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We mourn the death of Zach Thomas (1980–2021),
a Deleuze scholar gone too soon.

The Leibnizian Lineage of Deleuze's Theory of the *Spatium*

Florian Vermeiren   KU Leuven

Abstract

This paper examines the Leibnizian influence in Deleuze's theory of the *spatium*. Leibniz's critique of Cartesian extension and Newtonian space leads him to a conception of space in terms of internal determination and internal difference. Space is thus understood as a structure of individual relations internal to substances. Making some Nietzschean corrections to Leibniz, Deleuze understands the *spatium* in terms of *individuating* differences instead of *individual* relations. Leibnizian space is thus transformed into a genetic space producing both extension (quantity) and quality.

Keywords: distance, extension, intensive magnitude, quality, quantity, space

I. Introduction

The notion of the *spatium* occurs in many of Deleuze's books and texts.[1] However, it is most prominently developed in the fifth chapter of *Difference and Repetition*, 'Asymmetrical Synthesis of the Sensible'. This chapter contains a theory of individuation, in which the constitution of individual qualities and quantities is understood through the genetic powers of intensive difference. The latter is conceptualised in terms of 'intensive magnitude', 'distance' and the '*spatium*'. All of these concepts, which are central to the chapter, can be traced back to Leibniz. This specific influence of Leibniz has been overlooked in Deleuze scholarship. The theory of the *spatium* is absent from the otherwise

excellent studies of Deleuze's reading of Leibniz by Tissandier (2018), Duffy (2010), Smith (2009) and Lærke (2015). And when scholars do examine Deleuze's theory of the *spatium*, they mention topology, Riemann, Simondon, Kant and Cohen but not Leibniz (e.g. Smith 2020; Burchill 2007). I see two explanations for this fact. First, Deleuze only rarely states the Leibnizian origin of this notion. Apart from a footnote attributing the theory of distances to Leibniz (and not specifically the concept of the *spatium*), *Difference and Repetition* does not explicitly relate the notion of the *spatium* to Leibniz (Deleuze [1968] 2004a: 331). Furthermore, *The Fold*, which is Deleuze's most direct engagement with Leibniz, mentions the *spatium* only once (Deleuze [1988] 1993: 20). Deleuze's two explicit statements of the Leibnizian origin of this notion are well hidden: one in the discussion section of 'The Method of Dramatization' (Deleuze [2002] 2004b: 109) and one in a seminar on Leibniz (Deleuze 1987). On both occasions, he emphasises the Leibnizian distinction between *extensio* (extensive space) and *spatium* (intensive space). The second reason why Deleuze scholars are seemingly unaware of the Leibnizian origin of this concept is that the literature on Leibniz does not develop this notion of an intensive space, nor does it ascribe any specific meaning to the Latin term '*spatium*'. In fact, Martial Gueroult, in 'L'espace, le point, et le vide chez Leibniz' ([1946] 1970), is the only Leibniz scholar singling out Leibniz's use of the Latin word '*spatium*' and attributing it such a selective meaning. Both *Difference and Repetition* and *The Fold* refer to this text (Deleuze 2004a: 328; Deleuze 1993: 145). Deleuze's reading of Leibniz's theory of space is heavily influenced by Gueroult's article. It is one of those texts which acts as a key to understand Deleuze's specific reading of the history of philosophy.[2] Without this text and the few hard-to-find references to Leibniz's theory of space, it remains mysterious where Deleuze got this notion of the *spatium*. This is why this specific Leibnizian influence on Deleuze has been overlooked. The following will examine this unnoticed lineage in detail.

The historical background of this conception of intensive space lies in Leibniz's critique of Descartes's concept of extension and Newton's idea of absolute space. What is ultimately problematic with these theories of space is that they lack internal determination. Spatial differences for Descartes and Newton are external differences. Leibniz attempts to construct a space of internal differences, namely, the *spatium*. This space is understood as the order of substances which relate to each other through their expression of the world. 'Distance' in this *spatium* is a difference in degree of expression, that is, an intensive magnitude instead

of extensive magnitude. Deleuze pushes this conception even further and understands the *spatium* in terms of a pure and genetic form of difference that produces extension (quantity) and quality as externalised and reduced forms of difference.

II. Beyond Geometry: Leibniz's Critique on Mechanism

Descartes offers the best initiation into Leibniz. A large part of Leibniz's theory can be read as a critique of Descartes, especially Cartesian mechanics and the corresponding theory of nature. In fact, the latter will offer us the perfect starting point to understand Leibniz's theory of space. At least two important sets of problems led Leibniz towards a different conception of space: the metaphysical issues concerning continuity and the limitations of the mechanistic approach to nature. I will here focus on the latter.

Cartesian philosophy is mainly a reaction to scholasticism which understood things through the Aristotelian model of primary matter and substantial form. Together with people such as Thomas Hobbes, Galileo Galilei and Pierre Gassendi, Descartes attempted to eliminate the obscure notion of substantial form. Driven by the mathematical dream, this new philosophy seeks to understand nature in a purely quantitative way. Descartes therefore takes matter to be equal to extension, understood as geometric quantity (Descartes 1985: 227). Matter is nothing other than the occupation of space, and space is always material. He thus understands nature as a material plenum without any vacuum (Descartes 1985: 229–30). In short, material reality is understood purely in terms of geometry: 'My entire physics is nothing but geometry' (Descartes 1991: 119). Such a physical theory therefore only allows geometric notions; all physical phenomena are explained through geometric form, quantity and movement.

The young Leibniz subscribes to this project: 'Physics is without a doubt nothing but an exercise in mathematics that deals with quantities, forms and movements' (Leibniz 2006: 713, my translation). Confronted with physical phenomena such as consistency (the fact that a body does not constantly dissolve), mass and inertia, Leibniz produces intricate models of movement to explain these phenomena in a purely mechanical way. Like Descartes, his conceptual apparatus mainly consists of circular movements in the material plenum – which are the only possible movements in a full plenum (Descartes 1985: 137–8). For certain phenomena such explanations work fairly well, but a large number of other phenomena are very difficult to explain

without attributing to matter something more than extension. One of the fundamental problems, emphasised by the older Leibniz, is that according to his early theory material objects can effortlessly move each other (Leibniz 1989: 123–4). But you obviously cannot move a boulder as easily as a marble. Such problems led Leibniz to a different conception of matter. He realised that there has to be something more to matter than geometric extension (Leibniz 1989: 124–5).

From a metaphysical perspective, it becomes clear that there are even more fundamental problems troubling this geometric conception of matter. The Cartesian plenum is completely homogeneous. Movement is therefore the sole principle of differentiation. However, as the older Leibniz argues, movement itself requires a form of difference that is absent in the plenum: 'This is because, under the assumption of perfect uniformity in matter itself, one cannot in any way distinguish one place from another, or one bit of matter from another bit of matter in the same place' (Leibniz 1989: 164). In short, movement, change and individuation presuppose something in matter beyond mere extension. Leibniz writes to Christiaan Huygens: 'there is something more in nature than what is determined by geometry, . . . Other than extension and its variations, which are purely geometric things, we must acknowledge something higher, namely, force' (ibid. 308). Through his reaction on Cartesian mechanics, Leibniz thus develops his dynamical theory in which force is a property of nature that is beyond geometry. Leibniz emphasises the difference in nature between force, on the one hand, and speed or movement, on the other. The latter do not suffice to grasp physical nature; what physics needs is something which grasps the past and especially the future or 'tendency' of an object:

> For in the present moment of its motion, not only is a body in a place commensurate to itself, but it also has a *conatus* or *nisus* for changing its place, so that the state following from the present one results *per se* from the force of its nature. If things were otherwise, then at the present moment (and furthermore, at any moment whatsoever) a body A in motion would differ not at all from a resting body B. (Leibniz 1989: 163)

Distinguishing a moving object from a resting object, therefore, presupposes the concept of force or tendency which surpasses the actual state of an object. Furthermore, movement is completely relative without any principle of force or tendency (Leibniz 1989: 308). Movement is in itself a mere *extrinsic determination*; to determine which object moves, a reference is needed to something beyond movement, that is, an *internal determination* of an object. Without such an internal principle, we cannot distinguish the movement of the car from the rotation of the earth.

In short, Leibniz is led to the conclusion that we need to acknowledge something beyond mere extension, namely, a level of potentiality. Cartesian philosophy remains on the level of effects; Cartesian matter is never anything more than inert passivity, it is moved but does not move itself. As Deleuze writes, the effect of Cartesian mechanics was 'to devaluate Nature by taking away from it any virtuality or potentiality, any immanent power, any inherent being' (Deleuze [1968] 1990: 227). Leibniz writes: 'Hence, since the Cartesians recognized no active, substantial, and modifiable principle in body, they were forced to remove all activity [*actio*] from it and transfer it to God alone, summoned *ex machina*, which is hardly good philosophy' (Leibniz 1989: 254). The purely geometric understanding of nature thus leads to the doctrine of occasionalism, held by Cartesians such as Malbranche, in which every form of causality is equated with a divine interference. As Deleuze says, by 'restoring to Nature the force of action and passion', Leibniz (and Spinoza) constitute a 'new Naturalism' (Deleuze 1990: 228). A proper philosophy of nature requires admitting a deeper level of nature; we cannot understand nature merely on the level of actuality, that is, in terms of extensive form, size and movement. Mechanics does not move beyond this exterior of nature; what we need, says Leibniz, is an 'innate principle', that is, a deeper nature or 'essence' (Leibniz 1989: 251). In short, we need to complete physics with metaphysics. Leibniz understands force as something metaphysical that is beyond the mere actuality of a body (ibid. 125); it constitutes a deeper level of potentiality. Force never exists here and now; it is only visible and measurable through its effects (ibid. 128), for in itself it is 'perceptible by the mind alone' (ibid. 125).

In conclusion, Leibniz's critique of Cartesian mechanics shows how extension lacks difference, potentiality and internal determination. Leibniz will, therefore, understand space precisely in these terms. In addition to this critique of mechanism, the internal principles of space are required by two of Leibniz's most fundamental metaphysical principles, which allow us to fully understand the necessity of internal difference in a theory of space.

III. The Principle of Sufficient Reason and the Principle of Indiscernibles Demand a Space of Internal Differences

Leibniz's theory of space is opposed not only to the Cartesian concept of extension, but also to Newton's theory of absolute space. According

to the latter, space and time are unalterable and immovable containers in which bodies move:

> Absolute, true, and mathematical time, of itself, and from its own nature, flows equally without relation to anything external … Absolute space, in its own nature, without relation to anything external, remains always similar and immovable. (Newton 1974: 6)

Space and time are thus external to the things that extend and endure. The containers are indifferent to what they contain, and what is contained is not determined by the container. In short, spatio-temporal determinations are external determinations that do not affect the individuality of a thing. According to Leibniz, however, all relations of a substance are internal to it. A substance's position in space and time is thus included in its individuality: 'Things which differ in position must express their position, that is, their surroundings, and are hence not to be distinguished merely by their place or by a solely extrinsic denomination, as such things are commonly understood' (Leibniz 1969: 529, modified translation). This is in accordance with Leibniz's general rejection of pure extrinsic denominations: no denomination or determination of a substance is extrinsic to its individuality (e.g. Leibniz 1996: 227; Leibniz 1969: 526–7). All of this can be traced back to two principles that form the cornerstone of Leibniz's philosophy: 'Those two great principles of sufficient reason and of the identity of indiscernibles change the state of metaphysics' (Leibniz 1969: 687). In the famous correspondence with Samuel Clarke, Leibniz invokes these principles to argue against Newton's absolute space. Given absolute space, Leibniz argues, there is no reason why God created the world when and where he did. As spatio-temporal relations remain external, God could have created the same world just a bit more to the left or just a little earlier. In short, in absolute space there would be no *sufficient reason* for the location of the world (or any object): 'No reason can be found, in these indifferent and indeterminate things, for what is determinate' (Leibniz 1973: 174).

All of this, in its turn, follows from the 'principle of the identity of indiscernibles' which states that 'there are no such things as two individuals indiscernible from each other' (Leibniz 1969: 687). In Newton's theory of absolute space, spatio-temporal difference is an external form of difference, which violates Leibniz's principle. According to this principle all differences must be internal: 'Things that differ ought to differ in some way, that is, have an intrinsic difference that can be designated' (Leibniz 1989: 174). Both in the Cartesian extensive plenum and in the Newtonian absolute space, things are 'different without

diversity' (Leibniz 1989: 175). In short, spatio-temporal difference must be internal difference: 'It is not possible for two things to differ from one another in respect of place and time alone, but it is always necessary that there shall be some other internal difference' (Leibniz 1973: 133). Therefore, as Leibniz writes: 'God will not choose a cube without choosing its place at the same time' (Leibniz 1969: 708). But how can we understand space and spatial determination in terms of such internal differences?

IV. Leibniz on the *Spatium* and Intensive Magnitude

For Descartes, extension is a substance and thus an absolute reality. For Leibniz, individual things are substances, and extension can be better understood in terms of an attribute (Leibniz 1860: 522). Extension presupposes something that extends, just as the concept of number presupposes something that is counted: 'The notion of extension is incomplete in itself, but is relative to something which is extended' (Leibniz 1989: 130). Extension is founded in substances, or better, in the relations between those substances. Those relations form the true reality of space, that is, the '*spatium*' (according to Gueroult's terminological distinctions). Extension is an incomplete concept presupposing the space of substances. Both Cartesian extension and Newtonian absolute space are abstractions from this substantial space. In a letter to Clarke, Leibniz explains how one arrives at such an abstraction (Leibniz 1989: 337–9). He says that the idea of an empty absolute space is produced through removing individual substances from the order of relations between those substances. In this way, Leibniz says, we arrive at the idea of a place (*une place*) that can be occupied by multiple objects. We say that A and B occupy the same place (at a different time of course), if they have the same relation to objects C, D, E, etc. The place is nothing other than that set of relations with all other substances, of which we imagine that they can be held by different substances. The empty and absolute space of Newton is nothing but the sum of all these empty places, occupiable by different objects. But the idea of a place is an abstraction, as it is impossible that A and B would ever have the same relation with the rest of the world. If that were to be the case, they would have the exact same 'individual affections' (Leibniz 1989: 338), which means they would simply coincide as the principle of the identity of indiscernibles dictates. What we have referred to as 'place' is included in the identity of a thing. This is why 'God will not choose a cube without choosing its place at the same time' (Leibniz 1969: 708). The location of the cube is internal

to the identity of the cube. This is why the concept of an absolute and empty space – as the collection of empty places that can be occupied by different objects – is nothing but an abstraction.

Place is an abstraction of what Leibniz calls 'situation' (*situs*) or 'location' (*lieu*). *Situs* is the location of a substance in the order of relations with the rest of the substances. This *situs* cannot be occupied by different substances; the *situs* or location correlates with the singularity of the substance itself. Martial Gueroult writes: 'As such, the location is the external expression of the internal quality' (Gueroult 1970: 263). The *situs* can be understood as the result of the closed monad turning outwards *in all its singularity*. What arises is not a shared public and homogeneous space, but a space in which every substance has it singular position; this is the *spatium*. The empty absolute space is the sum of all empty *places*; the *spatium* is the order of all *locations* or *situations*.

Space is therefore not a thing in itself but merely an 'order of things' (Leibniz 1969: 688). Space is nothing more than the structure of relations between individual substances. Leibniz turns Newton's conception of space on its head: space is not a container in which things can be ordered; instead, space is itself nothing but the order. Leibniz writes: 'Place and time, far from being determinants by themselves, must themselves be determined by the things they contain' (Leibniz 1996: 289). But how can things be ordered, how can they relate to each other, without this public field *in which* to relate or order thing? How should we understand this order that constitutes space without already presupposing a public space? Leibniz replaces the idea of placement in an extensive field with the idea of an *expressive* order in which things are ordered through their degrees of expression:

> The essential ordering of individuals, that is, their relation to time and place, must be understood from the relation they bear to those things contained in time and place, both nearby and far, a relation which must necessarily be expressed by every individual, so that a reader can read the universe in it, if he were infinitely sharp-sighted. (Leibniz 1989: 183)

> To be in a place seems, abstractly at any rate, to imply nothing but position. But in actuality, that which has a place must express place in itself; so that distance and the degree of distance involves also a degree of expressing in the thing itself a remote thing, either of affecting it or of receiving an affection from it. So, in fact, situation really involves a degree of expression. (Leibniz 1973: 133)

The position in this order, that is, the situation of substance is here understood in terms of a degree of expression. This notion of expression

is the key to understanding how substances can relate to each other, and can be ordered through intrinsic denominations. The expression of the world is a purely intrinsic affair of the substance. Nevertheless, these expressions of the world are related to each other; for, insofar as the substances are compossible, they express the same world. Moreover, the differences between these expressions of the world consist of degrees, as 'in nature everything happens by degrees' (Leibniz 1996: 473). Each substance perceives the whole world but in different degrees of clarity and confusion (Leibniz 1989: 211). Substances can thus be ordered according to their degrees of expression, which is an internal denomination. In short, the position in Newtonian space is an external determination; the *situs* in the *spatium* is an internal determination, a degree of expression.

Furthermore, the expressive order of substances is continuous. One of Leibniz's most fundamental intuitions is that 'everything is full in nature' (Leibniz 1989: 207), and '*nature does not make leaps*' (Leibniz 1996: 56). Accordingly, every substance is surrounded by an infinity of infinitely close substances (Leibniz 1989: 207). But this proximity should not be understood in extensive or traditional spatial terms. This proximity is also expressive; it concerns an infinitesimal difference in degree of expression. Each substance is surrounded by substances that express the world with only an infinitely small variation. For Deleuze, continuity provides the criterion of compossibility (Deleuze 2003: 126–33). If two substances are compossible, this means that they are connected in an expressively continuous series of substances. This expressive continuity between two substances entails that there is an infinity of substances between them that express the same world, in which each expression of a substance differs only infinitesimally with the expression of its immediate neighbours. This is also the reading of Robert Latta: 'The unit of substance must then be intensive rather than extensive, and the continuity of the whole must not be a mere empty homogeneity, but a continuity through infinite degrees of intension' (Latta 1898: 30–1).

Of course, Leibniz's position on continuity is somewhat complex. In fact, his way out of the labyrinth of the continuum was to relegate continuity to the realm of ideality and potentiality, as reality presupposes unity that can only be provided by a discrete collection of indivisible monads. However, I believe we should understand his attack on continuity in favour of discrete monads in terms of a rejection of *extensive* continuity. The indivisibles that led Leibniz out of the labyrinth are metaphysical and not extensive; as such, they do not allow any form

of extensive continuity. But I agree with Latta and Deleuze that Leibniz develops another idea of continuity, that is, expressive continuity. The series of substances is dense, not in an extensive manner, but in a qualitative (intensive) or expressive manner (see Crockett 1999: 135). Even Russell identifies this form of continuity in Leibniz (Russell [1990] 2008: 64–5).[3]

This intensive or expressive continuous series of substances teaches us how we can understand relations between substances as individual or intrinsic relations, instead of external denominations: the relation between substances is a matter of internal degrees of expression. The distinction between an individual relation and an external relation – that is, a relation as a purely extrinsic denomination – returns in Leibniz's theory of space as the distinction between 'distance' (*distance*) and 'length' (*longeur*). Absolute space has lengths, relational space has distances. The difference between the two can most easily be grasped by understanding them in terms of intensive and extensive magnitudes (see Russell 2008: 114; Deleuze 2003: 280–300). Intensive magnitudes measure the degree of expressions of substances, extensive magnitudes measure the extensive medium in which lengths extend. In short, extensive magnitudes are external denominations, that is, determinations of a thing through the external medium in which it extends. As the spatial determinations of absolute and homogeneous space, lengths are divisible. The length of a metre can be divided into 100 centimetres because a metre and a centimetre are homogeneous. Distances, on the contrary, are heterogeneous, as they concern the substance's individual expression of the world: 'Distance and the degree of distance involves also a degree of expressing in the thing itself a remote thing' (Leibniz 1973: 133). Accordingly, intensive magnitude is individual to the thing it measures. Due to this singularity and heterogeneity, intensive magnitudes cannot be divided or reduced to smaller magnitudes; in short, they are not metric magnitudes. But if this is the case, how do they constitute a magnitude? Confronted with Leibniz's relational theory of space, Samuel Clarke argues that the quantitative aspect of space cannot be understood in this theory. Leibniz replies:

> As for the objection that space and time are quantities, or rather things endowed with quantity, and that situation and order are not so, I answer that order also has its quantity; there is in it that which goes before and that which follows; there is distance or interval. Relative things have their quantity as well as absolute ones. For instance, ratios or proportions in mathematics have their quantity and are measured by logarithms, and yet they are relations.

> And therefore, though time and space consist in relations, yet they have their quantity. (Leibniz 1989: 341)

Distances or the magnitudes of relational space are thus magnitudes of order and relation. We should understand them as the magnitudes of the expressively continuous order of substances. Deleuze understands this magnitude of order in terms of ordinal numbers (Deleuze 2004a: 291–2). 'Space is what is structural, but an unextended, pre-extensive space, pure *spatium* constituted bit by bit as an order of proximity, in which the notion of proximity first of all has precisely an ordinal sense and not a signification in extension' (Deleuze 2004b: 174). In contrast to cardinal numbers, which tell us how much there is of something, ordinal numbers denote the position in an order or series. The cardinal number ten counts ten units and is reducible to two times the cardinal number five; the ordinal number ten only refers to the tenth place in an order, and cannot, therefore, be reduced to two times the ordinal number five. Ordinal numbers, just like intensive magnitudes, are therefore singular and indivisible.

Distance can thus be understood as an ordinal magnitude; it denotes the difference between the position of substances in the order of substances (Leibniz 1969: 703). The distance between two substances is thus understood as the magnitude of intermediary substances in the series of substance:

> Space is the order of coexisting things, or the order of existence for things which are simultaneous. In each of the two orders – that of time and that of space – we can judge relations of nearer to and farther from between its terms, according as more or less middle terms are required to understand the order between them. (Leibniz 1969: 666–7)

The distance between two substances, as an intensive magnitude, thus measures the degree of variation of the various intensive expressions of the world. The magnitude of this variation is determined through how many positions lie in between these substances in the continuous order of substances.

In conclusion, through his concepts of the '*spatium*', '*situs*' and 'distance', Leibniz develops a theory of space in which spatial determinations and spatial differences are wholly internal and intrinsic. What both the Cartesian and the Newtonian conception lack, namely internal determination, thus becomes Leibniz's central principle to understand space. Deleuze will further develop this approach to space in his theory of intensive difference.

V. Deleuze on Intensity, Quality and Quantity

Deleuze does not merely adopt the monadology or Leibniz's conception of space. He makes important corrections to the Leibnizian theory (see Bowden 2011: 64–87; Tissandier 2018: 95–104). These are most prominent in *Logic of Sense* (series 16, 17 and 24) and in *The Fold*. First of all, Deleuze takes pre-individual singularities (or events) to be primary to individuals. These singularities are, we could say, 'loose' or non-individuated predicates. When such singularities are compossible, they can constitute an individual substance that includes them. So, while Leibniz takes intensive magnitudes to be individual to a substance – that is, they are *individual* relations and intrinsic denominations – Deleuze understands them as *individuating* pre-individual difference. This allows Deleuze to use Leibniz's system as a theory of individuation (see Vermeiren 2022).

   However, this pre-individual version of the monadology is already present in Leibniz's theory itself. Deleuze always emphasises that in Leibniz's theory individuals are secondary: 'The [individual] soul is a "production", a "result". The soul results from the world that God has chosen' (Deleuze 1993: 26). Leibniz writes: 'For it can be understood that God does not decree whether Adam should sin, but whether that series of things in which there is an Adam whose perfect individual notion involves sin should nevertheless be preferred to other series' (Leibniz 2001: 309). God composes possible worlds from predicates like sinning and crossing the Rubicon, after which he realises the best possible world, together with the monads that express it:

> For God, so to speak, turns on all sides and in all ways the general system of phenomena which he finds it good to produce in order to manifest his glory, and he views all the faces of the world in all ways possible, since there is no relation that escapes his omniscience. The result of each view of the universe, as seen from a certain position, is a substance which expresses the universe in conformity with this view, should God see fit to render his thought actual and to produce this substance. (Leibniz 1989: 46–7)

So, already in Leibniz's theory itself, the predicates, or what Deleuze calls 'events' of 'singularities', are primary to the individual substances. There is thus a synthetic and genetic aspect to Leibniz's theory. However, this aspect is suppressed because Leibniz takes compossibility as a condition to reality. As the world needs to be composed in God's mind and realised as a fully formed harmonious world, the predicates do not really synthetically produce the monads, but are analytically included in the monads. Because of pre-established harmony, individuals are a given,

rather than a product of individuation. Deleuze, however, eliminates compossibility as a necessary condition. Injecting some Nietzsche into Leibniz, he takes divergence, instead of harmony, as a condition of reality:

> Leibniz, however, subjected the points of view to exclusive rules such that each opened itself onto the others only insofar as they converged: the points of view on the same town. With Nietzsche, on the contrary, the point of view is opened onto divergence which it affirms: another town corresponds to each point of view, each point of view is another town, the towns are linked only by their distance and resonate only through the divergence of their series. (Deleuze 2003: 198)

As Deleuze eliminates the demand for harmony and compossibility, and gets rid of the theodicy in general, he turns Leibniz's theory into a theory of synthetic individuation. The predicates are freed from both God and individual substance, and thus become true impersonal pre-individual events out of which individuals are produced. This elimination of harmony and compossibility as a necessary condition is, therefore, Deleuze's only significant correction to Leibniz, because the shift from individual substances to pre-individual singularities results from this. This shift merely actualises something already latently present in Leibniz's theory.

Getting rid of harmony as a necessary condition and replacing individual monads with pre-individual singularities, Deleuze also changes Leibniz's expressionism: events and singularities are expressive, instead of individuals, and there is no harmonious common world that is expressed. However, this too is not a radical shift from Leibniz, as Deleuze's version of expressionism is also implicitly present in Leibniz's system. The reason why individual substances express the world is that there is a harmonious world preformed and pre-established in God's mind. When we take away this pre-established harmony, predicates, instead of individuals, turn out to be expressive instances, as God composes the world from predicates, not monads. In other words, the 'ideal game' of expression is played at the level of pre-individual events. The only reason that monads turn out to be the expressive entities is that the world is created all at once, and the chosen collection of predicates are included in individual monads from the start. Therefore, when Deleuze eliminates compossibility as a condition, events and singularities become expressive, instead of monads. Nevertheless, Leibniz's expressionism remains fundamental in Deleuze's theory of singularities and events, certainly when it comes to

his specific understanding of their relation: 'On the other hand, they [the events or singularities] have between them, or with their ideational quasi-cause, no longer a relation of causality, but rather, once again and this time exclusively, a relation of expression' (Deleuze 2003: 194). Even though there is no common world that is expressed, the pre-individual singularities are expressive and relate to each other in terms of expression. The Leibnizian notion of expression thus survives in Deleuze's theory. Leibniz's influence is even evident from the title of the important twenty-fourth series, 'Of the Communication of Events', in *Logic of Sense*, which is reminiscent of Leibniz's *New System of Nature and the Communication of Substances*. In conclusion, although there are some important shifts between Leibniz and Deleuze, important parts of the Leibnizian model are retained in Deleuze's work. Leibniz's theory of space will therefore be of great use for understanding Deleuze's theory of the *spatium*.

The most significant development of Deleuze's theory of the *spatium* is in chapter 5, 'Asymmetrical Synthesis of the Sensible', of *Difference and Repetition*. This chapter describes the genesis of individual qualities and quantities out of the depth of the *spatium*. In general, this genesis is construed in terms of a cancellation of difference. Deleuze thus further develops Leibniz's idea that extension is a reduction of difference to a mere repetition of the same (Leibniz 1989: 130) in which things are 'different without divergence' (Leibniz 1989: 175). But as Gueroult says, Leibniz's writings are unclear on how we should precisely understand this genesis of extension (Gueroult 1970: 259). One of the factors causing trouble is that Leibniz often seems to describe the *spatium* in qualitative terms. Belaval and Gueroult uncritically understand the *spatium* as a logical order of qualities (Belaval 1960: 244, 250, 493; Gueroult 1970: 263, 272), even though, as they themselves acknowledge, this hinders our understanding of a genesis of extension (Belaval 1976: 212; Gueroult 1970: 259). As quality and quantity are so heterogeneous, the genesis of the latter from the former seems to be incomprehensible. Deleuze offers a more fruitful interpretation. He argues that we can more easily understand the genesis of extension if we put quality on the same level as quantity, namely, as a result of the genesis and not its origin. According to Deleuze, intensity is the genetic origin:

> In short, there would no more be qualitative differences or differences in kind than there would be quantitative differences or differences of degree, if intensity were not capable of constituting the former in qualities and the

latter in extensity, even at the risk of appearing to extinguish itself in both. (Deleuze 2004a: 299)

Deleuze understands this relation between intensity, quantity and quality in terms of difference. He first develops this understanding in an early text of 1956, 'Bergson's Conception of Difference' (Deleuze 2004b). In this text, he examines the central ontological issue of Bergson's philosophy in terms of difference. The opposition between time (duration) and space, which is central to Bergson's *Time and Free Will* ([1889] 2001), is conceptualised by Deleuze as the opposition between two forms of difference. Space, defined by the early Bergson as extensive and measurable, is understood as difference in degree. It is a purely quantitative difference: merely *more or less* of the same. Time, defined as duration by Bergson, consists of differences of nature, that is, qualitative difference. Bergson famously argues against the attribution of intensive magnitudes to states of consciousness. He rejects intensive magnitude as a mix-up of quality and quality. Deleuze argues that Bergson's strict dualism is only methodological (Deleuze 2004b: 32).[4] A purification of 'difference in nature' from 'difference in degree' allows Bergson to understand the nature of difference in itself as an internal difference that 'differs from itself' (Deleuze 2004b: 37). This enables Bergson to understand difference itself as a nature of which both qualitative and quantitative difference are modifications (Deleuze 2004b: 38). 'Difference of degree' and 'difference of nature' are understood by Deleuze as different 'degrees of difference' (Deleuze 2004b: 49–50). These degrees of difference are in their turn understood as degrees of intensity, that is, intensive magnitudes. In *Difference and Repetition*, this primary form of difference is not qualitative nor quantitative, but intensive.

But let us return to Deleuze's conception of intensity. He understands intensity as difference in itself: 'The expression "difference of intensity" is a tautology ... Every intensity is differential, by itself a difference' (Deleuze 2004a: 281). In contrast to qualitative and quantitative difference, intensity is a pure form of difference. Again, Leibniz can help us to understand Deleuze on this point.

First, Deleuze understands difference, or intensity, as 'the Unequal in itself, *disparateness*' (Deleuze 2004a: 281). The latter notion is also used by Leibniz to denote elements that are so heterogeneous that they cannot contain one another in any way (Leibniz 1906: 53; see Belaval 1960: 248). Deleuze uses this notion in a similar way to denote a form of division in which the parts are completely heterogeneous. This

form of division distinguishes itself from division in extension. A line is infinitely divisible without any of the parts being either heterogeneous with other parts or the whole. Extension divides into homogeneous parts. An intensive magnitude is also divisible, but through each division a difference in nature occurs (Deleuze and Guattari [1980] 1987: 483). The whole is thereby not reducible to its parts. The intensive thus divides into heterogeneous parts. When Deleuze speaks of 'the Unequal in itself, *disparateness*', he is referring to this infinite intensive division, that is, difference in difference unto infinity. This idea can be traced back to Leibniz's idea that the infinite division of matter must be founded on an infinity of different substances. Every minute part of the infinitely divided plenum has a substance or 'entelechy', and the principle of the identity of indiscernibles dictates that every substance is different: 'Entelechies must necessarily differ' (Leibniz 1989: 177). This constitutes disparateness: infinite division in heterogeneous parts, in other words, an infinite division of differences.

Second, we have to understand difference and intensity in terms of implication: 'Intensity is an implicated, enveloped or "embryonised" quantity' (Deleuze 2004a: 297). It is not implicated in quality, or rather, it is only secondarily so. Intensity is primarily implicated in itself: 'implicating and implicated' (Deleuze 2004a: 297). This implicative dimension is what Deleuze calls 'depth' (*profondeur*). These notions of 'depth' and 'implication' are often understood in terms of the Bergsonian memory: every intensity is a degree of contraction of the past. But space, understood as *spatium*, also has depth. In fact, the implicative depth of the *spatium* seems to coincide with the depth of time in the second synthesis, described in the second chapter of *Difference and Repetition*. While discussing the implicative depth of intensity and the *spatium*, Deleuze writes:

> We should not be surprised that the pure spatial syntheses here repeat the temporal syntheses previously specified: the explication of extensity rests upon the first synthesis, that of habit or the present; but the implication of depth rests upon the second synthesis, that of Memory and the past. (Deleuze 2004a: 289)

Deleuze thus connects space and time. In contrast to Bergson, it is no longer the opposition between space and time that counts, but the opposition between intensive space and time, as *spatium* and Memory, on the one hand, and extensive space and time, as extension and actuality, on the other.

But let us return to this notion of implication. It too can be understood through Leibniz. As I described in the previous section, the *spatium* consists of an order of situations. Every *situs* of a substance expresses an internal quality and corresponds to a singular expression of the world distinguished through its specific degrees of clarity. The *spatium* therefore consists of an order of these degrees of expression. (Similarly, Bergsonian Memory is itself nothing but an order of degrees of contraction of the past.) As Deleuze understands difference as implication, those degrees of expression or contraction are nothing but degrees of difference. Intensity = difference = degrees of difference. We thereby arrive at the specifically Deleuzian conception of the *spatium* (and the Bergsonian past) as the order or series of degrees of difference. The distances in the *spatium* are therefore not qualitative (difference in kind), nor quantitative (difference in degree) but intensive, that is, *difference in degree of difference*. The *spatium* therefore consists of implicative difference, which means that difference is always already difference between degrees of difference. 'The infinitely doubled difference which resonates unto infinity' is the depth of the *spatium*, degrees of difference unto infinity, which endlessly implicate each other (Deleuze 2004a: 281).

How do we explain the genesis of extension and quality out of this series of differences implicating each other? Deleuze understands it as the cancellation of difference: 'Intensity is difference, but this difference tends to deny or to cancel itself out in extensity and underneath quality' (Deleuze 2004a: 281). Let us start with the genesis of extension. Again, Leibniz aids our understanding of Deleuze: 'Extension, or, if you prefer, primary matter, is nothing but a certain indefinite repetition of things insofar as they are similar or indiscernible with respect to one another' (Leibniz 1989: 274). Deleuze explains this in clear terms: 'Leibniz can define extension (*extensio*) as "continuous repetition" of the *situs* or position – that is, of point of view: not that extension is therefore the attribute of point of view, but that the attribute of space (*spatium*), an order of distances between points of view, is what makes this repetition possible' (Deleuze 1993: 20). This repetition of the same, however, is caused by an incomplete understanding: 'The homogeneity of matter is brought about only through an abstraction of the mind' (Leibniz 1989: 183). Complete understanding reads an infinity of predicates in each substance, making each substance a non-repeatable singularity; the infinity of predicates completely individualises the substance. Through an incomplete understanding, however, a substance appears as repeatable. Let us take a number of neighbouring substances

A, B and C, each of which is a singular expression of the world. As they are situated close to each other in the *spatium*, there is a form of close continuity between these different expressions of the world. In the infinity of predicates of each substance, many predicates are shared by A, B and C. When we have an incomplete understanding of these substances and we abstract from these infinities of predicates, an image emerges of these substances as the mere repetition of such a common characteristic. This is how we move from an intensive disparate order of singularities to a homogeneous repetition in extension.

To sum up, extension is the result of an abstraction of intensive difference, that is, difference in expression of the world, that is unique to each substance, in Leibniz's model, or pre-individual singularity, in Deleuze's theory. Through this genesis of extension, we move from an intensive difference to a quantitative difference, that is, from a high degree of difference to a low degree of difference. As Leibniz writes, in extension objects are 'different without diversity' (Leibniz 1989: 175). Extension itself is homogeneous and does not contain diversity, it is merely 'more or less' of the same. This quantitative difference is a reduced, feeble difference.

What is more, quantitative difference is an *external* form of difference, while intensity is an *internal* form of difference. Leibniz's substances diverge from each other from within themselves, that is, through their internal expressions of the world. The 'predicate-in-notion' principle dictates that every determination is internal to a substance. However, the quantitative determination in extension is an extrinsic denomination (Leibniz 1989: 175). Quantity is never internal to a substance; it does not determine what that substance is. Deleuze therefore understands the genesis of extension as an 'explication' of an intensive difference. The intensive magnitude of the *spatium* is 'a Difference which subsists in itself even when it is cancelled outside itself' (Deleuze 2004a: 293). 'Intensity, which envelops distances, is explicated in extensity, while extensity develops, exteriorises and homogenises these very distances' (Deleuze 2004a: 290). Again, intensive difference is implicative; it implicates the whole world. Extensive difference, on the contrary, is explicative; it measures things in an extensive medium, that is, a public space in which things can be compared.

The reduction of difference also produces quality. In comparison to both Leibniz and Bergson, Deleuze is very original on this point. Both Leibniz and Bergson, in their reaction to extensive homogeneous quantity, rely on quality as an ontological ground, that is, a primary form of difference underlying quantity and extension. Deleuze, however,

does not take quality to be a genetic or primary form of difference: 'In its own nature, difference is no more qualitative than extensive' (Deleuze 2004a: 298). On the contrary, quality also entails a form of generality:

> We should note, first of all, that qualities have much more stability, immobility and generality than is often admitted. They are orders of resemblance. Certainly they differ, they differ in nature, but always within a supposed order of resemblances. (Deleuze 2004a: 298)

> There is no doubt that resemblance is the law of quality, just as equality is that of extensity (or invariance that of extension): as a result, extensity and quality are the two forms of generality. (Deleuze 2004a: 295)

Quality is what lets itself be repeated in extension. Quality fills extension: 'It [difference] is cancelled in so far as it is drawn outside itself, *in* extensity and *in* the quality that fills that extensity' (Deleuze 2004a: 287). As I have written above, extension is produced through the abstraction of singularities to common qualities that repeat itself. The qualities that 'fill' extension are therefore themselves not singular but repeatable generalities. Quality is 'resemblance' that fills the 'equality' of extension. The genesis of both is intertwined: 'The one [quality] profits from what has disappeared in the other [quantity], but the true difference belongs to neither. Difference becomes qualitative only in the process by which it is cancelled in extension' (Deleuze 2004a: 298). Qualitative difference recuperates the difference that is withdrawn in the genesis of extension and places it in between the qualities that fill extension, as a difference of nature. Qualitative difference begins where quantitative difference stops. The homogenisation of intensive distances in extension thus produces differences of nature, that is, qualitative cleavages between those homogeneous extensive repetitions.

Finally, we should emphasise that Leibniz's dynamics can also be recognised in Deleuze's theory of the *spatium*. In section II, I discussed how Leibniz argues that the geometrical world of mechanics should have its foundation in a deeper realm of force. The *spatium*, as the order of substances, is also an order of forces. This also returns in Deleuze's theory: 'Energy in general or intensive quantity is the *spatium*' (Deleuze 2004a: 301). Intensive magnitude and intensive difference can thus also be understood in terms of force and energy. In their reconception of space, both Leibniz and Deleuze move beyond mere actuality to a level of potentiality and virtuality. We should therefore never understand intensity in actual or empirical terms. Intensity is never actual but individuates actuality: 'Intensity is the determinant in the process of actualisation' (Deleuze 2004a: 306). To conclude, it is clear

that Deleuze's theory of the *spatium* in *Difference and Repetition* is heavily inspired by Leibniz.

Notes

1. An earlier and limited version of this text was published in Dutch in a special edition of *Tijdschrift voor Filosofie* dedicated to Deleuze (Vermeiren 2019). I thank the editor Roland Breeur for his permission to publish this translated and extended version.
2. In general, Deleuze's relation to the history of philosophy is often mediated by certain authors or books. To understand his reading of the Stoa we must pass through Émile Brehier's *La Theorie des incorporels dans l'ancien stoïcisme* (1928). Similarly, his understanding of Whitehead is mediated by Jean Wahl's *Vers le concret* (1932). Leibniz is, of course, a philosopher that Deleuze studied more directly and extensively. However, even in this case there is specific secondary literature that is crucial for understanding Deleuze's take on Leibniz. Relating Leibniz's theory of differentials to his monadology in *The Fold*, Deleuze is heavily influenced by Michel Serres's (1968) *Le système de Leibniz et ses modèles mathématiques*. But when it comes to Deleuze's theory of the *spatium*, Gueroult's text is of crucial importance.
3. The issue of continuity in Leibniz is not an easy one. On the one hand, he repeatedly affirms the continuity of reality, making it into a fundamental metaphysical principle (i.e. 'the law of continuity'). On the other hand, he takes continuity to be ideal and concrete substantial reality to be a discrete collection of monads. Although this is a very complex puzzle, I think the main answer can be found in a distinction between extensive continuity, which he takes to be merely ideal, and a substantial continuum, that is, a series of substances ordered according to their expression of the world. His solution is therefore somewhat similar to the arithmetisation of geometry in the nineteenth century: extensive continuity is founded on an infinitely dense ordered collection of numbers. Extensive continuity is therefore ideal, but it is well founded in an order of unities that are expressively or intensively continuous.
4. However, in *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze is more critical of Bergson (Deleuze 2004a: 299). Bergson's critique of intensity, and the underlying dualism of quality and quantity, can no longer be defended, as Deleuze's understanding of quality drastically changes. In his earlier texts on Bergson, Deleuze does take 'difference of nature' as 'internal difference' and the 'nature of difference', that is, the primary form of difference of which quantity and quality are different degrees (Deleuze 2004b: 32–51). Quality is thus equal to duration, 'internal difference' and difference of the highest degree. Hence, Bergson's critique on intensive magnitude could then be defended by Deleuze as a method to purify quality from quantity, which is necessary to get a grasp of duration. In *Difference and Repetition*, however, Deleuze takes quality and 'difference of nature' to be a form of generality: 'Extensity and quality are the two forms of generality' (Deleuze 2004a: 295). As will be discusses near the end of this article, quality and difference of nature are understood to be the result of a reduction of difference just as quantity and extensity are: 'Qualitative contrariety is only the reflection of the intense, a reflection which betrays it by explicating it in extensity' (Deleuze 2004a: 296). By understanding quality as a form of generality, Deleuze has cut himself loose from Bergson's (early) philosophy. I therefore do not agree with Craig Lundy who argues that Deleuze's dismissal of Bergson in *Difference and Repetition* is only provisional (Lundy 2018: 166–7). Referring to the footnote

accompanying Deleuze's critical paragraph, Lundy argues that Deleuze holds on to his earlier justification of the critique of intensity in terms of a first step in Bergsonism. However, Lundy overlooks the shift between Deleuze's early texts on Bergson and his later more critical use of Bergson. That is, Lundy ignores the fact that 'difference of nature', that is, qualitative difference, is first taken to be the 'nature of difference', in Deleuze's earlier texts on Bergson, and then taken to be the result of a *degeneration* of difference, in *Difference and Repetition*. Elsewhere, I discuss in detail Bergson's critique on intensive magnitude and Deleuze's critique thereof (Vermeiren 2021a; see also Vermeiren 2021b).

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The Noise of Time

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Abstract

The 'I' fractured by time – if Deleuze returns repeatedly to this seemingly minor moment in Kant's system, it is not simply to sound anew the theme of 'difference' (this time, with an *a priori* accent). No, Deleuze turns to this 'interior drama' for the same reason that Kant, in the *Opus Postumum*, returns to it: it presents the most direct passage from 'interior' (self) to 'exterior' (Nature). But Kant's late complication of the transcendental field undermines several of his most cherished theses – in particular, the fixity of the table of categories, the homogeneity of the forms of intuition (Space and Time) and the rights of logical determinacy. It is left to Deleuze to radicalise Kant's critique along the lines of time. In contending with this fissure, Deleuze inaugurates nothing less than a truly genetic philosophy of Nature – one that would think *with* Nature rather than *of* it. Only one caught in this labyrinthine flow could inquire into the possibility of radical metamorphosis.

Keywords: Bergson, continuity, duration, general economy, Kant, the philosophy of Nature

> ... the proper thing is to unleash inflation everywhere.
> Michèle Bernstein

Here begins a long and inexhaustible story: *I* is an other, or the paradox of inner sense. The activity of thought applies to a receptive being, to a passive subject which represents that activity to itself rather than enacts it, which experiences its effect rather than initiates it, and which lives it like an Other within itself. To 'I think' [the *active* 'I'] and 'I am' [the *accompanying* 'I'] must be added the self – that is, the passive position (what Kant calls the receptivity of intuition); to the determination and the undetermined must be added the

form of the determinable, namely time. Nor is 'add' entirely the right word here, since it is rather a matter of establishing the difference and interiorising it within being and thought. It is as though the *I* were fractured from one end to the other: fractured by the pure and empty form of time. In this form it is the correlate of the passive self which appears in time. Time signifies a fault or a fracture in the *I* and a passivity in the self, and the correlation between the passive self and the fractured I constitutes the discovery of the transcendental, the element of the Copernican Revolution. (Deleuze 1994: 86)

The 'I' fractured by time – if Deleuze returns repeatedly to this seemingly minor moment in Kant's system, it is not simply to sound anew the theme of 'difference' (this time, with an *a priori* accent). No, Deleuze turns to this 'interior drama' for the same reason that Kant, in the *Opus Postumum*, returns to it: it presents the most direct passage from the transcendental subject to a transcendental philosophy of Nature – and this passage is a precondition for posing the question of radical metamorphosis. Those who would inquire into the fate of the subject (or, better, subjectivated bodies) must immerse themselves first in the processes constituting Nature. Rather than disclosing a route from 'interior' subject to 'exterior' Nature, the thread left by Kant so complicates the interaction between interior and exterior that the latter appear as reciprocally modulating nodes in a complex whole. And being unable to distinguish between interior and exterior is a mark of this troubling fact: *being drawn into a labyrinth* – and not just any labyrinth, *that of the composition of the durative continuum*. For this complicating action – interlacing apparently distinct poles of the transcendental field, that of subjective 'self' and objective 'Nature' – draws essentially upon time. If duration informs alike the genesis of these two poles, then elaborating just this durative fund – say, mathematically – might generate a discourse that elides imperceptibly from one to the other. It is by this elision that once-cloistered acts – like self-reflection, where 'I' think *my*self – reveal the vital and material seams animating things from the outset. Mathematical discourse, knit ultimately of durative elements, bleeds alike into the subjective and the objective because duration informs alike the constitution of subjectivity and objectivity. But Kant's late complication of the transcendental field countermands several of his most cherished theses – in particular, the fixity of the table of categories, the placid homogeneity (or topological triviality) of the forms of intuition (namely, Space and Time), and the rights of logical determinacy. It is left to Deleuze to radicalise Kant's critique along the lines of time (Bergson lighting the way). Deleuze begins in a less than auspicious place: a 'fissure' between the 'I' and the 'self'. If inauspicious,

it is yet inspired: this fissure expands into a cascade of indeterminacy that infects irrevocably the discourses grounded in duration, especially mathematics and logic (whether formal or transcendental logic). Truly, 'to ground is to metamorphose' (Deleuze 1994: 154)! But that is not finally what is at stake. In contending with this fissure, Deleuze crafts nothing less than a prolegomenon to a truly genetic philosophy of Nature – one that would think *with* Nature rather than *of* it. The relation between this turn to the fractured 'I' and Deleuze's late philosophy of Nature has not been well mapped. We would like to inaugurate the cartographic project that must precede this prolegomenon.

I. Vital Cracks Along the Fissure

If Deleuze spirals into this orbit between 'I' and 'self', it is not to alight on a monadic point issuing a world entire. Nor is it to anchor everything in a 'pure' ground. It is to find something overlooked by Kant, Husserl and Heidegger – a slip, crevice or egress leading back to an exterior that anyway never left. Finding it will let Deleuze amplify the indeterminate 'noise' implicit in any formal discourse 'grounded' in volatile temporality. Deleuze's wager: first, a vital dimension or material seam entwines itself always in this putatively rarefied interior; second, abandon all pretence to logical determinacy! But excavating these seams and amplifying this noise is a delicate process – in every labyrinth, the ingress is no less fraught than the egress.

   Self-consciousness is reflexive – 'I' think *my*self. But 'reflexive' is a rather after-the-fact designation: it ignores how the *object* of self-consciousness – namely, this 'self' – is given.[1] For Kant, one's 'self' is distinct from one's empirical or physical body; the latter is intuited through the form of outer sense (Space), the former through the form of inner sense (Time). We confront here not a 'gap' between a transcendental 'I' (comprised of the *accompanying* 'I' of the transcendental unity of apperception and the *active* 'I' of the understanding) and an empirical body but a 'fissure' within the transcendental field itself – that between the (anyway split) 'I' and the 'self' given for self-reflection. There is an active component to reflexive thought: in thinking myself, 'I' actively *posit* myself – and 'positing' means here neither fabricating from detritus nor hallucinating for practical ends but *provisionally positioning for further determining*. This positioning is not necessarily a stabilising – indeed, rather destabilising effects flow from it. We need to hear Bergson's cry against spatialising the transcendental field. Treating the latter's components as if they were

so many solid objects arrayed in a homogeneous space would be a gross spatialisation (more on this later). Resisting these intellectual habits and thinking instead with the grain of time is the only way to arrive at an adequate perception of the transcendental field.

The doctrine of self-positing is not peripheral to Kant's system. Besides informing the derivation of the categories of the understanding, it has practical, empirical and even logical consequences, informing alike Kant's glosses on ethics, natural science and formal logic.[2] Crucially for Deleuze, this doctrine is central to Kant's late attempts to repair a distressing 'gap' within the critical system: 'only the exhibition of the subject's own bodily forces in the systematization of experience can play the role previously assigned [in the *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*] to the construction of the concept of "matter"' (Förster 2000: 74). Kant ends up very far from his initial motivation for positing a fracture between 'I' and 'self' – which was simply to account (in the first *Critique*) for the *possibility* of self-reflection (Kant 1997: 258, B 155). (There's little in Kant's critiques that doesn't unravel along ever-complicating lines.) Let's tarry then with the *telos* of Kant's deliberations on self-positing: the doctrine of self-positing is meant finally to replace the construction of 'matter' in the *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*. What was this 'construction of the concept of "matter"' supposed to accomplish? In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the 'schematism of pure concepts of the understanding' was meant 'to show the possibility' of applying the categories to phenomena (Kant 1997: 272, A 138/B 177). But since it

> dealt exclusively with time determinations and inner sense, it did not specify the 'sufficient' conditions of the application of the categories; it required supplementation by a work that laid out the forms and principles of *outer* intuition in their entirety, and thus related the categories to possible objects of outer intuition. In this manner alone was it possible to secure completely their objective validity and to relieve [the categories] from the potential charge of being empty concepts. (Förster 2000: 59)

The *Critique of Pure Reason* cast each category's way of bringing-a-manifold-to-unity as a modulation of the primordial unity of the pure temporal manifold of intuition. Put differently, categories unify a manifold on the basis of the transcendental unity of apperception – categorial unity is derivative of apperceptive unity.[3] But the phenomena of natural science appear through the 'outer sense' (Space). If knowledge of the natural world is to be necessary knowledge, it must involve the categories. But how do we know that the categories,

since they are determinations of time ('inner sense'), apply also to 'outer' (spatial) phenomena? The construction of the concept of 'matter' was supposed to provide final proof of the 'completeness' of the table of categories. If 'matter' could be constructed by just this table of categories, that would confirm both that the categories 'apply' to spatial phenomena and that the categories are complete. That is, if one could construct 'matter' from the table of categories, that would confirm that the table both exhausts all ways of bringing-a-manifold-to-unity and grounds objective knowledge of the material world, every aspect of which involves implicitly matter.[4] The stakes couldn't be higher: Kant wants to defuse definitively any doubt that the categories are arbitrary nominations lacking objective significance. That is, he wants to overcome Hume's problem: that the categories informing our knowledge of the objective world are grounded only in the accidental associations of the mind – and far from securing the necessity of objective knowledge, this 'grounding' (in habitual association) would preclude it from ever being necessary knowledge: constitutive principles and normative constraints cannot arise from accidental associations. But, Kant realised, 'the object of outer sense in general [*viz*., matter]' cannot be constructed in pure intuition (Förster 2000: 72). The categories did not sufficiently involve outer sense. The 'completeness proof' came to naught – the *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science* could not construct the concept of 'matter'. Casting about (in the *Opus Postumum*) for another way to repair the gap in the critical system, Kant alights on the doctrine of self-positing. Simply put, this doctrine asserts that experience is possible only by first 'positing' oneself, where *positing* means (again) *positioning for further determining*.[5] Self-positing is a condition for all possible experience: whatever its fate, an experience is first *my* experience. Kant stakes his attempt to complete the proof of the objective validity of the categories – which is a condition for inaugurating a critical philosophy of Nature – on the doctrine of self-positing. One could justly in ask: 'How could *that* possibly replace the construction of the concept of "matter"? Can so much come from so little? Why look "within" if we're concerned with "without"?' 'Here begins a long and inexhaustible story' (Deleuze 1994: 86).

The transcendental unity of apperception – this ambient 'I am' – *accompanies* every intuition, thought and experience. Whatever happens, *I'm* already there accompanying it – whether a thought or a perception, it is in each case *mine*. This implies that, so long as 'I' am, a manifold has always already been given. This is no less true in self-reflection: if 'I' am to take *myself* as an object of cognition, a

'self' distinct from both the accompanying 'I' and the active 'I' must too have been given. Self-reflection *reveals* a split between an 'I' and a determinable self (Kant 1997: 456, B 429).[6] Let's be clear: self-positing does not *generate* this fissure between the 'I' and the 'self'; it *discloses* it. Self-positing is one more 'clue' into the structure of the transcendental field – a clue better positioned than the 'act of judging' to express something essential about this field.[7] It's surprising that Kant would see this irreparable fissure in the transcendental field as *the* means to repairing a gap in the critical system.

Initially, when 'I' think my 'self', we are not dealing with an externally given 'spatial' phenomenon. The 'self' is distinct from the empirical body (but perhaps not from the *lived* or *felt* body). My perception of my *empirical* body involves the form of space (since that body takes up space). But the 'self' given in self-reflection has no spatial position. Kant's wager is this: if the 'self' appears initially under the form of time, it can appear eventually under the forms of time *and* space. In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the 'self' given for self-reflection appears only under the form of time. The *Opus Postumum* endeavours to prove that it appears under the forms of time *and* space.[8] This would endow the transcendental 'I' with 'not only a pure but an empirical character' – and this empirical character would allow it to 'engage' moving forces (Bassler 2018: 63). Only by adumbrating the aspects of the 'self' – appearing initially in time, eventually in time and space – can the doctrine of self-positing establish finally the 'objective validity' of the categories. If this 'self' involves the form of outer sense, then the transcendental field involves already the exterior – better, the transcendental field reveals itself as a labyrinth refusing the distinction between interior and exterior. There may be only a complex sea of forces, each of its innumerably many strata conjugating time erratically.

It's not just the categories that 'transcend' the grounds of existence; if the *Opus Postumum* is correct, the dynamical patterns of Nature etch themselves already on various facets of the 'self":

> empirical self-consciousness emerges at the point of intersection (interaction) between the moving forces of matter as they affect me, and my own motions thereon. That is to say, on the one hand, only because I am corporeal – a system of organically moving forces – can I be affected by moving forces of matter; on the other hand, only insofar as I can represent myself *as affected* do I *appear* to myself as sensuous and corporeal, that is, as an object of outer sense. Self-affection and affection through objects must thus be regarded as two' aspects of being-open. (Förster 2000: 106–7)[9]

What appears only under the form of time fosters a fiction of 'pure interiority'; this was a shortcoming of the *Critique of Pure Reason*: knitting everything of time (the form of *inner* sense) blocks any easy transit to the exterior. Allowing the 'self' to appear finally under the form of time *and* space shatters the cloister. Now the transcendental field involves the exterior: *the call is coming from inside the house* ... But there is a cost to repairing the 'gap' in the critical system. Kant jeopardises three of his most cherished theses: that the table of categories is fixed and universal; that the pure manifold of time is homogeneous (topologically trivial); and that the critical system affirms logical determinacy.[10] (For our purposes, affirming logical determinacy is equivalent (roughly) to affirming the law of excluded middle.) Should we preserve any of Kant's 'cherished' theses? Deleuze's answer is clear: only if we wish to betray the critical impulse! Undermining these theses is a condition for radicalising Kant's critique – we uphold no more the 'dogmatic image' of thought, nor do we acquiesce to the hegemony of classical logic nor capitulate to a model-theoretic orientation (Deleuze 1994: 131). Kant's turn to the doctrine of self-positing jeopardises his initial *image* of critique – as a means of securing the objectivity of mathematical physics and conserving logical determinacy. Almost despite itself Kant's critical turn undermines this image, pointing out a way to radicalise critique along the lines of time. If Kant failed to follow the path opened by his own critique, Deleuze lets himself be drawn down it, never denying that the gravitational pull of these newly admitted impurities (such as the 'system of moving forces' engaged by the self) only perturbs further an already volatile transcendental field.[11] And these tremors will transform our sense of what it is to 'ground' logic and mathematics. Far from 'fixing' a ground, it dissolves it, immersing us in a turbulent but fecund element soliciting everywhere novel elaborations.

If *Difference and Repetition* does not attempt to construct the concept of 'matter', it is because it accepts Kant's verdict on his own attempt at that construction: *that* is no way to inaugurate a critical philosophy of Nature.[12] Wedding the categories to outer sense involves grappling with what is sensed – and what one senses relates reciprocally to how one senses oneself. Deleuze's inquiry into 'the being of the sensible' functions exactly like Kant's complication (in the *Opus Postumum*) of the doctrine of self-positing, which elaborated a new aspect of the 'self' (Deleuze 1994: 140). Before *perceiving* a determinate corporeal phenomenon, one *senses* matter. Matter affects one prior to any syntheses of sensations into empirical objects. For Kant and Deleuze, material affection is inseparable from self-affection. That

'inner' affection and 'outer' affection reciprocally inform one another effaces the distinction between them – there is no longer 'inner' and 'outer', only the reciprocal modulation of mutually irreducible aspects. Spatialising the distinction between these aspects ignores Bergson's warning: whatever modulates reciprocally will not abide a 'spatial' logic – only a temporal logic (whatever that is) could be adequate to reciprocally modulating phenomena.[13] Indeed, reciprocal modulation is an invariant of the durative continuity that informs everywhere the transcendental field. That should make us suspicious of Kant's sedentary distribution of the categories and his reliance upon syllogistic logic. Kant's initial conception of self-affection and material affection is spatial not just because he labels these components by spatial terms ('inner' and 'outer'); his attempt to separate them cleanly, as if they were solid bodies, betrays an excessively 'spatial' bent. That these aspects of affection (namely, inner and outer) mutually inform one another allows us to transit between them without effacing the real difference between them. The transition from self-affection to material affection is not a transition from cloistered interior to open exterior – there was only ever exteriority, variously deformed; only ever an exterior informed by reciprocally modulating components. The 'being of the sensible' is never simple (Deleuze 1994: 57).[14] As every *topos* has its internal logic that 'is in general intuitionistic', this sensible (but imperceptible!) froth of 'differential' intensities has also an internal, implicit logic (Mac Lane and Moerdijk 1994: 5–6). Deleuze's exploration of this 'imperceptible' froth is no inquiry into the epistemological basis of scientific experience (he's not grounding 'everything' on sensation). It is always already work on natural philosophy, a line into the exterior – anyone looking to fulfil the promissory note Deleuze left for a philosophy of Nature would have to begin here, with this irreducibly complex 'being of the sensible'. Though standing in place of a construction of the concept of 'matter', Deleuze's inquiry into the 'being of the sensible' will reveal not the 'completeness' of a table of categories but, rather, how time – percolating through categories – gets 'into bodies' (Deleuze 1989: 197).

II. The Wages of Time is Exposure

For Deleuze, the inquiry into self-positing elides into an inquiry into how what is given is given – and that involves continuity. This elision – prefigured by Kant's own late work – has unexpected consequences for Kant's attempt to ground logic, mathematics and

mathematical physics in the transcendental field. For the 'moments' animating the act of self-positing – namely, the transcendental unity of apperception, the 'I' of the understanding, and the 'self' – all braid themselves into this field. That both *continuous* affection and a temporal *continuum* constitute these moments reveals that this act of grounding is entangled with the labyrinth of the composition of the continuum. Another of Bergson's protests can be heard: Kant neglects the character of durative continuity. Duration and temporality involve not a pacific, homogeneous continuum but a turbulent and heterogeneous one (Bergson 2001: 104). Affection is central to the doctrine of self-positing. That self-affection and material affection constitute themselves by reference to continuity compounds an already fraught situation: not only did Kant misconceive the temporal continuum, he didn't bother to construct it. As with the mathematical continuum, so with the temporal continuum: anything that ubiquitous, subtle and complex is never simply given. Explicitly constructing a continuum is a necessary exercise – and no idle one: it illuminates the variously captivating pictures hampering theoretical activity and, by revealing the 'logical principles' involved in the construction, the dogmatic assumptions informing it (Weyl 1994: 15). If Bergson inflects Kant's critique, it is to expose it to the luminous solvent Kant laboured to suppress: the labyrinth of the composition of the durative continuum. But any long exposure to that light develops along salutary lines – salutary, that is, for those who would (with Deleuze) scour away the residual dogmatism informing Kant's system and affirm the rights of indeterminacy.

The doctrine of self-positing revealed the porous character of the transcendental field. Even as apparently cloistered an element as the 'transcendental unity of apperception' implicates exterior elements: its affective dimension has two mutually informing aspects, one relating to self-affection, the other to material affection (to be alive is to be continuously affected).[15] But if every partition of the transcendental field is a porous one, will what grows on this or that side of a partition – whether formal logic or mathematical physics – be similarly compromised? Kant indexes the necessity and objectivity of formal discourses to the 'pure' (non-empirical) character of this ground. But now that the doctrine of self-positing sullies its purity – because the '*transcendental* self' engages always a '*physical* system of moving forces' – must we seek other grounds? Or does affirming the porosity of this ground disclose a new vision of logic and mathematical physics, one in accord with novel essays into the labyrinth of the continuum (by, say, Weyl, Brouwer and J. A. Wheeler)?

Already in the first *Critique*, the doctrine of self-positing impressed Kant with this fact: indeterminacy takes up residence in the transcendental complex and cannot be evicted. It haunts Kant's critical turn from its inception. I say 'haunts' because, though that turn was meant to secure the necessity and objectivity of mathematical physics, indeterminacy only threatens (or so Kant believes) its necessity and objectivity. Rather than try (with Kant) if not to evict then to curtail indeterminacy, we would affirm its rights and elaborate it along errant lines. How does indeterminacy variously suffuse the transcendental field? First, for Kant, cognition determines an indeterminate manifold. Every cognitive act relates to an intuition: in cognition, a partially indeterminate manifold has always already been given – and anything given has been conditioned by the form of time (nothing is immediately or simply given).[16] This is no less true when thinking of oneself (self-positing) – except that, in this case, the already given manifold is a 'self'. Since intuited, this 'self' has been subject to the 'form of time' – every intuition is conditioned by the inner sense of time. Even a pure presentation of the pure temporal manifold – a '*formal* intuition' devoid of anything empirical – has been conditioned already by the temporal *form* of intuition! Otherwise it would not be *this* presentation (given to *this* subject at *this* time).

But this is not the sole locus of indeterminacy. The act of self-positing involves a 'self' conditioned by the form of time. This conditioning marks this 'self' as passive, that is, as something affected by something else: 'through inner sense we intuit ourselves only as we are internally affected **by our selves**' (Kant 1997: 259, B 156). 'The "I think" expresses the act of determining my [undetermined] existence. This existence is thereby already given' – even if its manner of being-given is obscure (Kant 1997: 260, B 157). This 'undetermined existence' is a condition of possibility for being given at all, hence a condition for the particular act of self-positing. What is true of phenomena in general is true of the self in particular: anything given to cognition possesses an aspect that exists independently of its being given to cognition. But it is curious that the 'undetermined existence' concealed in the act of self-reflection is nonetheless *my* undetermined existence – as if a life involved necessarily inaccessible strata. Does Kant treat this hidden, furtive undetermined existence as anything more than a 'purely formal' presupposition, that plaything of philosophers?[17] And the 'form of time' mediating the act of determining this undetermined existence – does Kant underestimate the consequences of affirming that it's indefinite?[18] Why would the consequences for affirming that this 'undetermined existence'

is determinable by the 'I' only within time be 'extreme' (Deleuze 1994: 86)? The 'form of time' is not the only note accompanying an intuition of my self: there is also the accompanying 'I think' that marks this intuition as *mine* and the active 'I' synthesising the manifold into a unity – the 'self' is never given alone. If we can separate these moments *in thought*, they are inseparable in experience. Such is the complexity of experiential flux: capacious enough to admit of irreducibly different elements, agile enough to involve them in an unfolding flow – all without threatening that flow's *continuity* or melting these distinct moments into a homogeneous mass. But how can this flux incorporate *heterogeneous* elements while remaining yet *continuous*?[19] This is the heart of the labyrinth of the composition of the durative continuum!

Since subject to the form of time, the 'self' is passive. Its passivity alienates it from the active 'I': 'the **I think** expresses the *act* of determining my existence' (Kant 1997: 259, B 157, last emphasis mine). Whatever appears – here, a 'self' – presupposes a something $=x$ that never itself appears: 'I have **no cognition** of myself **as I am**, but only as I **appear** to myself' (Kant 1997: 260 B 158). Self-positing is possible only if a passive self – this 'undetermined existence', conditioned always already by the form of time – is given in time to a determining 'I': in the *act* of self-positing the 'I' confronts a 'self' conditioned by time (Kant 1993: 180). Kant pays a price for allowing these distinctions to proliferate: the 'self' becomes (partially) unthinkable. Anything given to intuition maintains a noumenal aspect – that is, an aspect that is not cognisable, since it exists only in itself. Self-positing involves then an unknowable 'self'. This alien 'self' reclines *within* the transcendental field. Worse still, it bears a squatter's bill of rights – indeterminacy has taken up residence and no one has the power to evict it (as always, I side with the squatter). But this 'self' is not *simply* there: it heaves into view only after having been patterned by a supposedly (for Kant) pacific 'form of time' – and this temporal tint colours alike this alien 'self' and all other components of the transcendental field. *A spectre is haunting the complex* … And Kant should be worried: *durée*'s hostility towards logical determinacy, forms of identity, and orientating operations threatens his entire architectonic, tilting it away from the logical determinacy he tries everywhere to uphold.[20] In Kant's rather complex analysis of self-reflection, the most potent opposition to logical determinacy concentrates itself in the peculiar character of *durative continuity*.

Before Bergson liberated time from space, Kant liberated time. For him, time is neither reducible to relations amongst bodies nor a

'merely ideal' order of successions (as Leibniz put it).[21] This liberation inclines Kant's system, against Kant's *own* instincts, towards a radical affirmation of indeterminacy. Almost despite itself, the *Opus Postumum* agitates for the rights of indeterminacy. That work's elaboration of the doctrine of self-positing makes it more evident that time cannot be *confined* to intuition, that it is not *merely* the 'form of my inner sense' – in part because the 'interior' can no longer be separated from the exterior. If Kant liberates time from bodies and from subjectivity, it is not to trap it in some 'otherworldly' transcendental plane.[22] Seeping into the latter's every crevice, temporality installs itself at the heart of being, transforming it into a superfund site without hope of temporal decontamination – no more interior enclaves. Whatever grows in this field, contaminated as it is by time, will incorporate elements of everything else growing in it – whether that be 'Nature' or the 'subject'. Kant responds to *durée*'s disruptive power by dogmatically curtailing it. But it is not possible to uphold classical logic in the teeth of duration and its peculiar kind of continuity. As J. A. Wheeler puts it: 'Adopt rigour or adopt the continuum?' (in Weyl 1994: xii). Bergson completes Kant's liberatory programme, freeing time from all undue subordination and dogmatic constriction. *Why* does Kant dogmatically curtail the noise of time? It's not just a mistake! As 'Ideas' drive reason past the bounds of experience, seducing it into advancing groundless theses, so *an image of logic* and *an image of continuity* drive Kant to annul time – to the point that he betrays his critical programme. Talk about losing the pet (critique) in the desert! But despite Kant's efforts, it's not so easy to neuter time.

   Deleuze first conceives of the 'form of time' as a mediating milieu: 'the form under which undetermined existence is determinable by the "I think" is that of time' (Deleuze 1994: 86).[23] This form is no inert, homogeneous 'arena' – to picture it that way is to spatialise it. It is a reactive milieu, a metastable solution with a non-trivial topology – it is pocked by holes, riven by gaps, complicated by singular points, pinched, twisted, non-orientable. The 'form of time' would hardly be a necessary component for the genesis of real experience if it had a topology like that of Newton's absolute space. Kant does not treat the 'form of time' as if it were anything but topologically trivial: for him, it is the formal possibility of self-affection – a mere condition for the 'I' to determine the 'self', a medium for the determining act. If it *seems* topologically trivial, that's because Kant *assumes* that the form of time is as homogeneous as the form of space: everywhere uniform, simply connected. With Bergson, Deleuze refuses this assumption – and so should we. Time

appears homogeneous only once the intellect spatialises it (Bergson 2001: 98). If we bracket the spatialising inclination of the intellect, time will strike us as heterogeneous – raggedly renewing itself each moment. Why does grounding logic and mathematics in this newly liberated time undermine logical determinacy? How does the indeterminacy endemic to self-positing preclude a fixed, universal ground – forcing us to recast the act of grounding as local and provisional? Is this why Deleuze insists that 'to ground is to metamorphose' (Deleuze 1994: 154)? Why 'metamorphose'? Could we quarantine the indeterminacy radiating from select moments of the transcendental field – such as the temporal form of intuition, the accompanying 'I' and the noumenal 'self' – so that it doesn't infect the formal discourses growing from this field?

We'll take the last question first: *no* – indeterminacy is ubiquitous and ineradicable. This is at once a philosophical thesis and a mathematical fact. Attempts to eliminate incompleteness phenomena, to fix definitively a domain of reference, or to determine finally a semantics have not succeeded.[24] Why cut against the grain? Indeed, logical determinacy may be strictly incompatible with the 'logic' of duration (Brouwer affirmed something similar, arguing that the continuum militates against the law of excluded middle). Duration informs the entire transcendental field, injecting everywhere indeterminacy. In such a field, logical determinacy can never take root. Logical determinacy – which has it that states are cleanly separable, that a predicate holds or does not hold but not both (principle of bivalence) – is possible only in a 'spatial domain' beholden to a 'spatial logic' (such as classical logic). The operations of classical logic are discrete – one acts locally, on *this* proposition (or this set of propositions) – and involve only discrete elements: one can act on a part without affecting the whole. Such 'discretion' violates the logic of durative domains. In a durative domain, no part is cleanly separable from the whole, the whole is virtually present in each part, and a change to any one part changes immediately the whole. Classical logic cannot 'grasp' any durative domain – neither those formal domains grounded in temporality nor those 'physical domains' informed everywhere by a time-besotted transcendental field.

III. Labyrinthine Economy

A finally liberated time disrupts every attempt to impose logical determinacy. If Deleuze tracks the various cataracts of indeterminacy, it is to recalibrate exact thinking to accord with a general temporal economy – one result of this recalibration: *to ground* means not 'to fix'

but 'to metamorphose' (Deleuze 1994: 154). We can glimpse, in this latter semantic shift, what motivates Deleuze's inquiry. However arcane these forays into Kant's architectonic, the grounds of experience, and the foundations of mathematics, logic and mathematical physics, the consequences could not be more concrete: Deleuze is not just arguing *that* the transcendental field could metamorphose (its metamorphosis is a condition for generating novel forms-of-life and collective formations) but indicating *how* it would do so. A truly radical metamorphosis requires nothing less than a transformation in how one takes time and place – that is, a transformation of the forms of intuition (Space and Time) informing experience ('experience always gives us a composite of space and duration'; Deleuze 1988: 37). Kant did not just doubt but foreclosed actively on the very possibility of radical metamorphosis: like the table of categories, the forms of intuition are fixed forever (in their homogeneity). But that the forms of intuition involve continuity countermands their alleged fixity. Allowing a continuous manifold to condition experience injects an indeterminate element that not only militates against any attestation of logical determinacy but recommends a general economic orientation. Errant dissipation is the one act left to those drawn by, say, Albert Ayler into a confrontation with the manifold ways of taking time – etching labyrinthine deltas at the source of experience, in vain hope of dissipating the vaporous influx. The indeterminate hues colouring the act of self-reflection (when *I* posit my*self*) radiate far beyond it, informing finally the formal discourses that emerge from the transcendental field.

One moral: duration abides only extravagant dissipation. It is no coincidence that mathematical discourse, drawing directly upon durative continuity, approaches the bewildering elaboration that alone would be adequate to duration. Rather than encompass and contain this indeterminate fund, philosophy ought to elaborate it along its own errant lines. One way of doing so would be to affirm the more exotic theses animating the fringes of mathematics, physics, proof theory and formal semantics – for example, Brouwer's theses that *all* functions are continuous, that the law of excluded middle is not admissible in general, and that logic is parasitic.[25] Brouwer's position seems less extreme in the light of time. It's past time to abandon a restricted economic orientation (one transfixed by set theory, model theory, classical logic and modal logic) for a general economic orientation not only besotted by exotic constructions but sceptical of any claim that all constructions are *ultimately* reducible ('in principle') to a single domain of objects (as Weyl would trace everything back to the natural numbers and the

successor function). In Bataille's succinct formulation: awash in excess, general economy would only dissipate it aimlessly (Bataille 2014: 191). 'We will oppose this economy to restricted economy whose operation is based upon valorized notions of restrain, conservation, investment, profit, accumulation and cautious proceduralities in risk taking' (McCaffery 2000: 202–3). If the mathematical continuum authorises all manner of pathological constructions – thereby making mathematics an uncoordinated 'motley' – so much more should the durative continuum incline philosophy towards transcendental anarchy, where the only 'rules' are those immanent to the construction itself, whether one constructs (from the pure temporal manifold) a mathematical continuum or a form-of-life (Wittgenstein 1983: 182). Towards an immanent genesis, one eschewing all extrinsic principles, dogmatic images and captivating pictures – is this not what animates experimental poetry or anything devoted to explicating implicit tendencies and distending obscure intensities? How many ways can one take time? Gather tenses from every language, whether extant or extinct: they would no more exhaust the ways of conjugating time than the table of categories exhausts the ways of 'unifying' a manifold. And why should *unity* have priority, anyway?[26]

   Deleuze's path is not the only path into the impossibly fecund fund of durative continuity, not the only map of how the transcendental field, temporalizing itself out of itself, constitutes lived experience and living Nature. He was right, however, to focus on Kant's arcane doctrine of self-positing: it disclosed, after all, that vital and material seams braid themselves into any transcendental field. And, besides revealing this field's labyrinthine character, it opened onto an immanent critique of Kant's system. For what follows from admitting these reciprocally modulating affective aspects of the transcendental field – which so interlace 'interior' and 'exterior' that the threshold between them becomes indiscernible – cannot benefit the partisans (Kant amongst them) of logical determinacy. Worse still, the latter must contend with indeterminate eddies erupting in supposedly settled, apparently mapped, putatively placid formal domains. It is as if in logic and in mathematics there persists a furtive dimension, one coloured by indeterminate hues that solicit elaboration: they are determinable but never finally determined. One might deny that they exist, saying 'those are *epistemically* undetermined, not *essentially* undetermined'; or one might cast formal domains as static, as always amenable to being 'taken up' in thought, ever open to being quantified over, with everything is already decided.[27] But continuity will not abide these decisions. It keeps

for itself a clandestine dimension – and, like the impersonal life involved in the transcendental field, it slips every net.

Notes

1. For Deleuze, calling this a 'self' is not just imprecise but misleading. Better to say: it's an aspect of a durative continuum, a moment in an unfolding process.
2. This doctrine of self-positing informs every level of Kant's critique (Bassler 2018: 63). But can it support all these strata?
3. 'Only because the combinations effected by judgments are identical with the combinations "universally represented" by the categories, as stated in the metaphysical deduction, and because these combinations are necessary for all representations of a sensible object, as shown in the transcendental deduction, may the forms of judgment be termed a priori and thus be considered *necessary* rules for combining our representations. Thus the rules of logic derive their necessary character from their relation to the original synthetic *unity* of apperception' (Longuenesse 1998: 75, last emphasis mine). Note what hinges on *unity* – everything! Not only the 'combinations effected by judgments' but also the *syntheses* of sensations into objects are acts of unification. But who says 'pure time' admits of unification?
4. 'The *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science* was written in order to supplement the Schematism and to complete the proof of the objective validity of the categories' (Förster 2000: 61). By this construction, Kant's proof of the objective validity of the categories would satisfy finally this criterion: 'to establish the **objective reality** of [the categories], we do not merely need intuitions but always **outer intuitions**' (Kant 1997: 335, B 291).
5. 'It will seem quizzical to maintain that a philosophy which drives toward a transcendental doctrine of ideas and a doctrine of egological self-posit(ion)ing leads to a radical form of externalism, but such is what I claim, insisting always that this is an externalism which recognises the radically *indefinite* nature of the external' (Bassler 2018: 21).
6. Kant warns against confusing the transcendental 'I think' with the proposition 'I think': 'if I have called the proposition "I think" an empirical proposition, I would not say that the **I** in this proposition is an empirical representation; for it is rather purely intellectual, because it belongs to thinking in general' (Kant 1997: 453, B 423).
7. For Kant, the act of judging is the essence of the understanding. This act expresses also the essential structure of the act of perceiving an object – for, like judging, perceiving draws a manifold into a unity. Experiencing is essentially judging. Yet this 'ever-present' experience of the 'I' is unlike other empirical experiences: 'The "I" refers to a condition, not to an object – namely, the condition of immediate, always present, feeling or sensation of "inner." Not only is this condition always present – that is, not only is it always "there" [hence spatially ambiguous] – but it defines for us our temporal present ... This is why Husserl differs radically from Kant. The transcendental ego is not a pure thought for Husserl, but is *lived*' (Tito 1990: 79).
8. Self-positing indicates 'how the "I" as mere object of thought (*cogitabile*) can *become* an empirical object given in space and time (*dabile*)' (Förster 2000: 103, my emphasis).
9. "'The first act of knowledge is the verb: I am, – self-consciousness, for I, [as] subject, am an object to myself. In this, however, there lies a relation which

precedes all determination of the subject" (Kant 1993: 179–80, 22.413). Self-consciousness thus is an act through which the subject makes itself into an object. In or with this original act, two things are given or emerge: (1) a "double" I: the I as subject and the I as object; and (2) the inscrutable imperative *nosce te ipsum*, which makes it impossible for the thinking I to keep to itself, as it were, and impels it to go beyond the original act of self-consciousness and determine itself to cognition. Since "to determine" means to ascribe a predicate under exclusion of its opposite, I must make myself into an object that can be distinguished from something other – hence from what must be viewed as *given*. This becomes possible, that is, my intuition becomes empirical, insofar as I can think of myself as being *affected*' (Förster 2000: 158–9).

10. 'Kant stresses that the original synthetic unity of apperception is a *thought*, not an intuition, for if it were an intuition, it would not be free of empirical admixture' – that is, it wouldn't be pure (Tito 1990: 75). For Kant, the only way to secure the necessity of knowledge involving the categories is for the transcendental unity of apperception – which 'grounds the categories' (which are themselves modes of this original unity) – to be pure (Kant 1997: 453, B 421). If the slightest empirical shard lodges itself in the transcendental subject, it will jeopardise the necessity of categorical knowledge – that is, Hume's sceptical challenge will infect the whole corpus (Kant 1997: 265, B 167–8).

11. Husserl radicalises Kant along these lines. For Husserl, 'the "I" refers to an ever-present experience. More specifically, this "I" refers to the *living* body' (Tito 1990: 79). If not simply present, might it flicker and pulse?

12. 'The task of a construction of the concept "matter" thus really has two sides to it. The *Metaphysical Foundations* must first take the empirical concept of matter in general and determine what a priori cognitions are possible with regard to it. That is, it must analyse this concept and determine the fundamental properties that belong to the possibility of matter in general (Kant 2004: 8, 4:472). It must then, second, demonstrate how the concept "matter" can be constructed from the elements this gained. It must show, in other words, how to exhibit a priori the intuition that corresponds to the concept' (Förster 2000: 62). Why undertake this construction? 'In empirical knowledge, the real possibility of an object is proven by its actuality. In the case of a priori knowledge, by contrast, I must show that the intuition corresponding to the concept can be given a priori, or that the concept can be constructed' (Förster 2000: 61). Only later will this construction reveal its insufficiency. Kant 'draws' his construction of the concept of 'matter' through four 'sieves' corresponding to the fourfold division of the categories. The categories must be involved in every a priori construction, and each categorial 'sieve' determines further the concept of 'matter' (Kant 2004: 12, 4:476).

13. In the *Critique of Judgment* 'the sensible takes on an autonomous value for itself and is deployed in a pathos beyond all logic, and which will grasp time as it bursts forth [*dans son jaillissement*], at the very origin of its thread and its vertigo. This is no longer the Affect of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, which linked the Self to the I in a relationship that was still regulated by the order of time; it is a Pathos that lets them evolve freely in order to form strange combinations as sources of time, "arbitrary forms of possible intuitions"' (Deleuze 1997: 34).

14. For Kant, 'sensory elements are not a starting point but already themselves a result, in a continuous process of generating differentiated and [potentially] conceptualizable representations' (Longuenesse 1998: 38).

15. Kant argues 'that sensibility cannot be described in terms of passivity alone. Something can be *given* to the subject only if it is received by a corresponding motion. In other words, receptivity is only a relative form of passivity; it equally

entails a *reciprocal* activity of the subject. Being reciprocal, the activity or motion in question must be subject to the same formal constraints as the receptivity to which it corresponds' (Förster 2000: 109, my emphasis). Reciprocity is the mark of a durative domain. Deleuze insists that 'the passive self is not defined simply by receptivity – that is, by means of the capacity to experience sensations – but by virtue of the contractile contemplation which constitutes the organism itself before it constitutes the sensations' (Deleuze 1994: 78).

16. 'Sensible intuition is either pure intuition (space and time) or empirical intuition of that which, through sensation, is immediately represented as real in space and time. Through determination [or topological deformation] of the former we can acquire *a priori* cognitions of objects (in mathematics)' (Kant 1997: 254, B 147). Different categories are different determinations of the pure form of time (just as continuous functions are deformations of the mathematical continuum). 'Can such a thing as a pure intuiting be found in the finite knowing of beings? ... What is represented in pure intuition is no being (no object i.e., no appearing being), but at the same time it is plainly not nothing' (Heidegger 1997: 31). Nor is it completely indefinite; it is determined as *one*: 'time as pure intuition means neither just what is intuited in pure intuiting nor just the intuiting which lacks the "object." Time as pure intuition is the forming intuiting of what it intuits *in one*. This gives the full concept of time for the first time' (Heidegger 1997: 123).

17. Determining acts presuppose partially undetermined elements. Like acts of inference, acts of determination are always mediate (Bassler 2018: 106). Determining this existence as *mine* – as that of *this* thinking thing – is possible only under the form of time. For Kant, totally indeterminate elements never appear, since everything in experience has always already been partially determined. Is this indeterminate 'self' anything more than a merely formal presupposition? Why dwell upon it, when dwelling upon it will tempt us to reify it? Can we avoid the temptation to mistake it for an object of experience? Is it just a formal requisite for a determining act, of concern only for the philosophical 'reconstruction' of experience? Or does it leave a trace in real experience?

18. Heidegger critiques Kant's conception of this 'undetermined existence', Bergson Kant's conception of time. For Husserl, 'Kant's conception of the "I think" renders it completely incomprehensible and *powerless*. Presumably the "I think" that accompanies all thought and intuition *precedes* [logically] all thought and intuition ... But what does it *refer* to, and what makes it ever-present? How does it come to attach itself to all thought and intuition? Now, although Kant says that the "I" of the "I think" cannot be an object of knowledge, he *does* term the "I think" a *thought*' (Tito 1990: 77).

19. Bergson confronted this aspect of the labyrinth of the continuum, but obscurely: 'as we know, the paradox that we must exalt the qualitative heterogeneity of states of consciousness to honour, finally, their unbreakable continuity, is very instructive' (Jankélévitch 2015: 123). 'The reader will note that Bergson has no difficulty in reconciling the two fundamental characteristics of duration: continuity and heterogeneity' (Deleuze 1988: 37). If this 'reader' notes it, he does not understand it.

20. If Husserl objects to Kant's dogmatic affirmation of logical determinacy, he indulges in his own dogmatic affirmations of it. 'Logical determinacy is maintained in the Kantian enterprise by a strategy of what can only look to Husserl like a double-barreled insufficiency, with each insufficiency functioning as a stopgap support for the other. But all this presupposes that Husserl could succeed in his rendering determinate of logical constitution: what if, indeed, there is some fundamental indeterminacy Husserl fails to acknowledge? In this

case, Kant's appeal to intuition looks like a first prospective model for the *accommodation* of such an indeterminacy' (Bassler 2018: 41). Kant's 'appeal to intuition must appear a stopgap for two related reasons. First, it forecloses the question of the evidentiary status of logic and so reduces its status to that of a formal "pseudo-given." Secondly, and perhaps even more troublingly, it precludes the fundamental determinacy of the Kantian enterprise by virtue of the status of the manifold [of intuition] as *indefinite*: this indefiniteness is in nowise overcome by the appeal to a "form" of intuition, since this "form" possesses no finite, and therefore no fully *de*finite structure' (Bassler 2018: 41).

21. 'Deleuze identifies a great revolutionary moment with Kant's new conception of time. Time is no longer defined as a cosmological or psychological time, but as a "form of interiority", a pure and empty form of time. There ensue two important consequences which Deleuze summarizes by means of the somewhat cryptic formulas "time is out of joint" and "I is an Other"' (Voss 2013: 212).

22. 'Time as pure self-affection is not found "in the mind" "along with" pure apperception. Rather, as the ground for the possibility of selfhood, time already lies within pure apperception, and so it first makes the mind into a mind' (Heidegger 1997: 130).

23. The consequences of affirming that this 'undetermined existence' is determinable by the 'I' only within time 'are extreme: my undetermined existence can be determined only *within time* as the existence of a phenomenon, of a passive, receptive phenomenal subject *appearing within time*. As a result, the spontaneity of which I am conscious in the "I think" cannot be understood as the attribute of a substantial and spontaneous being, but only as the affection of a passive self which experiences its own thought – its own intelligence, that by virtue of which it can say *I* – being exercised in it and upon it but not by it' (Deleuze 1994: 86). *But not by it* – dispossession has migrated into the transcendental complex, pre-empting every claim of possession.

24. Incompleteness phenomena are less exotic than one might suppose: they haunt fairly elementary formal systems (like Peano arithmetic) and any instance where one quantifies over infinite collections (or uses induction). Nor is it a meta-mathematical trick: these phenomena appear within mathematics itself.

25. 'Topoi are generalized universes of sets, and the logic of such universes is in general intuitionistic (the logic is classical precisely when the topos is Boolean). Therefore, it is natural to ask whether there are perhaps topoi which resemble Brouwer's world to such an extent that all functions from reals to reals are continuous' (Mac Lane and Moerdijk 1994: 325).

26. For Kant, 'unity is never taken for granted, but is produced, as it were bit by bit and effort after effort. We have only as much unitary world as we are able to *produce* by the painstaking use of our *capacity to judge*' (Longuenesse 1998: 204). That may be true, but who says that pure time abides unification? What if it annuls covertly every attempt to unify it?

27. Kant's 'turn' was not sufficiently radical: 'How does it happen that [Kant] regards formal logic . . . as self-sufficiently grounded? How is it comprehensible that he never thought of asking transcendental questions about the sphere of formal logic?' (Husserl 1969: 260, in Tito 1990: 2). Affirming total logical determinacy – no incompleteness phenomena, no underdetermined semantics, no absolutely undecidable propositions – is anti-transcendental, not least because indeterminacy suffuses the entire transcendental field. Excising indeterminacy is possible only by a dogmatic affirmation of logical determinacy. Kant does not outright affirm logical determinacy. Yet his grasp of the transcendental field, how he 'deduces' its lineaments, belies an expectation that it will prevail.

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The Queer Rhythm of Cecil Taylor's 'Enter Evening'

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Abstract

Cecil Taylor's *Unit Structures* (1966) is fundamentally a conjunctive, polyvocal expression: between music and text, composition and improvisation, individual expression and collective enunciation. This essay analyses aspects of Taylor's polyvocal expression as an ongoing series of productive assemblages that queer conventional notions of (musical) rhythm by reconsidering the very concept of rhythm in Deleuzo-Guattarian terms. In order to enact this move, I develop Deleuze and Guattari's concept of 'supple segmentarity' to theorise Taylor's propulsive, gestural language as a (queer) continuation of – rather than rupture within – the logic of elastic temporality that flows through many Afro-diasporic musical practices.

Keywords: Cecil Taylor, improvisation, jazz, rhythm, supple segmentarity

While I agree with Brian Hulse (2013) that there is no such thing as a Deleuzo-Guattarian music, but rather that *all* music can be productively engaged using Deleuzo-Guattarian frameworks (and vice versa: any music can be used to further develop those frameworks), my contention in this essay is that there are aspects of Cecil Taylor's music that resonate in particularly vibrant ways with many of Deleuze and Guattari's key concepts. One especially fruitful entry point is the ongoing series of folds that Taylor enacts between his music and other creative practices: writing, vocalising, moving, even his stylised, performative way of speaking; each expressive modality functioning

as a kind of outside that newly constitutes the rest. Another is the way Taylor's compositional structures open themselves to creative deterritorialisations by the musicians in his ensembles. Both of these concepts are operative in Taylor's much-lauded 1966 recording *Unit Structures*, performed by a septet comprised of Ken McIntyre (oboe), Jimmy Lyons (alto saxophone), Eddie Gale (trumpet), Henry Grimes and Alan Silva (bass), Andrew Cyrille (drum set) and Taylor on piano. Almost as well known as the music (among fans) is Taylor's album note, the prose-poem 'Sound Structure of Subculture Becoming Major Breath/Naked Fire Gesture'. In developing the account that follows, I will consider how music and text fold into one another to produce new kinds of conjunctive, polyvocal expressions. These expressions are continuously produced by eventful couplings of intensive forces rather than literal mappings of meanings from one domain to the next; to this end each exists in a kind of continuous doubled movement of coalescing into structurally cohesive units (hence the album title) while simultaneously dissolving out of those provisional wholes. They also, importantly, disidentify with or *queer* normative modes of musical being and doing and open up experience to highly personal, politically valent alternative spacetimes. As disidentificatory queerings they establish a constellation of radically varied, intertextual improvisational practices not as aberrations of jazz's (hetero)norms, but as already-different, multivalent, open to new multiplicities of expressive potentials.

   This essay unfolds in four parts, each built around a brief moment in 'Enter Evening (Soft Line Structure)' – the second track from *Unit Structures* – and several passages from 'Sound Structure', Taylor's prose-poem album note. The first three section headers refer to formal designations Taylor provides as frameworks for hearing one's way through the music: *anacrusis*, *plain*, and *area* (suggesting, in a way, a dimensional multiplication from line to plane to space). The last section, *coda*, refers to a common technique of musical denouement, and opens onto further speculative possibilities for reading Taylor's music and words. I will return throughout to consider the ways in which Taylor's conception of musical (and intertextual) rhythm – as what Ekkehard Jost (1994) describes as a kind of gestural energy that produces motion – operates as an enactment of Deleuze and Guattari's intensive rhythm, as that through which heterogeneous milieus communicate and through which difference is continuously produced. In order to draw this connection I develop Deleuze and Guattari's concept of 'supple segmentarity' to theorise Taylor's propulsive, gestural language as a

(queer) continuation of – rather than rupture within – the logic of elastic temporality that flows through many Afro-diasporic musical practices.

I. Anacrusis

> *Enter Evening*'s anacrusis consists of 4 separate lines, unequal in length; statements with changing consecutives. *Unit Structure*'s anacrusis isolates amplitude in note freezing sound; in attitude, the mobile phrase grouping piano attack happening across *Structure*'s TPT.
>
> Taylor 1966: n.p.[1]

The four melodic lines that begin Cecil Taylor's 'Enter Evening (Soft Line Structure)' form a heterogeneous counterpoint, each a discrete linear-melodic event, fully entrainable as a singular utterance.[2] Ken McIntyre's oboe is slow and insistent, each pitch crisply articulated. Its slow, emphatic declamation results in a temporal disposition that stretches beyond the moment where other strata stop – McIntyre's ensemble-mates either pause or sustain their last pitches to make room. Eddie Gale's muted trumpet timbrally conjoins with the oboe – already, transversal timbral conjunctions are beginning to melt instrumental strata into one another. Jimmy Lyons's alto saxophone at first lurks in the sonic shadows, covered by the more audibly salient oboe and trumpet, but its last reaching-up gesture rises to a higher register to form a kind of brief mimetic shadow of the oboe. And Taylor's staccato piano articulations form an altogether contrasting layer that somehow unifies all three of these linear utterances by providing a ground against which they can be heard *as* linear. (Note that we can easily invert this precarious figure–ground relation too.) Four discrete sound-spans assemble in a contingent arrangement of multiple temporalities, textures and mutual processes of coding and decoding. Assemblage here is transversal, between bodies and sounds, between heterogeneous couplings of individuating enactments.

A second process is enacted through an active coupling of words and sound, when Taylor's album note, 'Sound Structure of Subculture Becoming Major Breath/Naked Fire Gesture', is read in conjunction with the album's music. 'Sound Structure' is already a deterritorialisation of the concept of album notes: Taylor's words are not *about* the music (although as the quote above illustrates, they are not *not* about the music either) as much as a parallel creative expression that draws affective resonances from the music and vice versa. This is not to say that words and music should be presented together, that one should read Taylor's

words while listening, or any such simplistic interpretation of their relation. Their coextension is dimensional, non-linear and transversal, and proceeds through intensive foldings, each iteration of which newly figures the outside of one expression as the inside of the other (words as provisional modes of hearing musical expressions; sounds revealing resonances in verbal texts). There are multiple temporalities at work in this ongoing doubled expression. These include not only concurrently ongoing time-events but also larger historical arcs, such as both real and fabulated accounts of the genealogies of both jazz and ancient Africa.

Let us return to that opening moment of 'Enter Evening' and consider its local context further. The compound first phrase, with its entwined contrapuntal movements and transversal affective flows, is followed by a pause – a long second of silence that is easily hearable as a segmental boundary. When the second phrase follows, it makes an antecedent of the first. That is, through the impingement of the second phrase on the now-past of the first, we can re-hear the first as the antecedent of an antecedent-consequent pair. This is an important part of any emergent listening strategy, since in the absence of an obvious melodic, harmonic or rhythmic syntax, a sense of how various aspects of the music are functioning can only be determined relationally, which is to say by hearing gestures in terms of one another. In Deleuzian terms, the new event of the second phrase transforms the now-past of the first in a new hearing. This reveals the degree to which the past truly is active and open to new actualities as new presents draw singularly upon it and fold singularly back into it.[3] The relation becoming–antecedent–consequent is enacted in the event of the second phrase, but was virtual in the first. The process continues: the onset of the third event transforms our hearing such that a slow quasi-periodicity begins to emerge, each periodic utterance a little bundle of contrapuntal activity, each an individuated whole but also reflecting the double movement of affective relations that flow between it and the events around it. A fourth periodic iteration occurs, and then the process starts to unravel – a new plane emerges, continuous with the ongoing periodic one but deterritorialising its status as a series of clearly demarked events by dissolving what we were hearing as discrete event-boundaries into a more continuous, fluid utterance. We might describe this as the enactment of a molar periodisation (for example, by hearing in terms of discrete antecedent and consequent segments) simultaneously becoming molecular (becoming-de-periodicised, as those segments unravel into a more continuous flow of sound). One way to interpret this transformation is as what Taylor describes in 'Sound Structure' as an

accumulation. Along with the partial erasure of event-boundaries (at least as far as each contrapuntal bundle counts as a singular event – recall that each is comprised of multiple coextensive linear/timbral events as well), the sonic-temporal space flows out multidirectionally to fill its boundary-silences, and the individual instrumental strata, once intricately intertwined, begin expressing a broader variety of non-overlapping, ever-accumulating temporal gestures. Notice, for example, how in the fifth phrase (:44) trumpet, then oboe, then saxophone play short, quicker utterances in a loosely imitative manner. There is, then, a double movement of speeding up (the quicker imitative gestures) and slowing down (the temporal expansion enacted as once-discrete segments blur into one another).

All of this seems to lead to what might conventionally be called a *theme* (:56) in loose heterophonic unison: a four-note motif that establishes a refrain-centre, the continuation of which, while still conventionally theme-like (and again led by the salient declamation of the oboe), is again already in a process of spilling into its own boundaries. If that four-note motif enacts the establishment of a centre (thus marking a space of comfort or stability for listeners accustomed to hearing in terms of things like motifs and melodies), then like all Deleuzo-Guattarian refrains it is, in the very event of its enactment, grafting a breakaway, becoming-molecular. The unison motif, even in its initial utterance, is not as unequivocal as my cursory description suggests. Each participant's highly individual expressive interpretation queers the normative uniformity expected in unison ensemble playing, bending what is allowable within the expressive language of jazz into aberrant, highly personal and transgressive shapes (see Part IV: 'Coda' below). Lines project out in multiple directions, enacting new strata that fold newly back onto the ongoing collective utterance (namely, Henry Grimes's legato gesture that extends several additional notes beyond the motif), now no longer discretely segmented but engendering a new kind of differentiating process as little improvisations join larger melodic trajectories. There are many times unfolding at this point.

II. Theme – Plain

> The first level or statement of the three an opening field of question,
> how large it ought or ought not to be. From Anacrusis to Plain patterns
> and possibility converge, mountain sides to dry rock beds, a fountain
> spread before prairie, form is possibility; content, quality and change

> growth in addition to direction found … The paths of harmonic and
> melodic light, give architecture sound structures acts creating flight.
>
> Taylor 1966: n.p.

I would like to restate slightly differently what is happening through this anacrusic passage, in order to underscore how radical this extended moment is from the perspective of musical temporality, and to express that radicality in Deleuzo-Guattarian terms (and some concepts that flow from them). The first minute-plus of 'Enter Evening' is a continuous multivalent, manifold becoming. Its identity is in flux, a fluid, non-teleological process that unfolds as temporally and transversally proliferating events assemble in ever new ways, engendering new patterns and possibilities, contents and qualities. Becoming occurs in the middle and is continuous: there is no 'become' in Taylor's emergent soundscape towards which micro-becomings strive.

There are three middles that we should focus on. The first emerges between music and text; in this case specifically between the sounds that comprise 'Enter Evening' and the other tracks on *Unit Structures* and the words that comprise 'Sound Structure'. As should already be evident, there is a becoming-music that flows through the latter, a rhythmification engendered by declamation and little eruptions of assonance and rhyme. Likewise, we discover throughout 'Enter Evening' that Taylor's soundscapes – 'the little imitations, oppositions and inventions constituting an entire realm of subrepresentational matter' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 218) – take on resonances that make sonically manifest the micropolitical implications of the text. Not just the passages in the text that refer to specifically musical processes – for example, where Taylor describes how intervallic structures are manipulated in improvisational practice – but also more abstractly conceptual passages: 'Joint energy disposal in parts of singular feedings'; 'Time strata thru panels joined sequence a continuum (movements) across nerve centers'; 'Rhythm then is existence and existence time, content offers time quantity to shape' (Taylor 1966: n.p.). Taylor is a creator of concepts, operating between discourse (prose) and asignifying expression (music).

The second middle is the spacetime where composition meets improvisation, with the line between the two modes made porous to the extent that it is nearly impossible to tell which is which. There are molar moments, to be sure – the refrain-centre of the theme-motif for one; Taylor's composed melodic strands, prior to enactment in performance, for another – but these serve as loci for different modes of orientation that reinforce the status of the composition–improvisation relation as a lively assemblage, constantly in motion and refiguring itself. Taylor

would provide verbal performance directives to the musicians in his ensemble during long, intensive rehearsals. This included especially pitch information: what notes to play in what order; intervallic 'cells' for improvisational development. He would teach these aurally, eschewing what he perceived as the crippling limits of music notation ('Western notation blocks total absorption in the "action" playing'), singing or playing each part, repeating, ensuring that each gesture is committed to memory and understood in its potential for engendering new 'actions' and new relationalities.[4] Sometimes he would provide note names (G, C-sharp, etc.), thereby freeing each player to craft an individualised melodic contour by taking octave-specificity out of the equation. Everything about Taylor's rehearsal process empowers players to take responsibility for 'the conscious manipulation of known material; each piece is a choice; architecture, particular in grain, the specifics questions-layers are disposed-deposits arrangements, group activity establishing the "Plain"' (Taylor 1966: n.p.). So, while aspects of pitch information would be rigorously determined (composition), performers would have a great deal of latitude in terms of rhythmic expression, macro- and micro-temporality, timbre and amplitude, micro-tuning variability, juxtapositions with other strata and more (improvisation).[5]

The third middle involves time, in two intimately interconnected but starkly heterogeneous dimensions: the time expressed by unfolding musical utterances (both as singular strands and as heterophonic collective enunciations, as described above), and the double movement of a longer temporal arc that both folds into larger historical trajectories (including, we will see, fabulated ones) and refolds those trajectories back into itself. In order to theorise how these temporal dimensions operate in Taylor's music, I would like to orbit around the concept of primitive, nomadic or 'supple' segmentarity that Deleuze and Guattari introduce in their ninth plateau, '1933: Micropolitics and Segmentarity'.

For Deleuze and Guattari,

> [p]rimitive segmentarity is characterised by a polyvocal code based on lineages and their varying situations and relations, and an itinerant territoriality based on local, overlapping divisions. Codes and territories, clan lineages and tribal territorialities, form a fabric of relatively supple segmentarity. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 209)

Several important themes emerge in this brief passage, relevant to how Taylor's music proceeds. Each performative utterance is both an individuating act and a fold back into the collective enunciation, resulting in a 'polyvocal code', a product of assemblages of events

and utterances. Each such event-coupling is both a 'situation' and a 'relation' that engenders new lineages, including new future-oriented trajectories as well as new arrangements of pasts. A relation emerges between heterogeneous, polyvocal codes and processes of itinerant territorialisations such as we experience in the erosion of event-boundaries, how that erosion is engendered by qualitative transformations of different event-categories, and how there is no clear process by which that transformation takes place, nor precise moment in which one can pinpoint when it happens; the transformative process is always just happening. And furthermore, we can consider the ebb and flow of contexts, contents and relations as a kind of supple segmentarity animated by events; for example, the event bundles of the opening anacrusis-gestures, or Taylor's 'piano attacks' that ground certain kinds of temporal relationalities.[6]

Deleuze and Guattari go on to develop a distinction between supple and rigid segmentarities, which function as another in their long list of non-dialectical binary terms: supple aligning alongside smooth, nomadic, rhizomatic, molecular; rigid alongside striated, State, arborescent, molar. Of course, all of these pairs fold complexly into one another, enacting processes of qualitative differentiation rather than opposition, and all are in constant motion: there are elements of rigidity in supple segmentarities and loosenings in rigid ones. Note, however, the way in which Deleuze and Guattari describe the particularly qualitative kinds of molar formations that occur within supple segmentaries: 'roundness but no circle, alignments but no straight lines'.[7] They describe an operative proto-geometry 'in which figures are never separable from the affections befalling them', which begins with movement, gesture, connection and asignification rather than the formal logics of rigid, codified linearities. There is a queer logic at play in Deleuze and Guattari's conception – not of bending norms but of revealing the ephemeralities that precede and are sedimented or *straightened* by their formations – which is crucial for understanding how Taylor's gestures constitute their contexts.[8]

There is also a musical connection that Taylor's ensemble conception sets into play, which has to do with the supple segmentarity of what I call *beat span* (see below) and the way it deterritorialises the nominally isochronous metric grid assumed of most musics, denying metre its name, and therefore its centrality in a sign system. While most jazz stretches musical metre's nominal isochrony, Taylor's supple segmentarity opens onto a radically smooth space where played events relate first of all to one another and then, through those relations,

reterritorialise on a new, supple-segmentary plane. This is a very important notion, since Taylor's innovative approach to temporality marked a transformative historical moment in Afro-diasporic musical expression. Ekkehard Jost describes this as a deliberate eschewal of metre as an organising principle at all, in favour of a propulsive combination of 'time, intensity and pitch, thereby creating a new musical quality, *energy*' that 'creates motion, or results from motion' (Jost 1994: 69).[9] Throughout his early career, Taylor struggled in particular to find a drummer able to express this altogether new conception of musical time. He found what he needed first in Sunny Murray, and then again with Andrew Cyrille, the drummer on *Unit Structures*. Both Murray and Cyrille were able to create the kinds of forward-directed propulsions of musical energy Taylor needed, without falling back into an entrainable metric structure or 'groove'.[10] We can think of the ebbs and flows of ocean waves, their periodicities continuous but always different in both quantitative and qualitative terms: 'it is the difference that is rhythmic, not the repetition, which nevertheless produces it' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 314). It is hard to overemphasise how radical this was in the early to mid-1960s, since Murray's and Cyrille's innovations (along with those of a handful of contemporaries, including Rashied Ali, Milford Graves and Steve McCall) are now part of every progressive jazz drummer's toolkit.

Taylor's loosening of metric/rhythmic molarity in favour of a radically supple time-reckoning is strategic. It amplifies and exaggerates the movement away from rigid geometries within which measures, beats and subdivisions can be quantified and fixed that is a hallmark of minor musics everywhere. Take jazz, for example, which as a minor music emphasises a crucial double movement. First, jazz has always been a supple rhythmic art – we can easily hear this in Louis Armstrong's or Charlie Parker's or the Count Basie Orchestra's extreme temporal fluidity. Jazz's swing feel operates as a becoming-destratified of the grid of a major metric language. This is precisely Deleuze and Guattari's becoming-rhythmic of metre: 'there is nothing less rhythmic than a military march'.[11] The destratification of the metric grid takes on an important micropolitical resonance in Afro-diasporic expression, amounting to a micropolitical anexactitude that destabilises existing, majoritarian regimes of signs. This underlies, for example, Charles Mingus's famous depiction of how, in the progressive jazz he championed, the beat's performative spaciousness or *roundness* (note the connection to Deleuze and Guattari's characterisation above) functions as a catalyst for expressive freedom (Mingus 1971: 251–2).

Fred Moten (2017) develops Mingus's idea as a provocatively pan-diasporic phenomenon, describing the swing-concept as 'the irruption of [an] interior temporal alterity' (98) and an 'originary displacement' (108) that draws together diverse diasporic practices on a common micropolitical plane.

The second reason jazz's time-reckoning is particularly useful for understanding the double movements everywhere in Deleuze and Guattari is that jazz, in its very minoritarianism, is ever in a process of folding back into *a* logic, a molarisation, a State apparatus, a sign system. Jazz does this to itself via a logic of inclusion and exclusion that has determined, from perspectives of syntax and 'feel' within different historical periods and stylistic contexts, what does or does not get to count as jazz.[12] Taylor's music has been and remains systematically excluded from this State account (Spellman 2004: 13–14). As a minor gesture even within the already minoritarian space of jazz, Taylor's music at every moment marks a cut that actualises virtual possibilities that jazz's particular brand of micropolitical expression had ignored or supressed. As such, Taylor's ensemble enunciations function as queering-machines, coupling with potential futures to open new expressive conjunctions not possible within existing logics. This is what Moten seems to be getting at in his engagement with Taylor, for example his characterisation of the latter's cross-modal utterances (between music, poetry and dance):

> Performance, ritual and event are of the idea of the idiom, of the 'anarchic principles' that open the unrepresentable performance of Taylor's phrasing … Let Taylor's 'musicked' speech and illegible words resonate and give some attention to their broken grammar, the aural rewriting of grammatical rule that is not simply arbitrary but a function of the elusive content he would convey.[13]

It also describes the utopian Afrofuturist project, such that one can be defined – the queer bodies that comprise Octavia Butler's and Sun Ra's work in particular enact proliferating temporal folds that open pathways to newly imagined (and yet-to-be-imagined) futures.[14]

I would also like to put an Afrofuturist spin on the words/concepts 'primitive' and 'tribal' (and elsewhere in Deleuze and Guattari, 'savage'), which flows from a fantastical middle-passage evocation in 'Sound Structure', at once horrific and empowering:

> Cushitic scalps obeisance to fact reminds are tonic to gin, a kind Berger hebraic stew. East glances in sand-cars nudging pores producing juice, a future seed. Rush on Bantu Zulu with eagle nuts spread wise eyes knowledge

skin recently dyed. A clue American Masai, Sudanese stripe flag fella river too winding nihilistic salute, join the grog in winter's bitter froth, chosen land where Shari Nile moments are but hues on invisible ledges, rule; inform the region, announce love to its clay like reptilian landscape, my zebra neck stasis, a jewel among vine where fragrant roots steady stroll hummin' stretched skin invisionary water falls. . . .Yoruba memoir other mesh in voices mother tongue at bridge scattering Black. (Taylor 1966: n.p.)

Taylor's text dances around the liberatory micropolitical moment where past and future assemble in the active present of an improvised Afro-diasporic utterance. A different kind of periodicity emerges in this dream-like sequence, in which nomadic dispersions – Cush, Berger, Bantu, Zulu, Masai, Sudan, Shari, Yoruba – fold back to remap the land, to mark the body, to destratify history. 'The great nomad hunter follows the flows, exhausts them in place, and moves on with them to another place' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 148). Afrofuturism fabulates both time and space: this is probably its most important liberatory move. Consider for example the opening moments of Sun Ra's *Space is the Place*, where its protagonist muses about teleporting Black people from Earth to a far distant utopian planet, alongside his radical dis-identification from State historical narratives animated by careful engagement with contemporaneous retellings of history that relocate ancient African civilisations at the centre of human progress.[15] Taylor too fabulates a mythical pan-African genealogy. He likewise reterritorialises the histories of both jazz and mid-century high (musical) modernism – from all three of these perspectives Taylor's music enacts ruptures that open onto new ranges of interpretive possibilities. We hear this in his rare but critically insightful engagements with standard jazz repertoire, from his rhapsodic solo recording of Cole Porter's 'You'd Be So Nice to Come Home To' to ensemble versions of Ellington's 'Jumpin' Punkins', Haggart and Burke's 'What's New', Monk's 'Bemsha Swing', and several more, each of which operates via manifold processes of de- and reterritorialisation by performatively re-envisioning concepts of rhythmic impetus, harmonic density, formal design, piano touch, ensemble roles and more.[16] It is in the very gap between Taylor's syntax and those of earlier jazz, musical modernism and African musical practices that he enacts a series of ruptures with even his own fabulated pasts, but at the same time folds continually back into them. Key here are two brief passages from 'Sound Structures' that channel Billie Holiday and Bud Powell respectively, transforming each into a conduit through which a stunning proliferation of pasts and futures flow. In reverse order: 'Where are you Bud? . . . Lightning . . . now a

lone rain falling thru doors empty of room – Jazz Naked Fire Gesture, Dancing protoplasm Absorbs.'[17] Lightning, fire, gesture: the catalysts of Heraclitus's becoming. Doors without rooms: every entry a new opening that destratifies notions of fixed spaces. Bodies dancing, absorption: there is no affect without bodies, without movement, without actual or virtual dance.

I quote the next passage at greater length, to emphasise the proliferating line of thought that Billie Holiday suddenly channels.

> As gesture Jazz became: Billie's right arm bent at breast moving as light touch. Last moments, late father no use to sit and sigh the pastors have left us gone home to die. End to slave trade in sweet meats and rum. Larger audience means incidentals to spit mirage cracked virgin, a down side up, snikker to whine.
>
> The way – cleansed pearl – many nights passed in isolation darkly what works similar effort. The points of view not to be considered – finally an area of action is created logic in adjustment-end material accumulation dottering fidelity to family breeding class/unaccountable time unseen action resultant produce: overlay reaction 2nd murmurs shape/hunger satiated on plane of absolute; self universal compass/language of silent kings-embodiment-ancestral region hero's plain, a 'Gilgamesh' to wine lilacs mania on either side. As high relief fancied time or magic stuck winds to play and enscribe tzuringas, moan-to meaning, hariecha we propogate/foreign images converge upon consciousness: mind converses/with additional reason the mind color gives/overruled political chastisement moments appeased to survive (in)/life of choice within esthetic curve. Creative energy force = swing motor reaction exchanged/fused pulse expands measured activity relating series of events. Explosive dynamics filter graduated tempi/a molecular condition of bearing/special levels qualitatively diverse and special/emerging event holds traditional recording men's actions in heat life variable knit accord history silent a language in balance, direction. (Taylor 1966: n.p.)

Taylor's jazz is gestural, as is Holiday's. Like all music, jazz is primarily about sound, but sounds are produced by bodies in affective relations (and also contribute to the production of those bodies); it is no accident that jazz fandom, journalism and scholarship have focused so intensely on the personae involved – the lives and actions and corporeal materiality of jazz musicians beyond the sounds that comprise their recordings. Black bodies, queer bodies, undercommons bodies, body-instrument assemblages. In this passage a physical gesture, the light touch of Holiday's bent arm, enacts a 'madeleine' moment for Taylor, engendering lines of flight to complex remappings of histories and filiations and doubled and tripled meanings that flow through the

creatively punctuated text. What makes this passage music-analytically significant is how those lines double back to the music itself, culminating in one of the most revealing passages for understanding Taylor's music: first, as alluded to above, Taylor exchanges *reactive* swing for an *active*, expansive 'fused' pulse that begins with events. Second, those emergent events express their genealogies while at the same time forging ('heating') new molecularisations. And third, transversal connections are drawn between sonic parameters that are generally thought of as discrete, for example loudness/amplitude and time ('dynamics' in musical discourse refers to loudness).

In both music and text, Taylor eschews a molar conception of musical time; for example, 'Time seen not as beats to be measured after academy's podium angle' (Taylor 1966: n.p.).[18] One way he does this, again, is to fabulate connections to real or imagined ancient practices, as in the litany of African references we experienced above. What is extraordinary about this move is how little Taylor's music sounds like what we think we know about these antecedents. It is, for example, somewhat difficult to square Taylor's gestural energy with what we know about, say, Yoruba music, at least to the extent that we understand historical antecedents to resonate in contemporary practices. The nascent discipline of evolutionary musicology attempts this detective work, and while it (smartly) stops short of trying to reconstruct ancestral musical practices, it does make fairly plausible suggestions about how certain musical features developed across disparate but historically, geographically and politically connected practices, for example in terms of similar underlying morphological features.[19] Most important for the current project is to understand a few of those shared characteristics, in order to recognise how, to all appearances, Taylor's music enacts a radical break – but then to reterritorialise that recognition by rethinking Taylor's conception of rhythmic intensity as a logical extrapolation of the essential rhythmic elasticity of Afro-diasporic music-temporal practices.[20] Taylor's practice queers the dominant codes that have conventionally (if provisionally) defined temporal processes in Afro-diasporic musics. How so? Because Taylor performs his differentiating gestures; that is, difference is inscribed through those performative acts, involving Taylor's own body and the way it intra-acts with the piano, with the physical space of the performance, and with his co-creators – it is important to watch Taylor in action in order to truly understand the radical nature of what he is doing. Because he seeks – he *needs* – a community of like-minded peers, themselves nomadic outsiders working on the periphery of State recognition. Because his radical distensions of

the already metrically deterritorialised nature of Afro-diasporic temporal processes has an exaggerated camp quality that is at once playful and deeply political. (This camp exaggeration is also prominent in Taylor's highly affected speaking voice.[21]) This is what I mean by rethinking what Taylor is doing rhythmically as an extrapolation – an intensification to an nth degree – of jazz's rhythmic elasticity.

There are five features shared across a great many African and Afro-diasporic musical practices that feature importantly in this analysis: (1) continuously repeating cycles, each iteration of which we may characterise as a wave: an away-from/back-to motion that refigures what is often characterised in static, representational terms as movement;[22] (2) an asymmetrical 'timeline', which may be actually, materially sounded or virtually present, that organises and partially constrains performative possibilities; (3) a number of performed strata that interweave to create the total musical fabric – what Meki Nzewi (1997: 49) calls the 'ensemble thematic cycle', which is 'distilled from all the ensemble lines as the identifying tune/statement/pattern of a piece'; (4) song and/or dance (usually both), the former adding a layer of linearity to the mostly cyclic space, the latter opening transversal lines into multiple performative dimensions (sound → space); and (5) improvisation, which unfolds in many forms depending on genre and other considerations, but which problematises the idea that there is an essential form to any given performance strata: improvisation is always already part of the expressive unfolding of the music.

Example 1 is a visual representation of a sample cycle, from the Afro-Cuban rumba *guaguancó*, rendered in a modified 'Western' music notation. It is not important to be able to read the notation fluently – the important things to know are that the music flows from left to right and then loops back around to begin again, that each bit of orthography represents the onset of a sounded event, and that the notation shows the temporal co-occurrence of various events, as shown by their vertical alignments. These three points, though, are pseudo-fictions; heuristics. It is in the gap between the heuristic version and the lively unfolding of musical practice that the connection to Cecil Taylor becomes evident, and also, we'll see, how the three themes suggested in the title of this essay are enacted in Taylor's music. The gap is quite literal: what are shown in the heuristic model as simultaneous events turn out, in practice, to be what I call 'near-simultaneities' (Stover 2009) – some a bit early, some later, within a loose framework of micro-culturally agreed-upon tolerance. In jazz this is called *swing*, in Brazilian music *balanço*, in Cuban music *filin*. Anne Danielsen describes the stretched temporal

Example 1. Basic performance strata in rumba guaguancó.

spaces that result from near-simultaneous event onsets as *beat bins* (Danielsen 2010); I refer to them as *beat spans* to emphasise a kind of doubled temporal ontology that refers both to the malleable temporality of event onsets and the polymetric constraints that legislate how far they may slide and still be considered part of that event-space (Stover 2009).[23] And of course all of these terms/concepts resonate with the proto-geometry of supple segmentarity.

Taylor's conception of rhythmic energy queers the notion of stretchable musical time by eliminating the nominal, (hetero)normative heuristic grid – the isochronous or semi-isochronous metric stratum – while retaining, elevating and transforming the function of the temporally extended, malleable event. Events, for Taylor, are accumulative: each 'an area of action-logic in adjustment-end material accumulation' (Taylor 1966: n.p.). As a locus of action, the event assembles multiple strata into bundles of sonorous activity; each act of assembling an 'adjustment-end' that folds into the next accumulative stage.[24] This is precisely what I was describing in the first section of this essay: each new collective utterance-event in the opening moment of 'Enter Evening' enacts a new assemblage with the totality of what

preceded it, thereby opening onto new logics that accumulate alongside and newly inflect existing ones. The status of Taylor's time-conception, then, begins with these accumulative spacetimes, extending the notion of malleable temporal strata (beat spans) to larger, even more temporally fluid ebbs and flows. In this way, Taylor's time-conception can be seen not as an ontological break or rupture with a determined past, but as a process of deterritorialisation that continuously refigures that past in terms of new possibilities. Taylor's ensemble event-bundles, as we experienced in the anacrusis, are Deleuzo-Guattarian refrains, each a differentiating, differenciated event, a repetition of difference, a proto-geometry, a becoming, an assemblage.

III. Area

> Area illustrating prime power control. Each instrument has strata: timbre, temperament; internal dialogue mirror turns: player to nerve ends, motivation 'how to' resultant Unit flow.
>
> Taylor 1966: n.p.

From the anacrusis–theme a freely improvised quintet emerges: Taylor's piano a pointillistic polyphonic field, Grimes's bass projecting harmonic-melodic implications from the lowest register, Cyrille playing barely audible but affectively present textures on bells and cymbals, Silva's bass a shimmering altissimo at the very highest end of the strings, Gale's muted trumpet carving angular yet lyrical melodic utterances through the ensemble texture. Taylor and Grimes lessen their roles until they drop out entirely; Grimes's final downward-bent note (3:59) seems emphatically to hand things off to Silva and Gale. But prior to this hand-off, the duo had already begun to effect a sonorous transformation. At 3:50, Gale abandons his melodic figuration (which until that moment had been saliently connected to earlier motivic material) to conjoin with a precarious, trembling cascading figure Silva had begun seconds earlier. This seems to signal Grimes's hand-off, in the event of the enactment of a new plane, a new transversal assemblage as altissimo bass and muted trumpet, a panoply of shimmering harmonics, each takes on the timbral and gestural characteristics of the other.

In other words, it is not only the melodic shape of his improvised gesture, but also Gale's timbre that melds into that of Silva's bowed bass, and vice versa. Their sinuous melodic lines weave complexly into one another, behaving less like counterpoint and more like a single compound texture, a group-subject, an unfolding of affective intensities.

Overlapping pinched, upward-directed wedges of sound. A repeated cascading trumpet tremble, from which emerges an intense, slowly rising bass tremolo that proceeds to briefly ground a series of sharp trumpet jabs, their repetitions following the contour of the rising bass. The 'area' or plane they produce is, in one hearing, utterly disconnected from earlier thematic material, but it emerges through a gradual process of differentiation rather than rupture – a perspectival shift rather than a development or variation in a traditional sense – and as such it still throws lines back to its past, which remains virtually present, ready to be reactivated at any time (and which happens, in due time). This is an important point: improvisational utterances come together as heterogeneous assemblages: they enter into associations but they do not form a whole. There is no point at which one might say they *have assembled*. The aim of Taylor's music is not to coalesce into a whole, into a 'work': this is an aesthetic context utterly alien to Taylor's mode of production, which proceeds as series of intensities, transversal flows and energy emanating from bodies. 'Would then define the pelvis as cathartic region prime undulation, ultimate communion, internal while life is becoming.' The bodily nature of all of this cannot be overstated: for Taylor, the concert stage and the late-night disco are commensurably productive spaces, and in both spaces it is Taylor's own queer body that functions as the productive nexus: 'the soundtouch of an aberrant cruise inside the straight line, which uninstalls directness in interior paramouric curve or cave or cant' (Moten 2017: 177). By turning from the material specificity of discrete pitch-events and entrainable metric systems, toward gesture and eventful rhythm, Taylor enacts a desiring machine, each repetition of which sets flows into motion that *produce new objects*.

IV. Coda

> The word 'queer' opens beauty's floodgates, enables a serious consideration of aesthetics. We are not the enemies of beauty. We want to speak, at last, about the beautiful.
> Kostenbaum 2006: 3

> Nefertiti, the beautiful one has come.
> Taylor [1962] 1997: n.p.

A loosely heterophonic unison rising line, culminating on an intense high sustained tone, or, better, bundle of individuated tone-productions assembling into a richly complex cluster, micro-deviations rubbing

against one another producing resultant beats, additional noises – the scratch of a bow, the spit on a reed, the complex inharmonicity of a sustained cymbal; also Taylor's gently subsiding arpeggios and Silva's microtonal melodic inflections – impinging on the tone-event, a heterogeneous collective enunciation identified by its self-difference. This is how 'Enter Evening' ends, as a fold into a theme-like utterance that extends the earlier theme-motif in a kind of denouement.

Queer space is surely a place where 'patterns and possibility converge'. Patterns in the sense of the known – not just archetypes and behaviour expectations but functions and ontological becomings. Territorial assemblages, refrains, repetitions – not the static repetition of fixed identity but the supple repetition of the ever new. Possibilities in terms of opening onto new expressions: every territorial assemblage, in the very event of its enactment, a process of deterritorialisation that refolds what has been to engender new, singular potentialities.

The denouement of 'Enter Evening' queers notions of aesthetic beauty, ensemble dynamic, and sonorous materiality. It delegitimises – it dis-identifies with – accepted Western notions of beauty and purity, for example of instrumental tone. Or rather, it offers new modes of legitimisation and new practices of identification. It summarises what throughout the performance (and throughout Taylor's work) amounts to new modes of micropolitical action: new relationalities, new connections, new pathways to new structurings. It does all this through the specific action of assembling as a collective utterance, at once centring in on itself and drawing lines of flight to other sonic possibilities, other patterns. But there is another assemblage taking place concurrently, or, rather, a constellation of assemblage-actions as each musicking body expresses what Suzanne Cusick (2006) would call a queer relationship with their instrument. For Cusick this is a potential, provisional relationship that stems from a commitment to thinking about musical experience (as a performer or listener) in erotic terms, where music is a sensual partner with which one gets erotically entangled, with all of the implications for pleasure, pain and power that can result. One's relationship with a musical instrument can be considered in similarly erotic terms, and the kinds of relationships that involve opening onto new possibilities – to seeing what *else* one can do in conjunction with one's instrument outside the bounds of normative logics of doing – should absolutely be described as queer if we are to take seriously the possibility that this kind of relational framework is a fruitful image of thought.[25] The musicians in Taylor's ensemble are committed to instrumental relationalities that begin with this 'what else?'

question in order to imagine ever new creative modes of expressive sound production.

Furthermore, beyond delegitimising aesthetic standards, Taylor's group-utterances relegitimise a vital concept in early jazz, which is a basic premise of musical heterogeneity, constantly in danger of being swept up in the molarising force of standardising practices in the ensuing decades. How is this queer? Because in its originary practices there was no standard conception of what 'jazz' was or meant, there was only 'a throng of dialects, patois, slangs, and specialised languages' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 7). Somewhere along the way a series of binarising operations was set into motion, determining those logics of inclusion and exclusion I alluded to above. To turn to the collective enunciation is to re-emphasise the 'stuttering effects' of 'a "discordant harmony" . . . a becoming-in-musicality that produces an endlessly improvised, indefinite "we"' (Nigianni 2009: 8). So, to reclaim jazz as a radically pluralistic expression is first of all to eschew the binary structure that determines what is or is not jazz, in a way that should remind us of Foucault's important points about the modern invention of gender and sexuality binaries. Now, to be fair, the stakes are much lower when we are discussing types of musical practices and labels for genre inclusion rather than gender and sexuality categories with real personal and political ramifications, but when we fold in the fact that jazz is to a very large extent an African American expression, intimately linked with an activist political subalternity, the question of what it means to queer jazz's identity becomes significantly more poignant. To reiterate another point I made above, jazz is a minoritarian practice in Deleuze and Guattari's sense: it begins as 'that which a minority constructs within a majority language', its actions are framed as political (proscribing individual concern in favour of the social), and in its enactment 'everything takes on a collective value' (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 16–19). It is a relatively easy leap to replace the hegemonic Czech of Kafka's Prague with the hegemonic harmonic, rhythmic and formal process of the Western tonal music tradition, and 'the German language of Prague as it is and in its very poverty' with the blues-based musical discourse that links jazz musicians rhizomatically and synchronously to New Orleans, the Mississippi delta and West Africa. Taylor's group utterances reiterate and reclaim the power of a heterogeneous minoritarianism in each gesture.

'Enter Evening' unfolds a mostly non-linear path, with little strands of linearities opening onto potentialities that may or may not be taken up:

motifs, gestures, (supple) segments. Each little strand is a becoming-actual that immediately folds back into the virtual. Multiple strands enact heterogeneous conjunctions, some of which develop into partial individuations (for example, Silva and Gale's bass/trumpet assemblage), some of which flit away into a lively past, virtually colouring new expressions even if not actively, actually reiterated. The sonic materiality of the music is very far from its only reality; indeed, one of the most important takeaways is understanding the degree to which real and fabulated arrays of pasts and openings onto virtual futures are expressed in multiple ongoing living presents. These are political expressions, in many registers: the micropoliticality of social interaction foregrounded by Taylor's concepts of ensemble gesture, transversal conjunction, rhythmic malleability, polysemic expression and more; the macropoliticality of black improvised music as minor gesture; the metapoliticality involved in queering histories, categories, boundaries and identities in processes of becoming and assembling.

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Notes

1. It is not clear what 'TPT' refers to.
2. On Taylor's *Unit Structures*. There are two versions of 'Enter Evening' on the album; all references here are to the first take, with the full title 'Enter Evening (Soft Line Structure)'. A recording is easily available through the usual digital sources: I strongly encourage listening in conjunction with reading this essay.
3. I develop this aspect of Deleuze's second synthesis of time in Stover 2017. See also Deleuze 1994: 81–5.
4. The most comprehensive published account of Taylor's rehearsal process is Goodheart 1996. See also Jost 1994 and Spellman 2004: 44–5. While I never had the opportunity to play with Taylor, I recently performed his music in a large ensemble directed by Karen Borca, a decades-long collaborator of Taylor's who strictly maintains his rehearsal approach.
5. See Goodheart 1996: 39–41.
6. We might also note how Taylor's use of punctuation (or lack thereof) in his verbal streams forms a kind of supple segmentarity, resulting in an open proliferation of possible meanings.
7. Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 212. They return to this concept on the Nomadology/ War Machine plateau: 'The circle is an organic, ideal, fixed essence, but roundness is a vague and fluent essence … A theorematic figure is a fixed essence, but its transformations, distortions, ablations, and augmentations, all of its variations, form problematic figures that are vague yet rigorous …' (367).

8. This concept of queer ephemerality draws upon José Esteban Muñoz's work; see Muñoz 1996.
9. See also Kaja Draksler's insightful commentary in Draksler 2013: 19–20.
10. See Jost 1994, in which the author describes Taylor's ebbs and flows as 'urgent, dynamic chains of impulses' (72) and recounts Taylor's challenging early-career search for an appropriate drummer.
11. Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 313. In their astute eschewal of rhythm as metre or cadence, 'the tom-tom is not 1-2, the waltz is not 1-2-3, music is not binary or ternary, but rather forty-seven basic meters, as in Turkish music', they don't go quite far enough, since those forty-seven meters still refer back to fixed archetypes rather than the supple segmentary of a nomad geometry with infinite qualitative shadings.
12. I describe this in detail in Stover 2020.
13. Moten 2003: 43–4. See also Moten's essay 'Amuse-bouche', in *Black and Blur* (Moten 2017: 174–83), for a compelling virtual encounter between Taylor and Samuel Delany.
14. On Butler's conception of alternative sexual modes, see Bogue 2011. On Sun Ra's queer bodies, see Stüttgen 2014.
15. Sun Ra 2003. For a concise account of Sun Ra's engagement with radical African histories, see Swiboda 2007: 93–106.
16. Each of these songs is part of an extended canon that jazz musicians call 'standards', which serve as contexts for collective jazz improvisation and with which, according to State structures, musicians are expected to be fluent. Taylor's recording of 'You'd Be So Nice to Come Home To' is from *Jazz Advance*, his first album, released in 1957.
17. Taylor, 'Sound Structure', n.p.; ellipses in original.
18. This critical passage continues, effecting transversal lines between the rigidity of metric music-reckoning, what Taylor perceives as ballet's disconnectedness from the vital bodily center (and, later, from the nurturing earth), and an inertia that arrests the forward flow of vital life. 'The classic order, stone churches with pillars poised, daggers ripping skies, castrati robed in fever pitch, stuff the stale sacrament, bloodless meat, for the fastidious eye … only found sterility in squares/never to curl limbs in reaction to soundless bottoms; ballet is the studied manipulation of extremities, a calesthenic procedure away from body center. Stillness advised by death and a peace turned backward.'
19. See Touissant 2003 for one interesting if not altogether convincing example.
20. See Stover 2009 for more on this last concept.
21. See, for example, Funkhouser 2019.
22. See Zuckerkandl 1956: 168.
23. Another way to make this last point is to show how, within a music-making practice like, say, swing-based jazz, a played event might stretch a beat span by 'laying back' (an insider term for playing behind a nominal beat) expressively, but there is a point – never unequivocally defined – where it is simply late and therefore 'wrong'.
24. I make a similar accumulative claim about Sun Ra's relation to his pasts and futures in Stover 2018, in which I draw upon Octavia Butler's alien Oankali 'acquisitive' ontology.
25. I am particularly interested in the political implications of thinking of jazz's history as a sedimentation into a series of cis/heteronormative practices that certain avant-garde strands, Taylor's included, have intentionally disidentified with.

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Responsibility before the World: Cinema, Perspectivism and a Nonhuman Ethics of Individuation

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Abstract

The recent 'nonhuman turn' in the theoretical humanities and social sciences has highlighted the need to develop more ontological modes of theorising the ethical 'responsibility' of the human in its relational encounters with nonhuman bodies and materialities. However, there is a lingering sense in this literature that such an ethics remains centred on a transcendent subject that would pre-exist the encounters on which it is called to respond. In this essay, I explore how Gilles Deleuze's philosophy offers potential opening for a more ontogenetic thinking of a 'nonhuman ethics'. Specifically, I focus on how his theory of 'individuation' – conceived as a creative event of emergence in response to immanent ontological problems – informs his rethinking of ethics beyond the subject, opening thought to nonhuman forces and relations. I argue that if cinema becomes a focus of Deleuze's ethical discussions in his later work it is because the images and signs it produces are expressive of these nonhuman forces and processes of individuation, generating modes of perception and duration without ontological mooring in the human subject. Through a discussion of Verena Paravel and Lucien Castaing-Taylor's experimental film – *Leviathan* (2012) – I explore how the cinematic encounter dramatises different ethical worlds in which a multiplicity of nonhuman 'points of view' coexist without being reduced to a hierarchical or orienting centre that would unify and identify them. To conclude, I suggest that it is through the lens of an ethics of individuation that we can grasp the different sense of

'responsibility' alive in Deleuze's philosophy, one oriented not to the terms of the already-existing but rather to the nonhuman potential of what might yet come into being.

Keywords: cinema, ethics, individuation, nonhuman, perspectivism, responsibility, Sensory Ethnography Lab

> The very eye that opened up a world to the human species, has also allowed the human species to fold the world around its own, increasingly myopic, point of view.
>
> Colebrook 2014: 22

In a recent edited collection, Richard Grusin (2015) argues that the defining feature of the theoretical humanities and social sciences since the turn of the millennium has been the attempt to decentre the human in favour of a thought of 'the nonhuman'. An impressive array of theoretical formations (including new materialisms, affect theory, speculative realism, assemblage theory) have emerged on the intellectual landscape in recent years, each seeking to develop a new style of thought better positioned to grasp the active role that material forces and nonhuman agencies play in constituting our social and ethical relations. This current vogue for the 'nonhuman' in the social sciences and humanities, as several authors have highlighted, is by no means coincidental (Dewsbury 2012; Colebrook 2016; Connolly 2017). What the 'nonhuman turn' signals is the growing recognition that all of the urgent problems we face in the twenty-first century – climate change, mass extinctions, war – 'entail engagement with nonhumans' (Grusin 2015: vii). These contemporary realities have forced us to confront the inadequacies of our traditional images of thought, showing how the exceptionalist framing of the human as a transcendent and sovereign entity to which we remain bound in our thought and our ethics is precisely part of the problem. Indeed, and as Susan Ruddick (2017: 119) has argued, 'the ecological crisis is also an ethical crisis', one that urgently demands we rethink some of the central *ontological* presumptions and categories that underpin our ethical philosophies. What unifies the otherwise disparate strands of the nonhuman turn is therefore the commitment to challenging the dogmas of Kantian-inspired moral philosophy grounded in the purported freedom and will of a transcendent 'I', and the elaboration instead of a more ontologically derived ethics that pushes beyond the sensibilities and judgements of human subjects.

The central argument of this article is that to grasp the full significance of the problem that the nonhuman poses for ethical thought requires a shift from an ontological to a more *ontogenetic* terrain of thinking. When conceived as an 'ontological' problem, the 'shock' of the nonhuman becomes simply a matter of extending the empirical reach of our existing frameworks to *include* those beings (objects, animals, things) usually excluded from it. This approach can be seen, for example, in actor-network theory's emphasis on worldly entanglements as well as in certain less rigorous strands of Deleuzian-inspired assemblage theory (see Buchanan 2015 for a critical discussion). It is also a central logic of much contemporary discussion around the 'more-than-human' (Lorimer 2013). The additive logic of the 'more-than-human' (the human *plus* everything else) is insufficient as it tends to leave other key distinctions intact (language, consciousness, meaning), thereby dodging the real challenge that the nonhuman encounter presents to our categories of thought (Todd and Hynes 2017). For the most part, and as Kathrin Thiele (2014: 209) writes, 'the practice of inclusion only re-affirms the "Great Divides" that it aims to undo by merely adding, without transforming, the "ground" itself'. This has led Brian Massumi (2014) to make an important distinction between two different logics of 'inclusion'. On the one hand, a traditional and representational logic of 'exclusive inclusion', which conceives the nonhuman (at least initially) as external to and separate from the human as a pre-given entity (Massumi 2014: 4). And on the other, a more ontogenetic logic of 'mutual inclusion', which raises the question of the immanence of the nonhuman to all the transformative vicissitudes of the human. Here, the ethical significance of the nonhuman is sited at the level of ontogenetic becomings rather than individuated beings: in the pre-individual forces and relations that constitute 'the dephased heart of every individuation, human or otherwise' (Massumi 2009: 37).

One area through which we can grasp the stakes of a more ontogenetic mode of ethical theorising is in relation to the question of *responsibility*. Several authors have recently highlighted the anthropocentrism of conventional discourses of responsibility based on an ethics of correct conduct and imagined as an attribute of a pre-existing subject. Maria Hynes (2013) develops this argument through her critique of the reimagining of ethical responsibility in recent 'posthumanist' literature, which, largely following the philosophies of Jacques Derrida and Emmanuel Levinas, thinks responsibility in terms of an infinite demand that the ethical encounter places on 'us' as subjects (Critchley 2008; Wolfe 2010). Here, Hynes takes specific aim at what she claims is the

'still-too-humanist assumption that responsibility issues from the ethical subject, where this subject would function as a transcendental unity that pre-exists the events on which it is called to respond' (2013: 1935). This sense of responsibility sustains a clichéd image of thought in which ethics is reduced to a secondary exercise of subjective reflection on already determined situations, rather than the genuinely transformative event for thinking that encounters with the nonhuman would seem to imply.

It is with this challenge of shifting the scene of ethical thoughts towards an ontogenetic terrain in mind that I argue we can locate the productivity of an encounter with the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze. In developing this argument, I want to distance him from both 'more-than-human' (Lorimer 2013) and 'posthuman' (Braidotti 2013) modes of ethical theorising to which he is sometimes attached, which in their tendencies towards, respectively, additive inclusion and eschatology still retain a certain anthropocentrism. What Deleuze offers us instead is a more radically *nonhuman* ethics. While we often perceive the prefix 'non-' as something negative, the concept of the 'nonhuman' is not about negation or rejection (i.e. it is not 'anti-human'). In the same way that the 'non-' in Deleuze and Guattari's (1994) discussion of 'non-philosophy' is not a rejection of philosophy but about its expansion and transformation through an encounter with different terrains of thought (art, science, and so on), so the 'non-human' is about an enhanced sensitivity in thinking to the immanent forces and transindividual processes that precede and exceed the human subject. If Deleuze is the figure in the history of philosophy who goes furthest in shifting ethics to a more ontogenetic and nonhuman terrain (Ansell-Pearson 1997), it is because of his insistence that any ethical thinking worth its salt should concern *individuations* rather than individuals.[1] Ethical thought, for Deleuze, is not simply about the application of pre-existing judgements and transcendent values to recognised situations (a procedure that he argues defines a distinctly 'moral' image of thought) but is instead a properly inventive praxis that facilitates the production of new and unforeseen modes of existence (Deleuze 1997: 135).

I argue that it is in terms of this intimate connection between ethics and processes of individuation that we may understand the significance that Deleuze (1995, 2005a, 2005b) affords to cinema in his later philosophy. What Deleuze most admired in cinema was its capacity to offer us a different sense of *what it means to think*. Cinema does not merely seek to approximate or mimic human thought (Epstein 2014). It is instead what Deleuze terms a *spiritual automaton* – 'an autonomous thinking machine' – generative of its own singular logics and styles of

thought which it thinks through the images and signs it produces (Clarke and Doel 2016: 4). It is in the cinematic encounter that he believes we encounter the conditions for a genuinely *nonhuman* mode of thought. It achieves this through a radical decentring of distinctly human perception, expressing *nonhuman points of view* composed of 'forces and durations that are inferior or superior to our own' (Deleuze 1988: 28). The cinematic image discovers its ethical function in the multiplication of 'points of view' that are no longer grounded by the phenomenological subject, but which instead preside over the individuation of more intense modes of thinking, feeling and relating (Deleuze 2005a).

To explore the nonhuman ethical potential of cinema, this essay turns to an encounter with the film *Leviathan* (2012), directed by Verena Paravel and Lucien Castaing-Taylor of the Harvard Sensory Ethnography Lab. I argue that *Leviathan*'s radically a-centred and nonhuman aesthetic helps dramatise a very different image of a Deleuzian ethics to that which we are accustomed, and one that pushes beyond some of the tendencies of conventional responses to the nonhuman identified above. First, a shift from a logic of inclusion – encapsulated within Deleuzian-inspired strands of new materialism as a joyful ethics of entanglement and connectivity that maintains molar differences (Culp 2016: 2) – towards a *perspectivist logic of indiscernibility*. Contrary to interpretations we commonly find in the Deleuzian literature, becoming-indiscernible is *not* about the dissolution of everything into a cosmic flow that cancels out difference (a 'becoming-nothing') (Hallward 2006). Reaching a zone of indiscernibility is rather 'where differences come actively together' in ways that intensify and transform each other in a process of constant variation (Massumi 2014: 6). Second, I argue this becoming-indiscernible of human and nonhuman points of view in cinema also opens to a very different sense of ethical responsibility: one oriented not simply to the terms of what already exists, but rather to the nonhuman potential of what might yet come into being. Turning by way of conclusion to the distinction Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 1994) make between 'responsibility *for*' and 'responsibility *before*' the world, I highlight how ethical responsibility is recast in their thought as a *transindividual* problem (rather than an individualised matter of the actions or thoughts of a distinct and individuated [human] subject), one which concerns how bodies might harness and reorient the pre-individual forces comprising different milieus towards the individuation of new ethical modes of relation and becoming.

I. Deleuze and the Nonhuman: Ethics, Cinema, Perspectivism

Perhaps the defining feature of Deleuze's encounter with the question of ethics, scattered throughout his corpus, is his attempt to restore a sense of inventiveness to the practice of ethical thinking (Bryant 2011). Contrary to traditional understandings, he argues that ethics is not merely about the application of readymade solutions to already recognised problems. This instead characterises the schema of 'morality', which 'prevents the emergence of any new modes of existence' because its transcendent criteria reduces the ontological potential of our encounters to the terms of the already-known (Deleuze 1997: 135). 'Ethics' is different, involving the creative tracing of *problems* and the new relations and potentials they introduce into our habits of thought (Wasser 2017). In Deleuze's (2004a) philosophy, problems take on an ontological rather than purely epistemological or psychological accent, defining an immanent field of forces and singularities that preside over the genesis of bodies. Importantly, and in contrast to conventional ethical discourse, 'problems do not disappear with their solutions', but rather persist as non-representational forces that continue to intensify and transform thought. Opposed to morality's transcendent logic of application, then, an immanent ethics instead follows a *logic of individuation* where ethical encounters are defined in terms of the emergence of problematic forces that engender the transformation of collectives and the opening of new possibilities for thinking and living. So, whereas morality demands that we judge ourselves and others according to an image of what *should be*, Deleuze's immanent ethics instead foregrounds the affirmative idea that we do not yet know what we might *become* (Smith 2007).[2]

   The closest that Deleuze ever comes to a formula or principle for his understanding of ethics appears in the short essay 'To Have Done with Judgement' when he writes: 'Herein lies the secret – *to bring into existence and not to judge*. If it is so disgusting to judge, it is not because everything is of equal value, but on the contrary because what has value can only be made or distinguished by defying judgement' (Deleuze 1997: 135). One of the questions that a Deleuzian ethics demands we attend to is where new values and modes of existence are being produced today. It is precisely in terms of the invention of new ethical possibilities of life that we can locate the significance that Deleuze assigns to the arts throughout his work. This is especially clear in Deleuze and Guattari's (1994: 166–7) final work, *What is Philosophy?*, where they conceive art as involving a creative encounter with nonhuman forces anterior to

their organisation into the recognised perceptions and affections of a human subject (Sharpe et al. 2014; Hynes 2016; Lapworth 2016a). Art expresses these forces through material compositions of *sensation* ('the smile of oil, the gesture of fired clay'), which impinge directly on the body as vibrations that can only be experienced rather than recognised and understood (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 166). The sensations of art draw those who experience them into an encounter with what Deleuze describes in *Cinema I* as:

> *The non-organic life of things*, a frightful life, which is oblivious to the wisdom and limits of the organism ... it is the vital as potent pre-organic germinality, common to the animate and inanimate, to a matter which raises itself to the point of life, and to a life which spreads through all matter. (Deleuze 2005a: 52)

While the different arts can obviously be distinguished by their specific materials of expression, genres and techniques, Deleuze (2006a: 40) argues that they are all intimately connected by their sharing of a 'common ontological problem': how to capture and harness these (non-organic, non-human) forces to render visible and thinkable what has yet to be seen and thought. It is this encounter and engagement with an immanent universe of forces that, as Simon O'Sullivan (2006: 51) notes, gives art its 'ethical imperative' since it involves moving beyond the already familiar (our habitual modes of being) to explore new possibilities of becoming and relating in the world.

While Deleuze's two volumes on cinema – comprising *The Movement-Image* first published in 1983 and *The Time-Image* published in 1985 – are usually sidelined in contemporary discussions of a 'Deleuzian ethics',[3] I argue that they mark a pivotal moment in the development of his ethical thinking. What we find at the heart of these texts is a problem that consistently defined his engagement with ethics: namely, and as Thiele (2008: 185) puts it, 'how to liberate thought from all the presuppositions that dominate it and most of all from its subjectivist heritage which, by covertly re-introducing transcendence, produces an even stricter and normative moral image of thought'. Deleuze's encounter with the cinema offers an important extension to this ethical problem through the claim that our material potentials for thinking differently are dependent on the creation of ways of perceiving differently (Bogue 2007). In the *Cinema* books, Deleuze (2005a, 2005b) takes up Bergson's (1991) famous thesis in *Matter and Memory* that we perceive the world as a subtracted set of linked images. Through the repetitions of habit and the consolidation of opinion these perceptual

framings and linkages can harden into affective schemas that constitute anticipatory horizons for the body, submitting the emergence of the new to the requirements of the already-given (Lapworth 2016b). Following Bergson, Deleuze refers to this affective schema of anticipation as *the sensori-motor cliché*: through it, he writes, 'we perceive the thing, minus that which does not interest us as a function of our needs' (Deleuze 2005a: 65–6). Art and thought are in perpetual combat against such clichés that denature the intensive difference of our encounters with the world. The ethical problem that Deleuze (2005b) identifies in the *Cinema* texts, and one which retains its urgency today, is not only how clichés constitute our interior psychic world ('by which we think and feel') but also how they come to circulate and proliferate in an external world that increasingly looks to us like a bad film (full of stock characters, banal opinions and intolerable situations). What Deleuze admires most in cinema, then, is its capacity to break the conventional sequences of images that undergird our habitual ways of thinking and perceiving, producing new links that bring thought into direct contact with the immanent forces of life (Marrati 2008). At its best, the cinematic encounter generates unforeseen powers and 'aberrant movements' in thought (Lapoujade 2017: 24), which 'carry out a *suspension of the world*, affecting the visible with a *disturbance*' (Deleuze 2005b: 163).

What is disturbed by the cinema is precisely an image of thought that would begin or end with the human subject. Cinema's 'great advantage', for Deleuze (2005a: 60), was its capacity to produce direct affective shocks to our habits of sense-making, generating new configurations of thought that 'circumvent philosophy's traditional privileging of "the subject" as a centre of anchorage and horizon' in the world. Philosophy, Deleuze contends, has largely missed what is at stake in cinematic encounters as it remains bound to subject–predicate modes of thought that conceives the image as a representation of consciousness or as a derivative reflection on reality. In chapter 4 of *Cinema I*, Deleuze (2005a: 59) explicitly targets phenomenology for continuing this philosophical fixation on a subjective centre of perception, and for reducing cinema to the representational 'coordinates of natural perception'. He instead turns to the philosophy of Bergson who, despite his famous disdain for cinema, opens the possibility of a different, non-representational and non-phenomenological thinking of images. The image for Bergson, as Anne Sauvagnargues (2016: 86) highlights, is 'produced as a composition of relations of forces, a system of actions and reactions at the level of matter itself, such that it does not need to be perceived, but rather exists in itself as disturbance, vibration, and

movement'. This is a radically different sense of the image to that which we are accustomed within the social sciences and humanities – the image not as a phenomenon or representation, but instead as an individuation that does not need to manifest itself to a subject who would experience it (Sauvagnargues 2016). Understood in these terms, everything is an image (or an assemblage of images): atoms, cells, organs, bodies, environments (Deleuze 2005a: 60). The Bergsonian universe, as Deleuze highlights, is thus an *a-centred* universe of such moving images where everything acts and reacts upon everything else in continual variation. This has important implications for a thinking of the subject, which is no longer a pre-given or transcendent substance, but simply one type of image among others. In Deleuze's Bergsonism, we move from the a-centred universe of materiality to subjective images 'without ever leaving the immanent plane of forces' (Sauvagnargues 2016: 88). This movement is facilitated by events of perception that consist in acts of 'subtractive framing', myopically curving the universe around a 'special image' and isolating from its encounters only the elements of other images that interest it (Sauvagnargues 2016: 88). Perception, following Deleuze, is no longer a distinctly human or subjective act, but rather a mode of individuation that extracts a zone of centred perception (a specific '*point of view*') from matter.

Deleuze's aim in the *Cinema* books is to explore how cinema pushes beyond the habits of human-centred perception by 'abolishing subjectivity as a privileged image in what Bergson calls the "aggregate of images" that is the material universe' (Trifonova 2004: 134). What is offered in these texts, then, is less the conventional 'history' of cinema that we usually find in film theory (organised around key genres or film movements), and instead more of a philosophical inventory of the different techniques and processes developed in the cinema to present an image of the world that is not human (Rushton 2012). What his discussions of, for example, early experiments with movement and editing (Epstein 2014), the splicing of space-times through montage (Zourabichvili 2000), and the disjuncture of sound and image in modern cinema (Pasolini 2005) all highlight is the potential of cinematic encounters to open us up to intensities and durations that 'go beyond the human condition' (Deleuze 1988: 28). Cinema, as Sauvagnargues (2016: 95) puts it, does not attempt to enhance human perception, but rather to 'decentre it, causing it to lose its stable points of reference and its familiarity to attain a nonhuman perception'. It presents unforeseen images and signs that human perception alone is incapable of producing.

Now, of course, cinema isn't the only place in which we glimpse what Colebrook (2014: 23) describes as a 'world without us'. Nor indeed is this nonhuman perception the ethical vocation of *all* films. It is instead a potential that Deleuze sees most clearly in the experimental cinema of the *time-image* which he contrasts with the classical cinema of the *movement-image*. He argues that these images correspond to two different regimes of perception that he again draws from Bergson: 'subjective perception' and 'acentered perception':

> A subjective perception is one in which the images vary in relation to a central and privileged image ['the subject' as centre of perception, affection, and action]; an acentered perception is one where, as in things, all the images vary in relation to one another, on all their facets and in all their parts. (Deleuze 2005a: 79)

Cinema, as François Zourabichvili (2000) notes, is unable to attain a completely a-centred perception because it is forced to confront its own material conditions of possibility (the technical apparatus of the camera, the perceptual conditions of human spectators, etc.). However, what cinema *can do* is push these conditions to their limits, producing 'weakly-centred' images that express nonhuman forces and intensities no longer dependent on a stable human centre of perception (Deleuze 2005a: 83).

What Deleuze's encounter with the cinema highlights, I argue, is a thinking of ethics that does not begin or end with the human subject, but which instead concerns the individuation of nonhuman points of view that open new possibilities of becoming. At first glance, and in the usual sense ascribed to this concept in our everyday discourse, invoking points of view here would seem to reintroduce the subject–predicate modes of thought that Deleuze's immanent ethics seeks to overcome.[4] However, in *Cinema II*, Deleuze (2005b: 139) makes an important distinction between 'relativism' and 'perspectivism' as two distinct modes of theorising the ethical relation of points of view, which themselves correspond to the two main regimes of cinematic image he identifies. Relativism, which Deleuze associates with a thought of the movement-image, refers to our common-sense understanding that identifies the point of view with the perception of a distinct subject on a supposedly unchanging object. However, with perspectivism, which finds its expression in the a-centred time-image, we see points of view take on a genetic value as the conditions that preside over the individuation of subjects. As Smith (1997: xxvii) notes, 'perspectivism no longer implies a plurality of points of view on the same world or object;

each viewpoint now opens on to another world that itself contains yet others.' In this ontogenetic perspectivism, then, the point of view is not constituted or grounded by the subject – this would be relativism's banal formula that 'everyone has their point of view', which would make the point of view depend on a pre-existing subject from which it emanates. In contrast, with perspectivism *subjects are constituted by points of view that are in constant variation.*

We find this ontological inversion famously in the philosophy of Leibniz, who Deleuze argues is the first to introduce perspectivism into continental philosophy.[5] The notion of point of view, as Deleuze (2006b) highlights in *The Fold*, is a crucial concept in Leibniz's philosophical monadology. Leibniz argues that every individual (or to use his technical term, 'monad') implicates (folds) the totality of the world within itself, but only expresses (unfolds) a small portion of the world in a clear and distinct manner. This is the crux of Leibniz's theory of the point of view: 'it is the portion or region of the world expressed clearly by an individual in relation to the totality of the world, which it expresses obscurely' as a background of micro-perceptions and imperceptible events (Smith 2012: 47–8). From the 'confused murmur' of the universe, every individual (human and nonhuman) extracts a zone of clarity that makes up its world (Leibniz 1989: 65). Indeed, for Leibniz 'the world' has no existence outside of the singular points of view that express it, as Didier Debaise highlights:

> It is as if the universe ceaselessly contracts into a multiplicity of points that are so many centres of experience, perspectives of all that exists. It is important to note that these perspectives are not perspectives *on* the universe, but *of* the universe, immanent to it: they form its ultimate material. (Debaise 2017: 50–1)

And what defines these immanent points of view? Leibniz goes on to argue that what we express clearly and distinctly is that which affects ('concerns') our body in a singular way.[6] For Leibniz, then, points of view are constituted by the different affective relations and capacities of which bodies are capable.

However, it is in the philosophy of Nietzsche that we find a more radical and 'profound' perspectivism that Deleuze (2004b: 198) affirms, when he claims that points of view correspond not to individual bodies, but rather to *pre-individual forces* and their differential relations. Here, points of view are understood to emerge from the encounters and synthesis of disparate material forces. Deleuze draws out two key implications from this assimilation of a theory of perspectivism with an

ontology of forces in Nietzsche's philosophy. First, Deleuze (2004b: 198) argues that points of view are no longer 'closed in' on a single convergent world that they express (as in Leibniz), but are instead constantly 'torn open' through the divergent series and forces that they implicate and transform. For Nietzsche, then, the individual becomes redefined as a multiplicity, rather than a unity, of heterogeneous and overlapping points of view. Following on from this, a second key theme that Deleuze draws from Nietzsche's perspectivism is the idea that a point of view is only actualised by affirming its difference in relation to others, and this is a process that itself depends on its capacity to pass into, and be affected by, other points of view. As Zourabichvili puts it:

> Nothing appears, affirms itself, exerts a force, produces an effect without implicating a disjunction with something else, a *virtual coexistence* with that from which it separates itself, and consequently a contagion of points of view in reciprocal implication. (Zourabichvili 2012: 132, my emphasis)

What distinguishes Nietzsche's (1992: 555) perspectivism from the relativistic framework to which it is often reduced is his refusal of the banal notion that all perspectives are of equal value and validity. On an ethical level, Zourabichvili argues that what Nietzsche's philosophy makes possible is an immanent evaluation of points of view through his theory of active and reactive forces. An 'active' point of view is one that does not ignore the ethical difference of other points of view, 'but lives it intensely, and considers the ensemble of existential possibilities from out of them, even at the cost of inverting its perspective' (Zourabichvili 2012: 124). On the other hand, a point of view 'becomes-reactive' when it folds in on itself, turning into an isolated *pole* of identity that is cut off from different forces and perspectives that are the conditions of its becoming-other.

In the *Cinema* books, Deleuze sees the production of such severed and reactive points of view in the sensori-motor habits of human perception, which submit our encounters to the representational terrain of the already-known. As an automatic and unthinking perception of the world, the sensori-motor image reduces experience to the needs and requirements of the subject. But Deleuze makes clear that these anthropocentric sensori-motor images aren't the only types of image the cinema can create. And he sees in post-war cinema (especially in the films of Orson Welles, Alain Resnais, Alain Robbe-Grillet) the individuation of a different type of image in which a multiplicity of points of view interact without there being a privileged centre that would unify and order them. These are what Deleuze (2005b: 79) terms 'crystal-images',

in which the virtual coexistence of points of view is experienced through the incessant oscillation of the actual and the virtual. This *virtual* sense of coexistence expressed by the crystal-image is different from the more conventional understandings of coexistence that we find in ethical discourse, where it is often framed in terms of the coming-together of bodies that nonetheless remain separate and identifiable, maintaining their established molar identities. In contrast, the crystal-image follows a logic of *indiscernibility* rather than recognition – as Zourabichvili (2012: 122) notes, 'the subject persists, but one no longer knows *where*'. Following Deleuze, the worlds expressed by cinematic images can be understood to be more or less ethical depending on whether they allow this multiplicity of (human and nonhuman) points of view to intensively coexist, or whether this heterogeneity becomes imprisoned in a myopic perspective of meaning and sense *for us* (Barker 2016).

II. *Leviathan* and the Nonhuman Eye of Cinema

How might we imagine a world outside the myopic perspective of human subjectivity (Colebrook 2014)? What role can cinematic encounters play here in opening thought to the forces and intensities of nonhuman points of view of the world? To explore these questions, I now turn to an engagement with *Leviathan* (2012), an experimental film directed by Verena Paravel and Lucien Castaing-Taylor. Both directors are members of the Sensory Ethnography Lab at Harvard University, which was set up in 2007 to support experimental approaches to ethnographic filmmaking that are concerned, as Castaing-Taylor puts it:

> not to analyse, but to actively produce aesthetic experience … and to transcend what is often considered the particular province of the human, and delve into nature—in short, to re-conjugate culture with nature, to pursue promiscuities between animalic and non-animalic selves and others, and to restore us both to the domain of perception. (Castaing-Taylor 2012: n.p.)

Leviathan continues this approach to the 'innovative combination of aesthetics and ethnography', presenting an intense sensorial portrait of the nonhuman assemblage of an industrial fishing trawler off the coast of New Bedford, Massachusetts. My reasons for turning to *Leviathan* here are twofold. First, because of the way it attempts to radically decentre the actions and thoughts of human subjects to instead experiment with the intensities and potentials of a nonhuman vision of cinema. *Leviathan*'s 'nonhuman aesthetic' is something that has been

highlighted in several critical and academic commentaries, as well as by the directors themselves.[7] The film dispenses with nearly all the formal conventions and tropes of traditional ethnographic or documentary filmmaking – it has, for example, no identifiable protagonist, little narrative continuity or structure (in terms of a clear beginning, middle or end), or explanatory voice-over. In this sense, *Leviathan* has more in common with the formalist experimentalism of non-linear and avant-garde documentaries like Dziga Vertov's *Man with a Movie Camera* (1929) and Godfrey Reggio's *Koyannisqatsi* (1982), than it does with recent issue-oriented documentaries about industrial fishing like Rupert Murray's *The End of the Line* (2009) and Louie Psihoyos's *The Cove* (2009), in which human subjects (and their actions and responsibilities) are centre stage (Unger 2017). *Leviathan* instead works through the visceral immediacy of sensation to generate the disorienting experience of being in the middle of the pulsating bodies and material forces composing life at sea.

It is this aspect of the film that has frustrated critics and audiences looking for an explicit ethical or political stance in relationship to themes that the film indirectly addresses (the industrialisation of food production, the destruction of marine ecologies, labour and the body, human/nature interactions in the Anthropocene, and so on). In response to questions posed at screenings asking what it is they are trying to say with the film – what point they are making – Castaing-Taylor and Paravel have often responded that they 'try and make films that *don't say anything*' (Film Society of Lincoln Centre 2012). They argue that non-fiction cinema, and documentary films specifically, suffer because of this demand placed on them by audiences (and even filmmakers themselves) that they are always making an argument or statement *about something*. Film becomes divested of its experiential plenitude and qualitative richness when it is reduced to a set of linguistic propositions or meanings about the world. Brian Massumi (2011: 172) highlights something similar in his book *Semblance and Event* when he talks about the 'processual poverty of making statements'. He argues that the provocation of a more Deleuzian style of thinking is that the ethical value of a specific text or image:

> pertains much less to its usefulness for making statements than to the degree to which a technique of existence avails itself of its *imaginative powers*: its ability to marshal powers of the false, not in order to designate the way things are but to catalyse what's to come, emergently, inventively, un-preprogrammed, and reflective of no past model. (Massumi 2011: 173)

Against a moral didacticism concerned with correct action and recognised responsibilities, *Leviathan* offers an affirmative *encounter* with forces and durations that are not our own, cleaving open a space through which a different way of thinking and relating to the nonhuman – beyond recognition and identification – might emerge.

Second, and relatedly, one of the key features that makes *Leviathan* such a disorienting encounter to our habits of thought is its constant refusal to offer a stable or identifiable viewpoint to which we could anchor our spectatorial perception. *Leviathan*'s mere twenty-two shots (each ranging from two to seven minutes) offer a perceptual experience that is in constant variation with the rise and fall of the boat, with the film plunging us into turbid zones of intensive exchange between elemental, human, animal, material and machinic forces (Stevenson and Kohn 2015). In making the film, Paravel and Castaing-Taylor state that their ambition was to 'relativise the human ... by expressing the multiplicity of perspectives that made up the nonhuman ecology of this fishing trawler' (Castaing-Taylor 2012: n.p.). In this respect, *Leviathan* does something more radical than Castaing-Taylor's previous film, *Sweetgrass* (2009), which while shifting away from human-centred modes of perception by multiplying perspectives, still retains a sense of the identity of these points of view such that we remain able to discern whether we are seeing the world from a human- or a sheep's-eye view. It abides by what Deleuze (2005a: 80) calls 'human' or 'solid' perception based on stable points of reference and the familiarity of subject–object relations. What we have with *Leviathan* isn't an 'improved human eye', whose capacities are enhanced by the technologies employed in the film (Deleuze 2005a: 83). Nor is it the eye of 'another animal' (perhaps a 'fish-eyed' or 'birds-eye' view of the world) (Deleuze 2005a: 84). In both cases, images remain centred, oriented and organised around an identifiable, molar point of perception (Zourabichvili 2000). In contrast, with *Leviathan*, there is an attempt to more fully tear perception away from any discrete body to express an immanent perception of the world that renders points of view indiscernible. The film discovers what Deleuze (2005a: 83) terms, after Vertov, the 'nonhuman eye' of cinema that displaces the human as the stable foundation from which all other images must emerge. The nonhuman eye emerges through a disruption of the human-all-too-human coordinates of solid perception, expressing an image of the world 'before man [*sic*], before the dawn of ourselves' (Deleuze 2005a: 83). It attains a 'gaseous' state of perception, rendering visible the molecular intervals and forces of matter that are the genetic

elements of all possible perception, but which 'human perception, on its own scale, is incapable of distinguishing' (Sauvagnargues 2016: 95).

Leviathan returns us to this material immanence of perception – this 'eye in matter' (Deleuze 2005a: 84) – through several creative audio-visual techniques, a few of which I want to highlight here. First, the film's a-centred and disorienting aesthetic owes much to its innovative use of digital GoPro Hero cameras (Thain 2015). In interviews, the filmmakers have highlighted how the use of the GoPros was a necessity rather than a conscious artistic decision, as they became the only way of capturing footage under the ferocious conditions on board the trawler, rather than risk damaging the more expensive (and cumbersome) cameras they had originally intended to use. GoPro cameras are most commonly associated (and were initially marketed at) practitioners of extreme sports, as their durability, relative ease of use and water resistance make them ideal for capturing sharp and stable images of high-velocity action and movement. Since their release in 2004, the GoPro range of cameras have expanded beyond the world of extreme sports to find usage in everything from Hollywood blockbusters (for example, Ridley Scott's *The Martian* [2015]), YouTube travel vlogs, nature documentaries on television (for example, the Discovery Channel's *Deadliest Catch*) and music videos. Recently, and in light of the turn to moving-image methodologies within the social sciences, several scholars have highlighted their capacities as an ethnographic tool for capturing the lived experience of specific encounters and practices. This phenomenological orientation to video ethnography is clear in Vannini and Stewart's (2017: 150) discussion of the potential of GoPros to 'generate evocative and affective impressions' of people's embodied relationships with different places. Here, the privileging of the subject–world relation remains centre stage of this 'GoPro gaze' (Vannini and Stewart 2017: 150). Paravel and Castaing-Taylor are instead part of a small number of artists and filmmakers who have experimented with the relational and perceptual affordances of these cameras for expressing a more nonhuman and disembodied vision of the world. Their lack of a viewfinder and small size means that they can be mounted onto various mobile or immobile objects and bodies, and thus no longer require a human subject behind the camera in order to operate (Murphie 2014). Many of the shots in *Leviathan* were captured by attaching the GoPros to the end of long poles, which enables the film to render visible spaces usually imperceptible and inaccessible to human subjects (such as below the surface of a wave or at the bottom of a gutting tank).

The nonhuman eye of the film is therefore not at a transcendent remove from the world, but instead emerges as a mode of perception fully embroiled in and transformed by the world's material forces. We are constantly reminded of this immanence of perception throughout the film, from the sudden jerks generated by the intense storm conditions, to splashes of water and blood that occasionally smudge the screen. But it has particularly disorienting effects in the film's final sequence where the camera undergoes a series of vertiginous plunges in and out of the ocean. Each time the camera crosses the threshold its angle is inverted such that it becomes increasingly difficult for us as viewers to recognise and orientate images in relation to what has come before, to the point where sea and sky gradually become indiscernible. This disorientation of our perceptual coordinates is something Deleuze himself anticipates in the closing pages, seeing it as a crucial feature of what he terms future 'electronic images'. Such images, he writes:

> become the object of a perpetual reorganisation. in which a new image can arise from any point whatever of the preceding image. The organisation of space here loses its privileged directions, and first of all the privilege of the vertical which the position of the screen still displays, in favour of an omni-directional space which constantly varies its angles and coordinates, to exchange the vertical and the horizontal. (Deleuze 2005b: 254)

Another key implication of the film's a-centred and disorienting aesthetic is how it disrupts conventional modes of sensing and seeing the human. The directors note that *Leviathan* continues their approach of attempting to 'look at and listen to the human in ways that render the human unfamiliar'.[8] A central technique here is the film's creative framing of human bodies. Due to the inverted angles and blurred focus of the camera, the glimpses that we do have of the fishermen on board the trawler are usually of fragments and parts of bodies rather than whole figures. Movements and parts rather than whole forms. Where human characters do appear onscreen their form is usually veiled by the translucence of glass and steam (like the sequence in which a fisherman showers) or distorted by splashes of blood and gore. The film also includes several extreme close-ups of human flesh, displaying lacerations caused by errant shucking knives and lines weathered out by years of exposure to the force of waves and wind. Deleuze (2005a) reflects at length on the intensive powers of the close-up shot in *Cinema I*, arguing that they disrupt our habits of perception by abstracting a body or object from its determinate spatio-temporal coordinates. The close-up 'suspends individualisation' in order to call forth 'pure intensities

... qualities and powers considered for themselves without reference to anything else, independently of any question of their actualisation' (Deleuze 2005a: 100). The image therefore no longer serves the representational function of determination (in which intensities would be attributed to a recognised subject or object), but instead constitutes a non-representational space of expression in which different bodies become so many centres of indetermination. Deleuze (2006a: 16) argues that it is in images of flesh and meat (like those we find in *Leviathan*) that we most clearly encounter this 'zone of indiscernibility or undecidability between man [*sic*] and animal'. Such images of pulsating and quivering flesh express for Deleuze (2006a: 18) 'the reality of becoming', in which the distinctions between human and nonhuman begin to dissolve, and where we become reminded that 'animals are part of humanity' and that 'we are all cattle' (or, as in the case of *Leviathan*, fish).

A final feature contributing to the film's 'estrangement of the human' is its soundtrack, which was edited by the sound artists Ernst Karel and Jacob Ribicoff. The film's soundtrack makes use of the low-quality and muffled recordings captured by the GoPro cameras, which were layered and mixed with sounds taken from a separate stereo microphone, creating a distinctly harsh and intense sonic ecology. Karel states that his approach to sound design in *Leviathan* attempts to disrupt conventional understandings of the sound environment in documentary film that treat it as an 'optional component of the image' that can be 'reined in ... whenever someone wants to talk over it' (Goldberg 2013: n.p.). While human voices do periodically enter *Leviathan*'s soundscape, they quickly become overwhelmed by the cacophonous roar of wind, waves and machinery such that we can no longer discern what they are saying. The film therefore disrupts what the sound theorist Michel Chion (1999) has termed '*vococentrism*', in which the human voice is prioritised over nonhuman and ambient noise, structuring the sonic space that contains it: 'It's the privilege afforded to the voice over all other sonic elements ... speech, shouts, sighs, whispers, the voice hierarchizes everything around it' (Chion 1999: 6). Instead, the film's mixing of multidimensional sounds with the constant buzz of machinery creates a sonic landscape composed of sounds that retain a sense of their virtuality in no longer being assignable to any one identifiable source (human, animal or technological). Through these audio-visual experiments, *Leviathan* shifts our perceptual registers beyond the molar and recognisable forms that define subject-centred perception towards a *molecular plane of indiscernible forces* that constantly disrupt and reorder these subjective forms.

III. Conclusion: Responsibility (Be)for(e) the Nonhuman

> To affirm is not to take responsibility for, to take on the burden of what is,
> but to release, to set free what lives.
> Deleuze 2006c: 174

To conclude, I want to suggest that the becoming-indiscernible of human and nonhuman points of view we encounter in *Leviathan* has significant implications for how we think responsibility in the present, shifting the ethical scene of thought beyond the anthropocentric assumptions of the supposedly known responsibilities that we should take up on behalf of others. This conventional, and more moralistic, sense of responsibility is what Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 240) briefly describe, in the 'Becoming-Animal' plateau of *A Thousand Plateaus*, as 'responsibility *for* [*des*]', the other. One of the contributions of Deleuze's *Cinema* texts is to highlight how this subject–predicate notion of responsibility *for* the other is itself dependent on a sensori-motor image of thought that presupposes a direct unity of human action and the world. After the Second World War, Deleuze notes that modern cinema inherits a situation in which this assumed unity of human action and world is shattered. However, and rather than attempting to nostalgically restore this link, Deleuze (2005b: 166) writes that modern filmmakers creatively explore the potentials of a different kind of ethical relation, one which he argues takes the shape of a 'belief in the world' and of the other immanent possibilities abroad within it. As Paola Marrati (2008: 86) puts it: 'this new belief invests the world as it is, not to justify what is intolerable, but to make us believe that although the organic form of the link that attached us to the world is broken, the link itself is not, and other forms of it can still be invented'. Amidst the collapse of long-held moral certainties and concepts, cinema extracts the possibility for new modes of ethical relation that reconnects thought to the forces that make it creative.

This immanent cinematic ethics disrupts the conventional image of responsibility to which we are accustomed – responsibility *for* the other – which maintains an image of the human subject as a discrete and autonomous unity that transcends the object on which it is called to respond. It is precisely this image of ethical responsibility that *Leviathan* resists. If the film shows us anything it is that there is no transcendent starting point beyond ontology from which (ethical) thought would commence, because 'we' are always-already 'in the midst of, linked to, and becoming through' other nonhuman bodies (Gilson 2011: 79–80). This more immanent conception is what Deleuze and Guattari (1987:

240) call (in relation to the work of the German pre-Romantic writer Karl Phillip Moritz) 'responsibility *before* [*devant*] the other'. Lawlor (2008) argues that the concept of responsibility takes on a different accent in Deleuze and Guattari's work, where it is conceived as a question of becoming, instead of being a matter of recognition that would continue to maintain the subject/object dualisms of traditional ethical theorising:

> In the experience of becoming, when one is fascinated by something *before* oneself, when one contemplates something before oneself, one is *among it*, *within it*, in a zone of proximity ... I find myself fascinated *before* something I cannot recognise, before something that has lost its molar form, before something singular. (Lawlor 2008: 176)

Theorised as a process of becoming, responsibility for Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 1994) implies a specific type of ethical relation, one in which bodies are connected not merely on the terrain of their molar identities, but rather through the molecular plane of forces and singularities that constitute and energise them. Here, then, to act responsibly means to creatively explore the intensive zones of contact with human and nonhuman others, and to experiment with these relations in ways that enhance the powers of expression and becoming of the ethical assemblages in which we find ourselves. For Deleuze, it is this immanent vision of ethical engagement that cinema can give expression to, generating new collective individuations in which subject and object are not yet differentiated, and in which the potentials for what thought and perception could become are not yet defined.

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Notes

1. Deleuze's discussion of 'individuation' in *Difference and Repetition* and *Logic of Sense* is clearly indebted to the philosophy of Gilbert Simondon where it refers to a mode of thought that takes as primary not the already-constituted individual or subject, but rather pre-individual forces and material processes of emergence. The individual (whether subject, body, image, point of view) is thus neither the source nor the privileged term of philosophical thinking but is instead the partial and provisional result of a process of individuation.
2. Here, it is important to distinguish how Deleuze's ethics of individuation involves a very different sense of 'becoming' to the more clichéd discussions we find in the social sciences where it often does little more than name the fact that individuals do not have a static being and are in constant flux (Smith

1997). Deleuze's thought differentiates a more profound thought of the 'being of becoming' from a thinking of the 'becoming of beings'. Simondon (2005: 311) is particularly instructive on the difference between these two different senses when he writes that 'becoming is a dimension of being, not something that happens to it following a succession of events that affect a being already and originally given and substantial'.

3. For example, the contributions to a recent edited volume, *Deleuze and Ethics* (Jun and Smith 2011), make hardly any reference to concepts from Deleuze's *Cinema* texts, which is surprising given Deleuze's explicit discussion in these texts of an ethics of 'belief'. Film theory more broadly has also been quite slow in exploring the relationship between film and ethics, although this is beginning to change with the recent publication of some key texts reflecting upon cinema as a mode of ethical thinking and experience, including some from a Deleuzian perspective (see especially Choi and Frey 2014; Sinnerbrink 2016).

4. This might also be surprising given Deleuze's own comments to Robert Maggiori of his 'dislike of points' (Deleuze 1995: 161). Despite this, we find various types of point throughout his work: points of inflection (Deleuze, 2006b), singular points and bifurcation thresholds (Deleuze 2004a), 'sensitive points' (Deleuze 2004b), points of view (Deleuze 2006b), and so on. These points, for Deleuze, are where lines and forces intersect, and around which something begins to happen. Perhaps Deleuze's hatred is less for points and more for 'poles' (for example, the paranoiac, reactionary and fascistic poles of *Anti-Oedipus*) that, as I unpack later in the essay, are points that become shut off from the forces and relations of the outside, and which become fixated on zones of identity and possession.

5. However, Eduardo Viveiros de Castro (2014) makes the important observation that 'perspectivism' has a much longer history outside of European philosophy, and especially in various Amerindian cosmologies. As he writes in *Cannibal Metaphysics*: 'virtually all peoples of the New World share a conception of the world as composed of a multiplicity of points of view. Every existent is a center of intentionality apprehending other existents according to their respective characteristics and powers' (Viveiros de Castro 2014: 55). Within Amerindian thought, then, the world is inhabited by different sorts of subjects (or 'persons'), both human and nonhuman, which apprehend reality from distinct points of view. It is here that we can understand the significance of the indigenous practice of shamanism as a way for specific individuals to cross the corporeal barriers between species and to encounter and exchange perspectives (and perhaps in these terms we could argue that cinema possesses something of a shamanistic quality). Viveiros de Castro (2014) argues that the perspectivism we find in Leibniz, Deleuze, Whitehead and Nietzsche has more in common with this Amerindian ontological perspectivism, where the *point of view creates the subject*, than with Western epistemologies that see the *point of view as creating the object* (in which the subject remains as an original and fixed condition).

6. Smith (2012: 47) offers a helpful expansion on this relation between bodies and points of view as follows: 'Leibniz in this manner provides a deduction of the necessity of the body as that which occupies the point of view. I do not express clearly and distinctly the crossing of the Rubicon, since that concerns Caesar's body; but there are other things that concern my body – such as the writing of this essay – which I do express clearly.'

7. See, for example, the 2015 special issue of *Visual Anthropology Review* on *Leviathan*, especially the papers by Stevenson and Kohn (2015) and Thain (2015) which focus on the film's distinctly 'posthuman' aesthetic.

8. These lines are taken from a Q+A session with the directors following a press screening of the film at the Lincoln Centre in 2012 as part of the New York Film Festival. A video of this event can be found on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clOCqCIt-vE. Future references to this discussion in this article will take the form (Film Society of Lincoln Centre 2012).

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Framing and Staging Madness in the Ethico-aesthetic Paradigm: How Witold Gombrowicz's *Operetka* Expresses Nicolas Philibert's *La moindre des choses*

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Abstract

Nicolas Philibert's 1997 documentary, *La moindre des choses*, depicts the daily lives of residents and staff at the private psychiatric clinic La Borde, and their production of Witold Gombrowicz's play *Operetka*. This paper will analyse the aesthetic and ethical implications of La Borde's production of Gombrowicz's play by mapping the documentary, text and production's collective expressions. The film's capacities to reconfigure audience subjectivities through a filmic and intensive entanglement will be explored at length by framing the documentary's cinematography in Félix Guattari's theories of the ethico-aesthetic paradigm and minor cinema.

Keywords: documentary, Witold Gombrowicz, Félix Guattari, La Borde, mental health, minor cinema, *Operetka*, Nicolas Philibert

Nicolas Philibert's 1997 documentary, *La moindre des choses*, depicts the artistic projects and daily lives of residents and staff at the private psychiatric clinic La Borde. The film follows the production of the clinic's annual theatrical performance. In 1995, during Philibert's filming, the residents and staff agreed to put on Witold Gombrowicz's *Operetka*, one of the last work of fiction written and published by the Polish writer during his lifetime. Though the play was not

factored into Philibert's decision to film that particular year, he admits that Gombrowicz's text resonated with the context of La Borde (Leboutte 2006: 4). Philibert does not focus on the plot or the clinic's interpretation of the play, but rather documents the quotidian interactions and activities of the clinic's residents and staff without voice-overs. Audiences are presented with a non-medical and more human depiction of La Borde.

While most criticism of *La moindre des choses* discusses Philibert's documentary style and his depictions of 'mentally ill' residents, little attention has been paid to how the operetta's production and text function within the frames of the film and the clinic.[1] *Operetka*'s absurdist critiques of social roles and language supplement the film's treatment of (in)sanity and theatre. In addition, critics scarcely mention Félix Guattari's spectre that permeates most of the film's frames; the La Borde psychotherapist's theories resonate with the film and Gombrowicz's absurdist play.[2] This article will analyse how La Borde's theatrical production functions through the documentary's minor cinema by reflexively evoking *Operetka*'s subversive dramaturgy. Given that Gombrowicz fills the light-hearted operetta form with 'the gravity and pain' of humanity, I will consider how *Operetka* frames the La Borde residents and how they, in turn, engage the play's aesthetics through Philibert's camera lens in a double process of creation that is synchronously autopoietic-creative and ethical-ontological (Gombrowicz 1971b: 153, my translation; Guattari 1995: 108). Both documentary and play affectively transfuse residents' lived experiences and facilitate an intensive identification within viewers. My analysis will address the intermingling of Philibert's minor cinema and Gombrowicz's theatre, situating them within what Guattari calls the ethico-aesthetic paradigm, which 'has ethico-political implications because to speak of creation is to speak of the responsibility of the creative instance with regard to the thing created, inflection of the state of things, bifurcation beyond pre-established schemas, once again taking into account the fate of alterity in its extreme modalities' (Guattari 1995: 107). By analysing the reciprocal functions between Gombrowicz's text, Philibert's film and La Borde's theatrical production, two neglected but central nodes of *La moindre des choses* will help us understand how through *Operetka*'s aesthetics the film generates affective, ethical encounters that produce revolutionary shifts in subjectivity and pathic empathy within viewers. As a result, the documentary sustains a micro-political dimension by enmeshing the viewers' and the residents' desire, engendering potentialities of a social solidarity and politics to come.

I. La vérité du mineur et le fou révolté

Philibert's documentary style is an evocative rendition of the French *cinéma-vérité* tradition. *La moindre des choses* presents its protagonists in their milieu as they are. Throughout the whole documentary, '[t]he director takes the role purely as a silent observer in the tradition of "fly on-the wall"'; he and the crew are never filmed and their presence is only ever acknowledged through the residents' gazes at the camera crew and when they ask questions to the residents and vice versa (Biley 2008: 349). The camera becomes a tool of interaction and engagement with the residents as the camerawork is 'maintained at eye level; an individual's perspective, so [one] [becomes] intimately engaged with the films' key characters, together with the use of hand-held cameras the viewer simply becomes yet another resident at the institute' (Biley 2008: 349). Philibert's film functions as an immersive mediator between viewer and protagonist. The intimate, eye-level shots and prolonged focus on the most minute of residents' actions implicate the viewer in the quotidian life of the clinic. In this regard, the cinematography of *La moindre des choses* recalls the pioneering direct cinema of Fredrick Wiseman's *Titicut Follies* (1967). Wiseman's documentary depicts the institutionalised lives of inmate-patients at the Bridgewater State Hospital in Massachusetts. Viewers witness the quotidian rhythms of the ward, such as recreation time, therapy, case report reviews and staff–patient relations. While the staff-organised talent show and festive birthday party convey moments of collective work and levity, viewers more so witness visceral scenes in which medical staff and guards disregard the inmate-patients' dignity through systematic harassment and abuse. The similarities to Philibert's documentary are outweighed by the contrasts; Wiseman's film evokes a shock in the viewer by recording the inmate-patients' inhuman living conditions and treatment. During the film's viewing, audiences sooner develop a sense of revulsion towards the institution than an ethical or empathetic impulse towards the inmate-patients. In contrast, Philibert uses the *cinéma-vérité* approach to frame the residents of La Borde in a patient and humanising lens.

La moindre des choses contains an ethical impulse that entangles viewers within a cinematic relationality with the La Borde residents. Brian Glasser comments on how Philibert is interested in eliciting 'an encounter' between the protagonists and his crew, and ultimately his audiences (2012: 69). There are moments during the film in which residents playfully, or intensely, stare at the viewer through the camera, hailing them or evoking a smile. Such an encounter 'succeeds

at portraying the often rather disabled residents with openness and empathy' as the viewer engages in a visual and existential proximity with the residents, who 'are shown as fully accepted contributors to the play and as respected [individuals]' (Stastny 1998: 82). Though filming inherently frames and therefore precludes any pure contact or relationship with its subjects, there are moments of reflexivity during the film that have residents draw attention to cinematic processes and intentions. The documentary thereby entertains an auto-critique of what it means to film at a mental health clinic, dismantling the camera's objectifying frame (Stastny 1998: 82). Philibert's self-reflexive attention to detail and non-didactic cinematography produces a near-seamless mediation between its viewers and protagonists.

Despite Guattari's theories and praxes being synonymous with La Borde and on display in the documentary, criticism of Philibert's film disregards its elements of minor cinema. Guattari theorises about film's non-discursive affects and potentiality to recalibrate viewer subjectivity, stating that '[cinema's] montage of asignifying semiotic chains of intensities, movements, and multiplicities fundamentally tends to free it from the signifying grid that intervenes only at a second stage, through the filmic syntagmatic' (2009: 263). A film's seamless stream of images, sounds, effects and colours are experienced by the viewer on an intensive, non-discursive plane, on which language does not immediately capture and structure the perceived event.[3] Filmic tropes and encodings then arrange the polyphony of affects evoked by the cinematic experience. Before and during the filmic syntagmatic recasting of the sound-image into semiotic alloys, the '[c]inematographic performance affects subjectivity' and envelops the viewer in a 'subjectivation [that] [often] become[s] hallucinatory; it no longer concentrates on one subject, but explodes on a multiplicity of poles even when it fixes itself on one character' (Guattari 2009: 264). Affect, in this sense, becomes collective. The viewer's subjectivity is dislocated and frayed by the film's intensity; the film's varying elements permeate and recalibrate viewer perception. An affective intensity thus suspends and remoulds subjectivity. Minor cinema uses film's production of subjectivity to diffuse 'becomings minor (practical enrichments of schizo desire) in the mass … [producing] becomings that might summon a people with whom minor cinema connects' (Genosko 2012: 211). Philibert achieves such a diffusion of becoming minor, or *becoming resident*, through the affective encounter he mediates between La Borde's residents and the viewer. His refraining from voice-overs and non-prescriptive style augments the sound-image's a-signification, facilitating the viewer's subjectivation. The intensive

encounters between residents and viewers momentarily cast the latter as part of the ateliers or play rehearsals. Through the film's expression of the clinic and the lives of its residents, potentialities of empathy, solidarity and political awareness are generated. Peter Stastny claims that Philibert stifles any 'explicit critique of the institutions or treatments' (1998: 82). This argument, however, fails to consider how the film's minor cinema '[entails] a revolution of the self, as it is renegotiated and reconfigured in the face of another's experience', generating a socio-political awareness through an existentially charged entanglement between viewer and protagonists (Elliott 2012: 125). Philibert's minor cinematic framing of the residents is in part achieved through La Borde's production of Gombrowicz's *Operetka*, which complexifies the affective encounter between viewer and resident.

Gombrowicz's treatment of absurdity and language in his final work reflect the minor cinematic and schizoanalytic elements respectively at work in the film and La Borde. Throughout his oeuvre, Gombrowicz subverts hegemonic, cultural Form by experimenting with the minor through 'the rubbish of unexploited Polish possibilities' (Gombrowicz 2012: 45). Jaroslaw Anders describes Gombrowicz's concept of Form as 'a fictitious and unstable construct that man mistakes for his true, unique self' composed and imposed by the interactions between the individual and society, which *Operetka's* dramaturgy fully embodies (2009: 33). *Operetka's* absurdist theatricality acts as a subversive mimicry of society and a deformed self-representation of theatre. The redoubling inversion of the operetta's parodic display of society deforms the social relations within the cast's 'interhuman church', which lays bare the absurdity of social norms, popular fashion and politics (which constitute aspects of Gombrowicz's notion of Form) through repetitive dialogue and character doubling, such as Hrabia Szarm and Baron Firulet (Kuprel 1994: 419).[4] The dialogues' incessant repetition and mockery of social classes – the Professor who constantly vomits, Hufnagiel who only gallops and screams revolution, the refrains sung repeatedly, and so forth – parodies ad infinitum the artificial, societal masks that sustain human relations; the masks are so artificial that they distort their theatricality, producing glimpses of chaotic, bare life. Nonsensical uses of language similarly transgress Form and access an unrepresentable existence. For example, Książę Himalaj's meaningless conversation with the bagged characters: 'Plot plit … Hozmawia się nawet swobodnie, tylko że nie wiadomo co się mówi' ('Plot plit … One converses with them quite well, there is just no way of knowing what one says') (Gombrowicz 1971b: 182,

my translation). Such instances demonstrate what Maria Baraniecki describes as Gombrowicz's 'revaluation of language', which differs from the Theatre of the Absurd's rupture between reality and language, à la Eugène Ionesco, in that there is a 'creation of reality through language' (1985: 243). That is to say, language intervenes on the social, material plane, subverting Form to decompose culture and reconfigure reality through the minor; Gombrowicz's revaluation of language is flush with Guattari's understanding that 'sign, material, and social machines function together, and are made of the same components' (Watson 2009: 69). This subversive use of language, which channels the rubbish heap of unexploited possibilities, is 'affected with a high coefficient of deterritorialisation', breaking it free from Form and potentialising novel modes of being through lines of flights (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 16). It is in the final act of *Operetka* that Albertynka's joyous and salvatory nudity actualises a life free of Form-fitting, Form-abiding clothing (structure), an exploit only possible through the nude body's smoothness.

Albertynka figures as the text's most radical figure, surpassing the agent provacateur Hufnagiel riding the Professor to and through the revolution. She also poses a critical quandry; her nudity is polymorphic and ungraspable. Diana Kuprel suggests that she is 'the anti-mask, or nakedness, sanctified as an unattainable fashion' that defies and transcends Mistrz Fior's search of the future's fashion; her desire for nudity snubs Szarm's, and by extension society's, attempts to clothe her (1994: 423). She is resurrected during a symbolic funeral attended by the transformed victims of the revolution – symbolic because Szarm and Firulet carry an empty coffin in search of Albertynka's corpse, a victim of Hugnagiel's revolution. Baraniecki suggests that even though 'Albertynka represents man's salvation, an example of man's true essence, free from Form, and, thus, an example of a true reality outside the realm of artificiality', she can only '[describe] herself in physical terms', thereby containing herself within a physical Form (1985: 246). Emerging from the empty coffin, her body transcends physicality, but she debases her transcendence by affirming her bodily features. Though Baraniecki and Kuprel address the naked body's freedom of societal strictures and anti-structural connotations, they neglect how Albertynka encapsulates Deleuze and Guattari's body without organs – her body as a smooth plane of intensity, or desire, prefiguring and overflowing from the physical, socio-political world and subject. Her nude body, paradoxically free of Form yet physically defined, emerges from surcharged nothingness (the blackhole of the

empty coffin, the abyss of Hufnagiel's revolution) to intervene in the physical world and defy codified, social structures. This is emphasised by Albertynka's innate androgyny and amorphous body. Albertynka's hermaphroditic nudity suspends Hufnagiel's historical chaos and hegemonic masculinity to potentialise a new, atopic masculinity and a post-history (Mazurkiewicz 2016: 127). Albertynka's un-formed body figures as the plane of consistency, galvanising new (de)formations of being and thought through innumerable possibilities that defy stratification and representation (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 40, 43). Gombrowicz's aesthetic figurations of the body and language thus resonate with the schizoanalytic theories that Guattari founded and applied at La Borde.

Outside of Philibert's camera lens, *Operetka* already functions in the domains of madness and radical alterity. Indeed, Gombrowicz viewed his work as saturated with a desire to rupture Form through mad revolt: 'Ja: żądza przebicia się poprzez formę do "ja" mojego i do rzeczywistości, wariat zbuntowany' ('Me: desiring to pass through Form to my "me" and to reality, a madman in revolt') (1971a: 18).[5] The operetta's perpetual refrains and reflexive doubling demonstrate how characters' relations percolate within a madness that implodes Form. Gombrowicz's reconfiguration of language grounds it within the material social field, a plane of reciprocal affectation that potentialises semiotic and existential mutations. Social roles are similarly reconfigured, initially by the ceaseless self-reference to their artificiality that dissipates their Form; this is expressly shown in Hufnagiel's revolution, when numerous characters become Other, or objects – Książę and Księżna Himalaj become furniture, the Proboszcz becomes a woman, and so on. *Operetka*'s reflexive shattering of Form recalls Guattari's retooling of psychoanalysis, which understands the unconscious as machinic (not structured like a language) and sketches its individual and collective functions through 'non-representational maps of processes of singularization that are not amenable to capture in psychogenetic stages, personological constructs, or in terms of universal complexes' (Genosko 2013: 271). In this sense, Gombrowicz's senseless repetition and language are a relentless counter to such constructs and complexes that impose power or capture subjectivity; Albertynka's nudity defies universal structures, and channels a raw intensity by tapping into a plane of consistency that catalyses alien modes of existence. For Gombrowicz, '[r]eality … is in the process of becoming at every moment, in people's consciousness, a function of extreme subjectivism. Always deformed by all that is external and always

deforming everything that surrounds it' (Baniewicz and Dutkiewicz 1992: 102). *Operetka*'s aesthetics treats how the individual's singularity harnesses this chaotic becoming, how the unfettered body and the bare relations of the decaying inter-human church nourish the closest proximity to it. Form, whether it is language, genre, gender or society, is transgressed to access the smooth intensity of existence and to fashion new modes of life through Form's decomposition. *Operetka*'s schizoanalytic dimensions prefigure the reciprocal functions between Philibert's film, La Borde and Gombrowicz's final work.

II. Gombrowicz at La Borde

In an interview with Patrick Leboutte, Philibert describes how *Operetka* was chosen to be produced and performed at La Borde. Gombrowicz's play was suggested by 'Marie, an actress who [was] also a carer at La Borde'; after presenting the play to staff and residents, everyone eagerly accepted it (Leboutte 2006: 4). Philibert then describes how 'right from the first rehearsal, [he] found that *Operette* had an extraordinary resonance in the context of La Borde, as if the exuberance of the text grew in magnitude, set as it was, on a stage of madness' (Leboutte 2006: 4). The residents' and staff's eagerness to put on the play, despite its complexity, denotes an immediate identification with the text. Staff and carers involved in the project did not insist on the selection; the 'group's desire' was the perpetual impetus behind the production (Guattari 2015: 118). Thus, any suggestion that '*Operetta* [was] ... used as a therapeutic music-theater project in [the] state home for the mentally disabled', or that 'the play [became] a part of a therapeutic assemblage', neglects how the production is less a therapy and rather an earnest theatrical endeavour by residents and carers (Kuharski 2004: 10; Goddard 2010: 103). Indeed, Philibert confirms this view as reductive: 'it would be wrong to think that theatre, as it takes place at La Borde, relies on any theory such as "art-therapy". If people do theatre it is ... because they want to' (Leboutte 2006: 5). It is the desire and the 'extraordinary resonance' Philibert sensed and filmed that will guide my analysis of the production, text and documentary. The commingling assemblages of the La Borde production, Gombrowicz's play and Philibert's documentary continually express one through the other, producing supervalent, collective enunciations – the frequencies between La Borde and Gombrowicz are recorded by Philibert and enmesh with viewers' subjectivities within this tripartite flux.

Operetka's uses of language and music inform the film's minor cinema by facilitating the expression of residents' subjectivities through and on the screen. The play's dialogue often frames transitions between scenes of residents rehearsing and their daily life at La Borde. One such shot begins with tree branches swaying in the wind; the sound of the wind then carries over to a shot of residents rehearsing the opening scene of Act III – which begins with the Wind of History howling. Philibert then cuts to a still shot of the château with a voice-over of the actors' rehearsal: 'Mais dites quelques choses, oh avez-vous perdu la praole?! Lorsque les choses humaines sont à l'étroit dans les mots le langage éclat!' ('But say something, oh have you lost your speech? When the affairs of man are cramped into words, language shatters') (Philibert 1997, my translation). Then the shot cuts to a resident named Claude, who slowly shuffles towards the camera and addresses the viewer in an indistinct mumble, 'I can't anymore...''; his voice trails off without finishing the sentence, and he walks away. In this sequence, the play's text prefaces the viewer's encounter with Claude. The voice-over decouples the play's lines from the actors by projecting them onto the château, where we find Claude. Claude's inability to articulate himself demonstrates language's failure to convey his singularity. For forty seconds the viewer sits with Claude without dialogue or any didactic frame; the play's lines surcharge his movements and gaze, stimulating an affective intensity. Philibert records Claude's lived experience such that language fractures, opening up a supervalent shared experience of presence through a non-discursive conjunction. The encounter subjectivises the viewer through Claude's transmitted singularity. *Operetka*'s reproach of language catalyses the affective encounter between Claude and the viewer, factilitating the film's a-signifying semiotic linkage, a pathic empathy. There is an ethics of virtuality that is generated between Philibert's cinematography and Gombrowicz's dramaturgy, which place the individual and human relations at their respective cores.

Throughout the film, residents comment on their attunement to *Operetka*, an attunement that diffuses itself through the film and viewer. Michel, a resident at La Borde since 1969, acts as an interlocutor in the documentary, who speaks with Philibert through the camera. After rehearsal, Philibert asks Michel about the play: 'P: La pièce vous plaît? M: Oui, surtout la troisième acte. P: Pourquoi? M: Parce que le château est en ruine, le vent souffle, il est tout un bruitage à faire, et... Je dis oui... Les reparties sont complètement déboussolées, ça me console' ('P: Do you like the play? M: Yes, especially the third

act. P: Why? M: Because the château is in ruins, the wind is blowing, there is all these noises to be made, and... I say yes... The lines are completely nonsensical, it consoles me') (Philibert 1997, my translation). The Himalayas' revolutionary chaos is Michel's favourite part of Gombrowicz's play; when the ball's upper-class pageantry crumbles and socialites become inanimate objects. *Operetka*'s dismantling of social relations and language '*consoles*' Michel. The play's seemingly inaccessible incoherence does not estrange him, rather it expresses something reaffirming. His subjectivity resonates with Gombrowicz's language and staging that fracture Form and channel new becomings in their pure intensity. Guattari explains that this intensive continuum is 'not graspable in a representational apparatus but by a pathic existential absorption, a pre-egoic, pre-identificatory agglomeration. Schizophrenia is as if set up right in the centre of this chaotic gaping' (1995: 18). Michel's comment denotes an attunement to Gombrowicz's revaluation of language and rupturing of Form, which actualise a proximity to this intense plane. As an auxiliary aesthetic coefficient of Philibert's film (and minor cinema), *Operetka* facilitates the affective, ethical encounter between viewer and resident by diffusing a pathic flux of lived experience, allowing the former to develop a nascent sense of how the play consoles Michel and why language will always fracture when Claude speaks.

Philibert's documentary frames the residents' experiences through Gombrowicz's *Operetka* which functions as an interpretative lens or tool. Guattari's ethico-aesthetic paradigm is affirmed through the residents' and play's reciprocal expressions – a collective aesthetic enunciation. In *Chaosmosis*, Guattari affirms that aesthetics innovates more productive interpretive tools than critical discourses: 'If you want to analyze your unconscious, rather than going to Freud and Lacan, refer to the richest authors – Proust, Beckett, Joyce, Faulkner, Kafka or Artaud – because scarcely anything better has been done since. Interpret Freud, Jung and the others through Proust and not vice versa' (1995: 182). Gombrowicz, whose neobaroque style attracted the critical attention of Gilles Deleuze, is an unmentioned addition to Guattari's list.[6] Guattari views aesthetics as an effective mode of mapping and interpreting subjectivity and its collective composition. Unlike conventional hermeneutic tools, aesthetics not only potentialises critical self-reflexivity but catalyses creative (self)experimentation that can augment the capacity of subjectivity through an existential reconfiguration. In this sense, *Operetka* functions as aesthetico-theoretical shifter within and through Philibert's film; with its

dramaturgy that adopts absurdity, or madness, to question Form, it distils and affectively transmits the lived experiences of La Borde's residents through their production of the play. Gombrowicz's play prompts a remapping of viewer subjectivity via the film's minor cinematic rendering of the residents' theatrical endeavours and quotidian lives. Philibert's focus on the artistic processes of the La Borde theatrical production fills many scenes with dialogues and songs from *Operetka*, while engaging the viewer in the collective efforts and spaces of rehearsals. As a result, the play's text and staging gain greater consistency through the film, enveloping the viewer within the La Borde production.

Philibert films many of the troupe's rehearsals, but perhaps the most memorable are those led by André Giroud, the music director, who leads residents in warm-ups and repetitive assays to perfect songs. The songs' vertiginous repetition and memorable melodies augment and choreograph language's 'mute dance of intensities' upon the viewer (Guattari 2011: 32). Musical refrains reconfigure repetition through rhythm, sonority, pitch and melody; they set a repetitive tempo, recalibrate it through keys and tones, and then they elicit unexpected musical or bodily reactions, such as a swaying of the body or dancing, a cadenza, a listener humming off-key or creating a new harmony. Not restricted to music, Deleuze and Guattari describe that refrains refer to gestures, sounds, images, traditions and other repetitions that bound heterogeneous social assemblages, as well as mark, re-form and mutate territories (Watson 2013: 254). Refrains are key to the intermingled processes of territorialisation, reterritorialisation and deterritorialisation; they have diverse uses that can reaffirm behaviours and forms, or catalyse creative changes. *Operetka*'s musical score exemplifies a refrain of deterritorialisation, as '[Gombrowicz] specified that there must never be a fixed score for [*Operetka*] ... but rather that each new production should commission its own'; each production composes its respective refrains based on the play, recasting the lyrics in various tempos and melodies, whilst actors improvise gestures, dances and harmonies (Kuharski 2004: 10).[7] Gombrowicz's principle potentialises music to erode Form through a constant recomposition that causes the score to decompose and mutate through every production, marking and mutating territories. Each novel musical score for *Operetka*, therefore, stokes a given production's singularity, deterritorialising the play through ever-changing refrains. In *La moindre des choses*, the film's minor cinema and Gombrowicz's dramaturgy respectively inform the refrains' functioning through the viewer by

implicating her in the production's social assemblage. As a result, Giroud's original score saturates the documentary with the La Borde production's singularisation of *Operetka*, its refrains reconfiguring viewer subjectivity.

La moindre des choses is replete with opera arias, popular songs, nursery rhymes, and Giroud's original score that diffuse through the viewer. The opening scene emphasises music's pervasive role in the film by showing a woman singing 'J'ai perdu mon Eurydice' from Gluck's opera, *Orphée et Eurydice*, on a path in the La Borde forest. Without any reference of setting, who she is, or the relevance of the song, the viewer is haunted by the rawness of the performance and the singer's final gaze. The woman's vocal intensity amplifies the lyrics' sombreness:

> Eurydice! Eurydice!
> Mortel silence! Vaine espérance!
> Quelle souffrance!
> Quel tourment déchire mon cœur
> J'ai perdu mon Eurydice
> Rien n'égale mon malheur
> Sort cruel! quelle rigueur!
> Rien n'égale mon malheur
> Sort cruel ! quelle rigueur !
> Je succombe à ma douleur
> à ma douleur
> à ma douleur (Gluck)

Philibert then cuts to different residents walking around La Borde, their tardive dyskinesia noticeable in their rigid movements and off-tempo paces. Gluck's aria is quickly associated with the residents' suffering and alienation, alluding to art's potential to convey their pain – the film begins with an ethical impulse through music. However, the pairing of the opera aria and the wide shots of the patients produces a detached distance; the viewer more so observes the patients than encounters them. The aria's serious tone and the framed distance momentarily establish a removed, viewer position. Philibert voids this distance by implicating the viewer within Gombrowicz's subversion of the operatic form. The film and play preserve the possibility for empathetic connection between viewers and the residents by directly situating the former in the intimate, aesthetic moment of collaboration and creation.

The first filmed rehearsal of La Borde's *Operetka* is a group vocal warm-up with the refrain 'Les tabourets de Lord Blotton' (Gombrowicz 1969: 15). It takes place in the same forested area as the opening scene; the playfulness of Gombrowicz's play spatially overwrites Gluck's

aria – the mock-operetta's refrain ridicules and defuses the opera's melancholic air. Led by Giroud, the residents repeat the refrain over and over in a crescendo, followed by a diminuendo to a whisper. In the following warm-up, residents repeat the refrain while increasing tempo in an accelerando that falls apart into residents laughing and joking. The rehearsal is filmed at eye level, as though seated in the circle among the residents. Partaking in the rehearsal, the viewer laughs with the residents; the film neutralises any possible degrading humour by evoking laughter through the residents' contagious laughs and smiles (Biley 2008: 349). In situating the viewer among residents and implicating her in their playfulness, Philibert avoids creating a privileged cinematic position and counteracts any assumed social or sanist hierarchy – the viewer *becomes* a fellow resident. By taking part in the numerous musical rehearsals, the viewer learns song lyrics, the music provokes her to hum or sway. For example, the refrain from Act II, 'Ah, ah, ah, quel bal ce bal! Ah, ah, ah, ça c'est un bal!', quickly inscribes itself on the viewer through its sheer frequency in the film (Gombrowicz 1969: 23). After viewing the film, the refrain is involuntarily recalled. Music cognition specialists and psychologists call this phenomenon *involuntary musical imagery*, which 'involves the imagination of musical sound in the absence of directly corresponding sound stimulation from the physical environment' (Campbell and Margulis 2015: 347). The synaesthesia evoked in the term recalls how music intensely marks itself upon the body.[8] In a certain regard, the involuntary musical imagery of *Operetka*'s refrains function as the production's residual reterritorialisation of the viewer. Placed within the La Borde production's rehearsals and encircled by their refrains, the viewer becomes entangled in the film and play's affective rendering of the residents' experiences; she undergoes a *becoming minor*, more specifically a *becoming resident*. The film and production inscribe *Operetka*'s ludic refrains upon the viewer through her proximity with the residents' rehearsals, and later retrace her *becoming resident* by sustaining the virtual community with the La Borde production.

III. Micro-politics and Nudity

Operetka's absurdist critiques of social norms through the individual and her body, particularly Albertynka, is echoed in the documentary's representations of everyday life at La Borde. Philibert's choice not to film *Operetka*'s finale evokes the scene's abruptness in the text and most productions: Albertynka rises nude from the tomb, causing a tempest of

celebratory salvation that has the cast singing and dancing with her; the play then suddenly ends. Konstanty Puzyna suggests that '[t]he curtain falls just in time ... because we can be sure that after the first revelation of her nakedness, everyone will start dressing poor Albertynka all over again' (1984: 168); for Kuprel, the fleetingness of the scene correlates to 'the palpitation between the triumph of flesh (nakedness) and the virtuality of symbolic meaning (anthropomorphized resurrection)' (1994: 426). In *La moindre des choses* the scene's liminality diffuses itself throughout the film; the reader of *Operetka* anticipates the scene in the production, but it never arrives. Rather, Albertynka's Form-less, androgynous body is smoothed out into a powdery presence and thrives as non-representational intensity. Her nudity is actualised through the mad body's bare presence in and through the camera frame. In other words, the film functions through a perpetual *démasquage*, Albertynka's nudity as anti-mask, through its chief subject: the lived experience of madness. We see this in the documentary's pivotal scene, which shows a silent close-up of a black mask; after ten seconds, the mask comes down and reveals Michel sitting on his bed smiling weakly – we only hear ambient sounds. Philibert situates the scene near the fifty-minute mark of the hundred-minute documentary, underlining its central function. The scene is followed by a short montage of silent, close-up shots of residents sitting or lying down on their beds, sometimes looking through the camera at the viewer. Michel's *démasquage* and the montage of residents strips away social labels, or Form, through an intimate proximity, a bare encounter that engenders a reconfiguration of self in the face of another's experience. Albertynka's unformed body functions through Philibert's camera lens by facilitating an intensive encounter that strips away Form. Her amorphous, nude body is reflected in La Borde's deconstruction of the doctor–resident relationship, which similarly strips away socio-political roles imposed by bureaucratic and social structures.

Since the late 1950s, La Borde's staff and residents have used an organisational tool that Guattari coined as *transversality* to organise the clinic as a non-hierarchical, community-focused institution. During his early years at the clinic, Guattari proposed the idea of transversality as a way of demystifying and diffusing the authority of nurses, doctors and other care providers among residents and other staff. The practice established a work schedule that rotated roles between doctors, nurses, librarians, cooks and groundskeepers, causing all staff to develop different relationships and groups with residents, who also helped run the clinic. Through a transversal organisation 'a new kind of dialogue can begin in the group: the delusions and all the other

unconscious manifestations which have hitherto kept the resident in a kind of solitary confinement can achieve a collective mode of expression' (Guattari 2015: 116). Transversal relations decentralise authority, enrich encounters, and ensure multidirectional flows within the institute (Genosko 2013: 321). Residents and staff can collectively function and express themselves without fear of the institutional superego. Philibert's documentary visually captures transversality at work in La Borde, as Paul Elliott explains:

> what comes across most acutely is the transversal relationships that exist between doctors and patients, sick and well, and ultimately, the film and the viewer … At times the identities of staff members and patients become blurred, as the transversality of the regime encourages each member of the community to open themselves up to the possibility of change by other groups. (2012: 19)

While watching *La moindre des choses*, the viewer often cannot distinguish between residents and other staff at La Borde. Bodies are not differentiated or marked; they are nude like Albertynka's body. *Operetka*'s dismantling of Form is evoked through this transversality, 'patients gradually change as they cease to become merely psychotics and instead become actors, painters, musicians and acrobats' capable of artistically expressing themselves by reworking the play's script, drawing posters for the production, and playing in the production's band (Elliott 2012: 19). The inability to distinguish between residents, carers, set builders and other staff then produces an identitarian disorientation in the viewer's filmic encounter. Philibert's minor cinema not only captures La Borde's transversality, but rearticulates it by decentring viewer subjectivity within the La Borde community; a micro-political shift effaces distinctions between mad and sane to potentialise solidarity. As Michel explains to Philibert and the viewer, 'à La Borde … on est entre nous et vous êtes entre nous aussi maintenant' ('at La Borde … we are among ourselves, and you are one of us now, too') (Philibert 1997, my translation). Transversality elaborates the theme of theatricality that Philibert uses to equivocate the distinctions between sanity and insanity.

Theatricality in *La moindre des choses* runs parallel to La Borde's transversality, and couples with *Operetka*'s hyper-reflexivity. In his introduction to the documentary, Andrews argues that Gombrowicz's play provides a theme of acting and theatre. He describes that society requires people to learn roles and memorise lines just like in a theatrical performance, and the forgetting of these societal roles and lines is

equated with insanity (Andrews 2006). In other words, the distinction between sanity and insanity is equivocated by the theatricality of life in society, which the film brings to the fore. Andrews's analysis complements the transversality Philibert evokes. The former's analysis, however, is complicated by considering the title '*Operetka*'. An operetta is a sardonic mimicry of the opera, a comic self-reflection of the theatrical form. *Operetka* – whose title indicates its Form and reveals a self-awareness of its comic self-reflection – through its bare and absurd depiction of pre-war high society, upends the already parodic form of operetta, thus demonstrating a hyper-reflexivity.[9] Gombrowicz's play and its title, therefore, elaborate the question of theatricality in *La moindre des choses*. The La Borde production adds another reflexive layer. *Operetka*'s characters, most of whom are members of pre-war high society, constitute the average audience of operettas in the early twentieth century; the setting in the Himalayas obtusely emphasises the high society 'na wysokościach!' ('on the heights!') (Gombrowicz 1971b: 163, my translation). Residents diagnosed as unwell perform caricatures that lay bare society's unstable artificiality. Actors' diagnoses become arbitrary in a different sense than Andrews's interpretation; that is, their performance questions the credibility of an inherently absurd society to label them as 'sick'. This is reflected in a rehearsal during which a resident named Patrick dons a top hat, cane and monocle while singing nursery rhymes; as he finishes singing 'Frère Jacques', someone in the rehearsal exclaims 'Vous êtes vraiment Parisien!' ('You are really Parisian!'), and the group laughs (Philibert 1997). Though depicted as a joke, the context of *Operetka*'s social critique sharpens it into a precise invective – particularly since Gombrowicz's Himalayas refer to the capital of the highest culture, Paris (Mazurkiewicz 2016: 118). The collective and layered hyper-reflexivity of the residents' performance of *Operetka* enunciates a micro-politics. By performing Gombrowicz's play, the residents indict society's right to diagnose them; their performance becomes a mirror of the absurdity they perceive in the world outside of the clinic.

After the troupe's performance, Michel channels its socio-political critique into a direct accusation at the viewers. His indictment is prefaced by a montage: trees blowing in the wind (the Wind of History's final gusts), a resident cleaning up after the performance, and another seated in the forest whistling to himself. The shot then cuts to a close-up of Michel's face, who points at the viewer: 'D'abord, c'est vous qui m'aviez rendu malade. La société en général. Je fais pas de distinctions, la société en général. Et maintenant, je vais mieux grâce à la société aussi, je

vais mieux. Et oui, je vais vous donner un conseil, si vous permettez. Ne parlez jamais de votre santé au médecin, parce qu'il pourrait vous asservir' ('First off, you made me sick. Society in general. I don't make any distinctions, society in general. And now, I'm doing better thanks to society, too, I'm doing better. And yes, I'll give you a piece of advice, if you allow me. Never speak to a doctor about your health, because he can enslave you') (Philibert 1997, my translation). Michel underlines the madness of a society that strips diagnosed people of their freedom and systematically cultivates pharmaceutical dependencies. His advice to the audience resembles Gombrowicz's absurdist dialogues and functions as the film's most direct micro-political evocation; the distance between viewer and the resident is evacuated, as she becomes synchronously aware of her complicity in the mental health system and the system's power structure to which she is also subjected. This awareness is indicative of the film's subjectivation: how it induces a *becoming resident*, enmeshing the viewers and residents' desire to potentialise social solidarity and revolutionary politics to come. Michel acts one of the 'reflexive elements' of *La moindre des choses*, that underlines filmmaking and cinema-going as complicit in society's apparatus of control (Stastny 1998: 75). In this sense, the documentary participates in an auto-critique, self-consciously mapping how its processes are entangled in the mental health system as a form of resident testimony, or medical documentation of clinic procedures. The documentary is swept up in *Operetka*'s hyper-reflexivity, as it implicates itself in the treatment of cinema and madness, reflexively critiquing its ethico-ontological stance. Philibert then asks Michel to share his feelings about the performance, not realising that he has already been talking about the play.

IV. Cinematic and Interhuman Liturgies

Throughout this paper, I have not discussed the actual performance, staging and directorial decisions made by the La Borde troupe. Philibert only provides viewers with a seven-minute non-chronological montage of the performance. *Operetka*, however, recites itself through the film's expressions of the production's collective, artistic processes. Mapping the reciprocal functions between *Operetka*, *La moindre des choses* and the La Borde production demonstrates how the film's affective intensity is charged by the residents' singularisation of Gombrowicz's dramaturgy. Much more than a therapeutic tool, *Operetka* becomes expressive of the residents' molecular revolution

that galvanises revolutionary shifts in viewer subjectivity. Through this collective, aesthetic enunciation the viewer's *becoming resident* entangles her within the La Borde production, potentialising her allyship in minoritarian struggles.

Guattari observed that '[c]inema … has taken the place of ancient liturgies' and can either 'renovate, adapt, and assimilate the ancient gods of bourgeois familialism' or spark molecular revolutions, radical singularisations and transversal social solidarity (2009: 266). Philibert's cinematic liturgy initiates its viewers into Gombrowicz's ludic, interhuman church, their bonds with the residents facilitated by the ethico-aesthetic effects of *Operetka* and the documentary. The collective, aesthetic enunciation functioning in and through *La moindre des choses* shows how various art media intermingle to produce and transmit lived experiences. Through these embodied expressions, the film's frames and the theatre's stage dissolve and enable brief moments of existential contact between viewers and residents. Lost in the radical alterity of aesthetic creation and madness, subjectivity is mixed on a palette to paint new shapes of self and Other.

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Notes

1. Michael Goddard's *Gombrowicz, Polish Modernism, and the Subversion of Form* provides an extensive study of Gombrowicz as an untimely thinker whose thoughts resonate with Deleuze's (and Guattari's) post-structuralist philosophies. In his discussion of *Operetka*, Goddard briefly analyses the play's function in Philibert's documentary (2010: 103). While informative, the paragraph-long analysis only begins to trace the nuanced entanglement between the play, the film and Guattari's theories.
2. As Goddard notes, the title, *La moindre des choses*, or *Every Little Thing*, 'seems to have emerged out of Gombrowicz's novel Ferdydurke', thereby hearkening to the film's central periphery of *Operetka* (2010: 103). Through the setting of La Borde, however, the title also alludes to Guattari's theoretical and practical focus on the molecular revolutionary potential of artistic, political and social activities and interactions at intrapersonal and interpersonal levels. This is expressed in the documentary's focus on the quiet, unnoticed moments of residents' everyday lives, which are filmed at great length. Though Guattari is unmentioned in the film, the setting of La Borde is synonymous with his oeuvre of theoretical and political work – he worked at the clinic from 1955 to his death on the premises in 1992, just three years prior to Philibert's filming. Within the very title of the film, Gombrowiczean and Guattarian assemblages already commingle and produce collective expressions.

3. Intensity is theorised at length in Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* and later taken up and expanded by theorists, such as Brian Massumi in *Parables for the Virtual* (2002) and Gary Genosko in 'The Search for Non-Meaning'. Intensity is described as a non-discursive and pathic flux of virtual content emerging from new universes of reference, which exists in an intermediary state within structures of representation and signs; in other words, intensity is the 'giving' of potentiality found in discourse and structure, the 'given', that can galvanise ontological and subjective mutations when finally expressed or explored (Genosko 2018: 173).

4. Ewa Płonowska Ziarek explains that 'Gombrowicz's obsession with the condition of the speaking subject goes hand in hand with his explorations of the "interhuman" character of language, or, what he sometimes refers to as "interhuman church". In this intersubjective domain, the problematic of signification is intertwined with the question of nationality, ideology ..., and culture in the most general sense' (1998: 13).

5. In his *Diary*, Gombrowicz compares himself to two late, contemporary artists – Bruno Schulz and Witkacy – and distinguishes himself as the 'madman in revolt' (1971a: 18, my translation). His self-reflexive comment aligns with the argument that *Operetka* violates Form and language to reach a reality that cannot be expressed through structures.

6. Guattari, however, did write about Gombrowicz's colleague and contemporary, Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz, or Witkacy, in his essay 'Refrain and the Machinic-Feminine in Witkiewicz's *The Pragmatists*'. While Deleuze wrote about Gombrowicz as one of the major Modern writers, Guattari became critically invested in Witkacy's aesthetics; these respective critical affinities demonstrate the Deleuze–Guattari binary that remaps itself onto the Gombrowicz–Witkacy binary, highlighting the institutional preference of the major philosopher (Deleuze) and Polish writer (Gombrowicz) which systematically neglects the philosophical and literary contributions of the schizoanalyst and Polish playwright and artist (Ziarek 1998: 6). A more detailed, and comprehensive study of this mirrored binary, and its aesthetico-philosohpic resonances, would extend and complement Goddard's comparative project.

7. Kuharski points out that 'there exist today over two dozen different scores for the work from a dozen countries, a singular phenomenon in contemporary world theater' (Kuharski 2004: 10).

8. Certain studies claim that music is 'the most disturbing type of all' involuntary semantic memories (Liikanen 2011: 243).

9. Hyper-reflexivity is a psychopathological term coined by Louis A. Sass 'as a movement of thought particularly prevalent in people who have been diagnosed with schizophrenia. Sass describes hyperreflexivity as an excessive alertness toward the very structure of thinking that continuously analyses the thought processes while they proceed, breaking them up, and picking them apart into dismembered pieces separated by intervals of vacuity' (Bjørnholt Michaelsen 2018: 7). I use the term here, in its original sense, but also in an aesthetic sense of Gombrowicz's acute use, reuse, subversion and play of Form. That is to say, the meticulous aesthetisation of *Operetka*'s satiric inversions resembles the excessive awareness of thought's structures and their vivisection in hyper-reflexivity.

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Reading for *Senseation* in Poetry

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Abstract

The article, as part of ongoing research, is a theoretical account of the workings of affect and affectivity in the process of reading poetry, closing with an illustrative reading. It takes heed of the criticism of the terminology employed in affect studies and the employability of affect in critical discourse as an operative category. The study shows that the difficulty in the applicability of affect in discursive situations lies in its nature – in its being at once experienceable, yet impalpable. As a consequence, the article proposes the need to relocate the perspective within the reading for affect as an empty term and foregrounds the ways in which concentrating on Deleuzian sensation and sense, rather than affect alone, allows it to become operative.

Keywords: affect, Deleuze, Oswald, sensation, sense, *senseation*, Zourabichvili

I. Introduction

Poetry can be defined neither by its content nor by its form. A recognition of it does not emerge from the presence or lack of certain features, such as rhyme schemes or metre, the breaking of the text into lines, distorting syntax or using stylistic devices. Like prose, poetry may contain descriptions and narratives, express emotions and attitudes. Yet none of it, not even particular semantic or representational meanings that arise from poems, can be said to make them distinct from other forms of writing. Nevertheless, these are the features of poetry that literary theory accepts as operative. When discussing what they do, poets

themselves tend to use vocabulary that does not seem to suit critical thought. For instance, Seamus Heaney calls the ability to mediate the unnameable within poetry 'technique':

> It is indeed conceivable that a poet could have a real technique and a wobbly craft … but more often it is a case of a sure enough craft and a failure of technique. And if I were asked for a figure who represents pure technique, I would say a water diviner. You can't learn the craft of dowsing or divining – it is a gift for being in touch with what is there, hidden and real, a gift for mediating between the latent resource and the community that wants it current and released. (2003: 20)

Blanchot interprets Mallarmé's words about poetry as if it were composed of a kind of essential language, which, when looked at more closely, appears not to be a language after all, but something ungraspable which, nevertheless, is present. Blanchot argues that rational language, the language of thought, is not the language of poetry. The former is rather 'crude' and representational, and '[w]hat it represents is not present'. Such a language is for rationalising the everyday, whilst poetry awakens the 'elemental' (Blanchot 1989: 39–40). A certain saturatedness of intensities that a writer should aspire to appears to be discussed, whilst the poet seems to be considered to be someone who, along with words, handles that which escapes theoretical operations. The reader, however, seems to appreciate a poem – whether it is difficult or easy to understand, whether it is mainstream or innovative – by the effects it produces, how it interacts with and changes states of affairs.

An area of research that has emerged during the last decades which provides access to the matter of intensities is affect studies. While agreeing on the essential nature of affects as experienceable, impactful and transformative, research on affect in general – regardless of the field it is conducted in – oscillates between two directions.[1] One is concerned with bodies, cognition and psychology and through that with discernible feelings and emotions (e.g. Tomkins, Altieri); the other concentrates on more elusive intensities, their vectors and lines, slowness and speed (the followers of the Deleuzian/Spinozist philosophy of immanence, such as Massumi, Van Alphen et al.). Whichever the angle, when regarding affect within the discourse of art, what are seen to emerge in the case of an encounter between the viewer and the artefact are metamorphic capacities.

Although the Deleuzian/Spinozist branch of theory employs the word 'affect' when speaking of that kind of sensory experience, as do the other representatives of affect theory, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari

speak of sensation or blocks of sensation instead. Affect for them constitutes only a part of sensation, whereas the other part is percept. The impersonal character and the manifestations of the two terms are discussed in depth in *What is Philosophy?* (1991). Yet, instead of the detailed descriptions (for example, affects as harmonies and percepts as landscapes; Deleuze and Guattari 2009: 163–77), what seems even better to help grasp the workings of sensation in the manner Deleuze and Guattari intended is their explicating the notion through the reciprocity and prerequisiteness of an encounter as presented in Jakob von Uexküll's theory of *Umwelt* (Deleuze and Guattari 2009: 185). Namely, before introducing the method of semiotic analysis, Uexküll lays the ground for it by describing relations in nature as contrapuntal within a vast symphony of Nature (1982: 52).

'Contrapuntal', in the musical context of the term, indicates the harmonic interdependence of two or more rhythmically and pitch-wise independent melodies. Uexküll's extended metaphor (including such words as 'tone', 'motif', 'symphony' and so on) creates the vivid idea of the encounters of the two melodies 'note for note, point for point' (Deleuze and Guattari 2009: 185), which in Deleuze and Guattari's interpretation are sensational events: the event is not the fact of meeting as such but the fusing of the intensities of the meeting counterparts. The two elements in nature 'enter a harmonious meaning relationship with each other' (Uexküll 1982: 52) the factors of which are joined by the same meaning, are being 'jointly composed by nature' (Uexküll 1982: 52). It is especially noteworthy that in the Uexküllian symphony of nature, not only are there contrapuntal relations between some particular organs or organisms, but it also includes the inorganic: the meaningful relations occur between the fly and the spider web, the rain and the leaf. While Uexküll's approach is generally considered subjective, Deleuze and Guattari regard the sensational, impersonal relations in his explanations and descriptions which precede his suggestion of how such relationships could be analysed rationally. In the latter, Uexküll proposes to view the relations from the perspective of only one of the counterparts at a time – for instance, whether as the 'meaning-utilizing' or the 'meaning-receiving' one (Uexküll 1982: 52).

Thus, what appears to be most important in discussing sensation, for Deleuze and Guattari, is, indeed, impersonality – not, however, in the sense of socially and culturally determined collective behaviour but in the sense of becoming the encountered:

The tick is organically constructed in such a way that it finds its counterpoint in any mammal whatever that passes below its branch, as oak leaves arranged in the form of tiles find their counterpoint in the raindrops that stream over them. This is not a teleological conception but a melodic one in which we no longer know what is art and what nature ('natural technique'). There is counterpoint whenever a melody arises as a 'motif' within another melody, as in the marriage of bumblebee and snapdragon. These relationships of counterpoint join planes together, form compounds of sensations and blocs, and determine becomings. (Deleuze and Guattari 2009: 185)

Resorting to the above, the point of departure in this study is the understanding that poetry – despite its being comprised of words, punctuation and any other either typographic (e.g. upper or lower case letters), or graphic (line breaks, spaces and the placement of what is printed on the page) elements as its material – is composed of impersonal forces.[2] Considering that for Deleuze subjectivity contains opinions and evaluations, the experiencing of the forces of an artistic composition is also impersonal – not yet of subjective nature, but of individual nature. Therefore, an interpretation is necessarily subjective, whereas an experience without evaluations and analysis may be individual (e.g. Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 400, 479; 2009: 170, 197). According to a number of processual empiricists (e.g. Deleuze 2015: 196–8; William James 2010: 191), affective forces are almost 'imperceptible' – that is, they are 'palpable' solely in the immediacy of an experience and only possible, yet still difficult to be broached afterwards. In the context of reading poetry, the forces manifest themselves in an event of reading during an encounter between the poem and the reader, and are determined partly by the arrangement of the 'physical' material (words etc.) and partly by the past and present lived experiences of the reader.

Employing the Deleuzian/Spinozist intensities (when seen as separate from determinable feelings and emotions, but also distinct from evaluation and opinion, hence interpretation, as well) in academic discourse has, however, appeared to be problematic; criticism of the studies of affect concerns, for instance, the terminology used to discuss the impersonal, non-representational forces and the ideological impasse to which it leads. Robin James, in a chapter of her book *The Sonic Episteme*, foregrounds that criticism of new materialism, rooted in the impersonal affect theory of the Deleuzian/Spinozist branch, involves the ways that, in the attempts to avoid representationalism (and concurrently to capture the 'texture' of affect), 'conceptual abstraction'

seems merely to be substituted with vibrational or sonorous abstraction (James 2017). She also mentions the lack of originality in the choice of terminology – the sole reliance on the vocabulary of Deleuze and Spinoza – and the ways in which the latter is seen to have evolved into a practice that constantly reproduces an idealised model instead of a descriptive one, forgetting both to exemplify the processual aspects and to talk about the actual objects of study (James 2017). Elspeth Probyn (2005), in a similar way, distinguishes between the impersonal 'Affect' 'as an essentially empty [and] yet another contentless term in cultural theory', encouraging researchers to 'put [their] energies into motivated analyses of the constitution, the experience, the political, cultural and individual import of many affects' instead; to write about 'affect' with feeling or emotion, unlike the impersonal theory allows, and let 'Affect' rest in peace. Unlike Probyn, whose main argument seems to be against privileging the theoretical and dismissing the 'bodily and physiological responses', Eugenie Brinkema, who engages in formal analysis and close reading of film, appears to lament the lack of precisely those different layers of culturo-theoretical context. She points out the inoperativity of affect as a critical category, arguing that instead of enriching the discourse of cultural and social studies with promised excess and unexpectancy, the theory of Affect – negating the structural, formal, signifying, textual and legible, in order to emphasise the characteristic state of the 'pure possibility' of affects – is flat and general, produced by the lack of generic, historical and emotional specificity (Brinkema 2014: xii–xiv).

In the light of such criticism, this article attempts to avoid stagnation in the reading of poetry both in the form of representations and the presenting of Affect as an ideology. Nevertheless, it aims to retain the impersonal approach and does not equate sensation with determinable feelings or emotions, arguing that this does not necessarily mean dismissing 'bodily and physiological responses'. It seems relevant to remember that in presenting and developing his ideas, even when touching upon a variety of fields in science and arts, Deleuze's 'mode of thinking' was not scientific but philosophical. Unlike scientists who attempt to 'order and regulate' a set of objects to manage the chaos, philosophers 'confront chaos' by 'reinvent[ing] the whole process of thinking and living' (Colebrook 2003: 78–9). Therefore, instead of abstracting stable interpretations from an experience, a philosophical practice acknowledges the immanence or the respective prerequisiteness of various aspects: 'There is no single ground of production – such as the production of language, concepts or even material production – that

explains the other levels of production that constitute life' (Colebrook 2003: 78–9). Considering this, affect – whether seen as one omnipresent impersonal force or as a multiplicity of nameable feelings – depends on the existence of the named cultural social, formal, textual, emotional and other such levels, and vice versa. The philosopher is interested in how these aspects are connected in producing new modes of thought: 'A philosopher thinks in terms of concepts – concepts that aim to think, not of this or that object, but of the plane of all objectivity, subjectivity or being' (Colebrook 2003: 78–9). While philosophical 'thinking' does not, at first glance, seem to be the way to approach sensation in a work of poetry, it is the 'reinventing' of thinking (as Colebrook noted) in terms of the process of analytical reading of poetry that ought to be attempted. Specifically, thinking which, prior to interpreting an experience of a poem, enables one first to foreground the experienced sensation in its impersonality. The latter means attempting to discuss sensation not as determinable emotions or feelings, and not resorting to sonorous or vibrational terminology. In order to imagine what is left aside or outside such restrictions, it might be helpful to look briefly at Deleuze and Guattari's discussions of 'sensation' in art, 'concept' in philosophy and 'function' in science, which, for them, seem to operate both differently and alike.

Like philosophy and science, art aims to confront chaos through 'laying out a plane', yet the planes for them are different: for philosophy it is the plane of consistency, for science – organisation, and for art – a plane of composition (Deleuze and Guattari 2009). Furthermore, sensations and philosophical concepts are defined by becoming, yet Deleuze and Guattari mention that these becomings can never be quite the same; all they could be are 'sensations of concepts and concepts of sensations':

> It is not the same becoming. Sensory becoming is the action by which something or someone is ceaselessly becoming-other (while continuing to be what they are), sunflower or Ahab, whereas conceptual becoming is the action by which the common event itself eludes what is. Conceptual becoming is heterogeneity grasped in an absolute form; sensory becoming is otherness caught in a matter of expression. (Deleuze and Guattari 2009: 177)

The suggestion of the difficulty or, indeed, questionability of distinguishing the different becomings may be seen to be present in Deleuze and Guattari's controversial statement about the different plains and techniques of production being merely the 'three aspects under which the brain becomes subject, Thought-brain' (2009: 210), which

'is not only the "I conceive" of the brain as philosophy, it is also the "I feel" of the brain as art. Sensation is no less brain than the concept' (ibid. 211–12). They emphasise that the separate, incomparable ways of how the three operate 'do not define the difference between disciplines without also constituting their perpetual interbreeding' (ibid. 24–5). The authors even go so far as to contend that to ask 'at what stage on the path or at what level sensation appears' (ibid. 211–12) is, indeed, not necessary. For it (sensation) as the 'excitation itself' is ever-present as Soul or force – resonating constantly with and contracting impulses, preserving and prolonging those vibrations – as 'contracted vibration that has become quality, variety' (ibid. 211–12). Yet, the very Soul or Force as sensation is also the 'Brain subject', a contemplation: one's 'contemplating of oneself to the extent that one contemplates the elements from which one originates' (ibid. 211–12). Contemplation does not, thus, seem to mean rational thinking, reflecting, evaluating, but matter or substance which is contemplated through sensation, especially because contemplation appears to be a level of experience that is characteristic to all life: 'Plotinus defined all things as contemplations, not only people and animals but plants, the earth, and rocks' (ibid. 211–12). The idea of grasping sensation then would entail not only regarding the aesthetic, cultural or social evaluations, but life in the work of art. The saying that 'Contemplating is creating, the mystery of passive creation, sensation' (ibid. 211–12) hints that what the researcher might want to look for is not static vibration or noise, but a process, which, despite its seeming ungraspability or incorporeality, cannot be separated from the levels with which it is in co-dependent relationship as 'prescribed' by Deleuze's immanent metaphysics.

In poetry, the forming of affective images could be seen as such a process, and it is accessible through the material of poetry which has a role in determining the quality of the sensation produced during the encounter: it is not possible to regard sensation in poetry separately from its 'physical' material. As already mentioned, part of the material is also words, that is, language. However, it is not the language that delivers semantic or propositional meaning but language as a combination of words or phrases that has an effect on the reader, an effect of intensity, the swarm of 'experience[s], feeling[s], perception[s] or event[s] – not so much located within an ordered time and space as being one of the many flows from which time and space are discerned' (Colebrook 2003: 83). In what follows, the non-representational, processual aspect of words – but also whether they can be considered meaningful, possibly in the Uexküllian, contrapuntal way – will be examined.

II. Words and Sense

Gayatri Spivak has on several occasions explained her position of the non-translatability of culture when compared to the translatability of language by elaborating on the idea of 'lingual memory'. She suggests that in the process of acquiring their first language, children 'invent' their own language in which they will, eventually, 'invent' themselves. The notion of 'lingual memory' itself is borrowed from anthropologist Alton L. Becker, who believes that the language that one is 'thrown into becomes a part of [one's] consciousness' (1998: 421). Wherefore, in what he calls 'languaging' – a continuous language reel in the head – one is always 'simultaneously in the past, present and future' (Becker 1998: 421).[3] Spivak explains the possibility of such 'lingual memory' via Melanie Klein's psychoanalytic theory of internal objects – mental and emotional images of external objects that have been projected inside the self which will continuously contribute to its complex relationship with the self and the outside world ('internal objects'). Regardless of how this actually happens, or whether it can as yet be scientifically proved or not (Spivak 2009: 612), both Becker and Spivak believe that a word when 'activated' (Spivak 2009: 612) in an encounter may evoke 'its own past in the varied wordmemories of its readers' (Becker 1998: 338). Moreover, what is revealed or activated is not necessarily (or rather, not only) 'the content but the very moves of languaging' (Spivak 2009: 612). Besides immaterial meaning, words also awaken the 'felt sense' (Gendlin 1995) attached to them. Claire Colebrook, in interpreting Deleuze's work, seems to agree with the 'substantiality' of such past experiences. According to her, these encounters prompt a 'sense of the specificity of each sensual event' which then 'disrupt[] the order of the present, and [do] so because these sensual essences – such as taste, touch or the shade of a certain light – have an essence quite independent from the narrative order we impose on life' (2003: 92). This, in turn, somewhat echoes Becker's idea of an 'inner newsreel that goes on all the time' (1998: 421). He sees there to be a dimension in languaging that is 'the personal' wherein 'characteristic choices among varying possibilities' are made; the wordmemories 'shaping old texts coherently to new situations' (Becker 1998: 421). Colebrook also appears to attribute similar qualities to Deleuze's idea of rhizomatic writing:

> Writing about the past does not just mean retrieving an object from the archive. If we actively engage with a past … it will help us to rearrange the present: the past plus the present will then give us a new future. (The past is not some static being, and it is not a previous present, nor a present that has

passed away; the past has its own dynamic being which is constantly renewed and renewing.) (Colebrook 2003: 77)

It can, thus, be said that words trigger certain experiences of and in the reader. Furthermore, from the materiality of this sensual event emerges *a sense*, an understanding or knowledge of the essence of that particular instance (e.g. the redness of the encountered red colour in a painting) (Colebrook 2003: 91–5). To explicate how to 'analyse' the production of such an essence in critical reading, Colebrook believes one has to attend to the style in the 'materiality of its syntax', as it is through style that she sees the Deleuzian notion of difference to manifest itself. Specifically, style, Colebrook notes, is not used to embellish meaning, but it is itself the event from which meaning and sense arise. She proposes, on the example of the poem 'O Rose, thou art sick!' by William Blake, that the moralising sense in that particular poem emerges from its rhetoric style and its speed and rhythm of syntax (ibid. 95–7). Yet, while analysing the dynamics produced by the effects of rhythm and speed – prosody is, indeed, a common literary technique – it could be argued that there is a difference to the evaluative 'moralising sense' and the 'sense of redness'. The former presents the meaning already attributed to the whole poem and the latter embodies the sensation of a singular element in an image. Also, although showing the manner in which the moralising sense is produced, Colebrook bases her enquiry on the previous interpretation of the poem's meaning, thereby only justifying that particular interpretation. Considering that the experiences will be different in the case of every encounter and '[t]here cannot be a general difference that we can grasp once and for all' (ibid. 94), the current paper attempts to keep its scope of enquiry distinct from interpretations and attributed meanings. Instead, it explores the possibilities of discussing the named sense as the 'essence' of the words, the experiences evoked in encountering the words.

To explore the possibilities of sense-making on another level than that of fixed meanings and representation, Andrew Murphy, in his article 'Making Sense: The Transformation of Documentary by Digital and Networked Media', has recourse to Jean-Luc Nancy's ideas of relations between sense, meaning and technics, and François Zourabichvili's perception of 'sense as an immanent logic of forces' (Murphy 2014: 188). He notes that the prior ways of making sense, for the Western world, 'dogmatically' equal with fixed, representational meaning-making (Murphy 2014: 188); and (on the example of three documentaries) expresses the necessity for both noticing and

approving 'an immanence of sense' (ibid. 189). In discussing the new documentaries, such necessity, according to Murphy, appears to have arisen by the diversification of mediation via the employment of new kinds of 'technologies, techniques and technical systems' (ibid. 188). The latter may, for instance, facilitate the lack of an active voice that would deliver the meaning and, thus, the lack of a viewpoint that renders the work devoid of narration and end goals.[4] Works created in such a technique deem important the continuous action and the smaller, immediate impulses that do not eventually produce or contribute to grander meanings: 'Indeed they are often no longer ends at all, instead becoming means without ends. The grander, onto-theological bases of meaning are undone. As such, technics has undermined any greater basis for meaning...' (ibid. 188–9).

By turning to Zourabichvili for developing the notion of 'smaller ends' into 'sense as an immanent logic of forces', but also the undoing of ontological approach, Murphy indirectly also turns to Deleuze. Namely, in opposition to the 'normalised discourse' in philosophy, Zourabichvili is known to undertake the interpretation of Deleuzian philosophy as 'rather than that of ontology [but] as a ruthless pursuit of vital logics' (Aarons 2012: 1). Deleuze's 'sense' as developed in *The Logic of Sense* (1969), does not equal propositional meaning. However, neither can it be regarded to be in opposition nor in any way separate from it. It is, Deleuze notes, immanent to a proposition as the fourth relation, besides the other three 'dimensions' or 'relations' of a classical proposition: denotation, manifestation and signification (Deleuze 2015: 13–23). This immanence does not, however, indicate that sense is hidden deep within propositional or logical meaning and must somehow be revealed or extracted through a rational, logical analysis. Quite the opposite: according to Deleuze, it cannot be found in the depth of things. Deleuze explicates the idea through equalling sense to an event-effect (ibid. 25–9) which can be compared to a movement along a Möbius strip (ibid. 20). The event-effect manifests in the impossibility of belonging strictly to one or the other side of the strip, for in this movement, there appears to be only one single side to the strip. That the switching of the sides is unnoticeable, lacking the possibilities of being on the border or going beyond, it can already be seen as an expression of the immanent metaphysics. Such a view is confirmed in the working of the same idea in the descriptions of Fortunatus's bag which (being composed of three handkerchiefs connected as a Möbius strip) is a spatial model of the impossibility of there being an inside and outside, only sense as a surface event-effect which enables 'the whole world' to be contained in the bag:

> 'Depth' [further on in The Logic of Sense as 'false depth' and 'false wisdom']
> is no longer a complement. Only animals are deep and they are not the noblest
> for that; the noblest are flat animals. . . . This is, indeed, the first secret of the
> stammerer or of the left-handed person: no longer to sink, but to slide the
> whole length in such a way that the old depth no longer exists at all, having
> been reduced to the opposite side of the surface. By sliding one passes to the
> other side, since the other side is nothing but the opposite direction. . . . It
> suffices to follow [the length of the curtain] far enough, precisely enough,
> and superficially enough, in order to reverse sides and to make the right side
> become the left or vice versa. (Deleuze 2015: 9)

Besides emotion and passion (as animality) and rationally established
beliefs and truths, Deleuze's depth does also seem to equal that
which is generally understood as the 'depth in meaning' – profoundness,
loadedness, gravity or seriosity. However, for him, it too is excessive,
redundant delving, which does not aid in grasping the sense. It is
the superficiality of not seeking for meaning, 'travers[ing] the entire,
depthless extension', which makes 'every event … of this type …
all the more profound since it occurs at the surface' (Deleuze 2015:
10). One of the ways in which Deleuze explains the depthlessness
of sense in language is its occurrence in the immediacy created by
epiphanic moments in Zen Buddhist koans (ibid. 9), whereas similarly
structured immediacy, according to him, is also present in the language
of 'English and American nonsense' (ibid. 9). Hence, although Deleuze
says that sense is a quality of dialectical and logical attributes, there
is a Deleuzian paradox of equalling it with the immediate, intuitive,
epiphanic knowledge triggered by koans which is not graspable by
rational, logical reasoning. Yet he ascertains that such sense is inherent
to language:

> … it is the task of language both to establish limits and go beyond them.
> Therefore language includes terms which do not cease to displace their
> extension and which make possible a reversal of the connection in a given
> series … The event is coextensive with becoming, and becoming is itself
> coextensive with language; … Everything happens at the boundary between
> things and propositions. (Deleuze 2015: 8)

The event-effect quality of it – the impassive impersonality triggered
by passions and affections, while not itself being one – is what sense
has in common with sensation as developed decades years later in
What is Philosophy?, especially when regarding the impossibility of
distinguishing it from philosophical concept or scientific function.
Deleuze argues that sense is the 'best-suited relation' (ibid. 12) to surface

effects or events, for they are 'incorporeal entities' (ibid. 5) which, even when resulting from bodies, are not:

> physical qualities and properties, but rather logical or dialectical attributes. They are not things or facts, but events. [which do not] exist, but rather that they subsist or inhere (having this minimum of being which is appropriate to that which is not a thing, a nonexisting entity). They are not substantives or adjective but verbs. They are neither agents nor patients, but result of actions and passions. They are 'impassive' entities – impassive results… . not living presents, but infinitives. (Deleuze 2015: 5)

Zourabichvili – who proposes that *The Logic of Sense* is an early attempt at describing the plane of immanence – contends that Deleuze's efforts in establishing a relation between intensities and sense was relatively novel in philosophy, 'given that force is habitually considered to be the mute instance *par excellence*, brutal and stupid: force says nothing, it strikes and imposes itself, nothing more' (2012: 61). He explains that, according to Deleuze, things, when viewed as signs, are empty in themselves, referring only to something they represent (Zourabichvili 2012: 62), whereas, the sense of these things rises from the forces that are both related to the thing, but also related to other forces (it is not possible for a force to be singular, it only appears in relation to other forces; Zourabichvili 2012: 69):

> Interpretations relating to the explicit contents of the thing teach us nothing of its sense, and, believing themselves to be speaking of its nature, [the speakers] in fact restrict themselves to describing a phenomenon. Sense appears only in the relation of a thing to the force of which it is the phenomenon. (Zourabichvili 2012: 62)

A thing for Zourabichvili, then, seems to be an active combination of representation and sensation – a kind of 'affective' sign, the forces and sense of which can be sensed only in relation, that is, 'as exercised' (2012: 69). Therefore, the attempts to capture it do not solely entail looking for what the thing stands for, nor evaluating it in a subjective manner: the sense of things, Zourabichvili notes, is 'in the interstices of representation' and 'in the gap between points of view' (2012: 68). When returning to the 'prephenomenal' occasion of the 'inventing' of one's own language, as described by Spivak, the Zourabichvilian/Deleuzian 'sense' can be said to agree with her idea of some kind of 'signification bestowed' in and later retrieved from language (Spivak 2009: 612). It appears in the light of the aforementioned considerations that both sensation as an impersonal sensory experience and sense as an epiphanic, knowledge-producing instance emerge from the same

impersonal, indiscernible immediacy of encounters. The combination, sense and sensation – or *senseation* – could be facilitating discussions of a work of art made of language in terms of the criteria named in the introduction.

When attempting to adjust the logic of force to the reading of poetry, one should, first, consider that, as the intensities are sensed only 'as exercised', yet the immediacy of these intensities is allegedly almost imperceptible and only describable afterwards (after the initial, 'pure' experience of the poem, simultaneously with which the describing of the forces can not yet happen), a kind of re-enactment of the initial encounter of reading has to be undertaken in order to depict the moves and effects of the forces. Second, there is no single force effectuated by one whole poem, nor a single line or a single word. The impulses from a poem emerge due to the relations of the forces of various segments and aspects, and on different levels of meaning. This approach resembles how in the documentaries that Murphy examines, immanent sense occasionally emerges from ambiguity – the ambiguous images in terms of the relations between the counterparts (technology, humans, animals etc.) (2014: 190). Miriam McIlfatrick observes that although ambiguities are active 'bound and binding' features of poetry, they are rarely approached as such (2013: 182). Assuming, then, that it would be possible, through the re-enacted reading to grasp the activity of ambiguities as they are exercised in the immediacy of 'pure' experiencing, the following section explores these 'features' more closely.

III. From Ambiguity to the 'Irrational'

There is a tendency in poetry to exploit different modes of situations to create ambiguity. They may appear as parts of composition, 'intentional' by the poet, but occasionally also unintentional, unacknowledged by the author, but picked up by the reader. Ambiguity may emerge from the use of line breaks, spacing, punctuation or even the seemingly tiniest detail of capitalisation. When considering only how capable a tool and attribute a line in a poem is, poet Joshua Marie Wilkinson sees the unit's 'awkwardly unfitting locution' of syntax – 'to produce some new, discrepant – indeed, othering – sense' (2011: 249–51). He sees grammatically correct sentences, that are even punctuated correctly, to be 'truncated awkwardly' and 'fragment from normal speech', making it possible to read the poem 'in a sensible, sense-making way, only to be derailed [,] invit[ing] the normative thinking which the line-breaks themselves derail [, whereafter] the normative machinery of sense falters,

or shifts to something else' (Wilkinson 2011: 249–51). In an affective encounter, the counterpart to the material of the poem in creating ambiguity is the one who encounters it. Thus, another way for ambiguity to emerge is from the solutions the reader creates in the process of parsing.

In linguistics, parsing means the capacity to break a string of text into logical parts (of speech), whereas in psycholinguistics, the constant evaluation of the meaning is deduced by the interpretations of each word. Although a componential syntactic analysis is not what is necessary for attending to affect in poetry, there is a certain similarity in the process of reading poetry and reading garden path sentences – a phenomenon that continuously interests researchers in psycholinguistics. Garden path sentences are sentences that tend to 'result in some sort of misanalysis in the initial syntactic analysis or parse' (Christianson et al. 2001: 369) and therefore need a subsequent reanalysis. In an exemplary garden path sentence – 'At the moment at which I moved from nothingness into being my mother was pretending to be asleep – as she often does at such moments' (Atkinson qtd. in Christianson et al. 2001: 369) – there is a recognisable ambiguous area within the section 'into being my mother'. One may more often than not experience similar effects in poetry caused by fragmenting longer sentences, or just longer, logical thoughts distributed on separate lines (e.g. enjambment), as Wilkinson noted.

Yet, whereas in narrative situations it is possible to delimit the unit of parsing more concretely – a sentence, a paragraph – in contemporary poetry it is not as simple. Due to the non-conformist use of punctuation, enjambments and so on, a unit can be regarded neither formally (lines, stanzas) nor syntactically. The parsing of a poem, rather, resembles the rhizomatic reading (or writing) as interpreted by Colebrook quoted above. Namely, instead of the arborescent model grounded in a foundation and advancing or ascending in one direction (suggestive of hierarchical structure), a rhizome is:

> a chaotic root structure: connecting every point to every other point, moving in every direction, branching out to create new directions.
>
> [It moves] along a single surface, that then stratifies or creates surfaces: no point elevated above any other, and no foundation or surface upon which movement and activity takes place, just movement and activity itself. A conventional book has a meaning and a subject which it represents or expresses; a rhizomatic text does not have a meaning – it is itself a work, event or production. (Colebrook 2003: 77)

The activity of ambiguities, according to McIlfatrick, lies in their 'interact[ing] within the poem by engaging the reader in holding in abeyance an array of meanings that are generated by and feed into the emerging discourse of the poem' (2013: 182). Research in cognitive psychology has discovered that in the case of garden path sentences, there is a language comprehension system at work which in the case of a reanalysis detects the accurate meaning. Although 'confident, sentence-level comprehension can be obtained without full, consistent reanalysis on some level' and that the initial (mis)interpretation will in most cases eventually be abandoned (Christianson et al. 2001: 394–5), what appears to be most relevant in the context of reading for affect is that, according to research, the comprehension system tends to allow the prior misreadings to linger. Furthermore, 'if that incorrect interpretation is pragmatically plausible, comprehenders are even less likely to give it up' (ibid. 395). When revisiting Murphy's discussion about sense as non-propositional meaning, ambiguities in conventional, 'arborescent' texts would stand for the simultaneously held meanings that contribute to the 'grand' ends or meanings. However, the images produced in rhizomatic texts – as, for instance, contemporary poetry – ought to be considered ambiguous on a different level. Rather, the images themselves – although created in an encounter with the ambiguously 'distributed' semantic material of a poem – cannot be considered ambiguous at all. Regardless of their not contributing to the 'grand' meaning, such images 'must be accounted as "real" as anything else', for they are experienceable (James 2010). Zourabichvili argues that an encounter is not yet thinking in rational terms – 'it is what thought does not think, does not know to think, and does not yet think. . . . And yet it is there, both unthought and unthinkable and that which must be thought' (2012: 67). Zourabichvili sees this 'necessarily irrational' logic as an affirmation of chance that is essential for Deleuze in fighting dogmatic thinking (2012: 57). It should be noted that Zourabichvili does not use the term 'irrational' as 'illogical'. According to him, it marks the 'outside' of the established and generally accepted, often dogmatic thought, the realm that the purely referential logic dismisses (ibid. 57).

The lingering quality of the misreadings and the above-mentioned Becker's 'language reel' allow the study to turn to William James, who authored the idea of the stream of consciousness (that does not necessarily coincide just with language, but with any experience). According to James, the flow of the stream 'it thinks' is rarely disrupted so abruptly that the previous thought would not be connected to what succeeds (James 2014: 552–3). The thought to follow will

always contain the traces of that which preceded: 'Into the awareness of the thunder itself the awareness of the previous silence creeps and continues; for what we hear when the thunder crashes is not thunder pure, but thunder-breaking-upon-silence-and-contrasting-with-it' (James 2014: 560). He differentiates types of thought as substantive, transitive and tentative. According to their quality, James also calls the substantive images 'lingering'. These are the sensorial images that linger so that they can be examined (ibid. 571). Transitive images can be experienced through the conduct – the movement and direction – of the substantive images (ibid. 572). The third category are sensations in the stream of thought that James calls 'tendencies' – those that produce an expectation of certain images to come. He sees the transitive images to be in the particles, conjunctions, whereas expectation or tendencies are mostly produced by collocation. In the context of this article, collocation in poems as rhizomatic texts should not be reduced only to successions of words, but also to a number of relations formed between other instances of a poem's material – between words and line breaks, between lower and upper case letters and punctuation, not to mention syntactic relations. The experiences or images that are the products of reading the ambiguously distributed material belong to the first category of substantive images. The lingering of these images in the event of an initial reading and the re-enactment conducted for an 'irrational' reading – that is, holding on to them or allowing them to linger in spite of their apparent disconnectedness from that which the logic of syntactic or narrative parsing prescribes – which allows them to be suspended, is precisely what makes it possible to examine them. Conjunctions and collocations, however, seem to be the fleeting elements, unexaminable, yet nonetheless just as 'real'.[5] Therefore, acknowledging even such less examinable instances in the process of re-enactment might make them more 'real' in order for them to be considered valid in further critical analysis. Yet, as Murphy suggested, the 'lingerings' as the 'smaller ends' may or may not contribute to the grander, ultimate ends. The re-enactment of any experiences in readings can be said to be an 'irrational' logic that gives a chance to what reason would otherwise dismiss. It is, then, the affirmation of chance, the affirmation of 'the unforseeable or the unexpected', according to Zourabichvili, 'from which thought is born' (2012: 57). Wilkinson believes that affirming the 'irrational', or the 'outside' in reading helps to avoid 'the expected … ways of knowing', dislodge the 'most ingrained notions of what a relation to another might be' (2011: 249–51) – that is, to recognise the unrecognisable.[6]

It might be argued that there is a limit to the number of possible interpretations of a work of art, yet acknowledging the outside is not about the multiplicity of interpretations, but making a connection with the surface effects that emerge through the lingerings. Even if not contributing to the general grand meaning, they may allow epiphanic knowledge through the foregrounding or illuminating of experiences rather than rational analysis, and enhance the dimensions of the poem, regardless of whether it affects the single grand meaning, or the polyvalency of it. Quoting Deleuze, Colebrook underlines the singularity of the multiple lingering experiences and the impossibility of drawing generalisations from them: 'What can one do with essence, which is ultimate difference, except to repeat it, because it is irreplaceable and because nothing can be substituted for it?' (Deleuze qtd. in Colebrook 2003: 91–2). It seems, then, that according to Deleuze the mere acknowledging, repeating or re-enacting is enough on the level that does not yet confront the fixity of meanings.

This, as Colebrook believes, appears to be precisely what Deleuze has in mind. These singular essences, for him, are 'not general categories or meanings that lie behind experience; they are unique possibilities which are actualised in any experience' and as 'sign[s] of the ideal essence' contained in art, they will transform the rest of our signs and through that the stagnant, fixed meanings (Colebrook 2003: 91–2). Whilst Colebrook says that for Deleuze the aim of art as an impersonal experience is 'beyond any located or human perception of judgement' (2003: 91–2), Deleuze himself seems to believe in the further applicability of sensation:

> That is why the brain-subject is here called *soul* or *force*, since only the soul preserves by contracting that which matter dissipates, or radiates, furthers, reflects, refracts, or converts. Thus the search for sensation is fruitless if we go no farther than reactions and the excitations that they prolong, than actions and the perceptions that they reflect: this is because the soul (or rather, the force), as Leibniz said, does nothing, or does not act, but is only present; it preserves. (Deleuze and Guattari 2009: 212)

In this article, sensation has been combined with sense, which as an event-effect is on one hand similar to sensation, and on the other appears to facilitate intensity-driven work with language. Therefore this passage may, perhaps be seen to also imply the potential of these seemingly useless acknowledgements to contribute to the wider culturo-theoretical discourse.

The paper now attempts to explicate how the acknowledging of the sense and sensation which do not correspond to the logical parsing of the poem's language may reveal such Jamesian lingerings and demonstrate how the latter enhance the experiencing of a poem. The reason for choosing 'Sunday Ballad' by Alice Oswald (2016: 37) as an example for reading in this study is that, quite typically of contemporary poetry, it can, despite the employment of some poetic images and cut syntax, be regarded as being composed of several complex (and, as the reading will demonstrate, not clearly discernible) but rather easily parsable sentences. As a narrative text, it does not appear to contain a 'hidden' meaning. It should hereby be repeated that the reading does not yet consider nor attempt to see the poem in connection to any external, pre-established context – neither cultural nor textual, concerning the author – nor does it attempt to position the poem within a poetic tradition. What will be considered is the activated Beckerian 'wordmemory' in the invented language of the author of the present paper. Beside the line breaks and images as poetic devices in their estranging quality, but also the formal aspects that contribute to the side-lingerings, the reading also attends to the poem's syntax, considering, for instance, in what way typographic features, such as upper case letters and full stops, are used and how their usage according to or deviating from the rules of syntax (e.g. when used, is it clear whether their task is to clarify the rational parsing or to confuse it instead?) effectuates. Finally, it will be discussed what kind of dimensions the lingerings of this particular re-enactment add to the already comprehensive depiction of a morning and whether the noticed epiphanic relations are in some way relevant for enhancing either the experiencing or understanding of the poem.

IV. A Reading for *Senseation*

A title does not always give the key to opening the intended or implied meaning of a poem. The word 'Sunday' in the title 'Sunday Ballad', does, however, elicit an underlying *senseation* of lingering or drifting to the reading, a connotation that is connected to the lack of the need to rush on the weekend. The first stanza, beginning with a capital letter, ending with a full stop, and also employing a comma in order to separate two clauses, forms a full sentence which sets a scene within a room and by doing that confines the activity of Light 's movement. Although the almost animatedness of the slowly advancing morning light filtered through the leaves or from between the curtains is a familiar intense sensation, what overpowers it at the beginning of this particular poem

is the personification of the light. Created by attributing an ability to 'question' to Light, emphasising thus the active curiosity and/or doubt, the personification effects a fable-like narrativity which at once makes an at least equal counterpart of the light to the 'two' who 'lay twined in bed' (4). Yet, by qualifying the light as not 'real' (but a fairy-tale character) and thus not serious enough, the usage of the device distances the reader from sensing the light's qualities to their full extent. The word 'probe' as a noun also both adds an instrumental quality to 'beam', yet retains the tentacle-like activity connoted in its verb form.

The second stanza, counter to what might be expected after a full stop, does not begin as a new sentence but as an uncapitalised relative clause which makes one question the validity of punctuation in its traditional syntactic meaning, in this poem. As it is common for grammatically accurate punctuation to be dismissed in contemporary poetry, it does not necessarily have an effect to the reading. However, when paying heed to the existence of a full stop in the previous stanza, one might attend to what follows as if to a new sentence starting with a relative pronoun. Considering that the full stop usually acts as a break between thoughts, the link between Light, being last mentioned in the first line of the poem, weakens, and thus the pronoun 'whose' could be seen to refer back to 'bed' instead, as the last noun that has been mentioned. Nonetheless, besides the use of pronouns 'theirs' and 'them' in that stanza which help to position the 'twined two', what appears to render the narrative parsable is precisely the explicitly anthropomorphised light.

The line break after 'with no regard' (6), leaving the preposition 'for' to the next line, allows, first, the meaning of the phrase to oscillate between either 'with no respect for' or merely 'not paying attention to' (the latter necessitating the preposition 'to' after 'regard'). This, by overlooking that the 'to' never occurs, in turn, facilitates the perceiving of the 'for' in the following (seventh) line as not a preposition, but carrying the meaning of the conjunctive 'because' instead. In that case, reading the pronoun 'them' as 'themselves' (which is not uncommon to metrical poetry in particular wherein the number of syllables may 'license' alterations in words in order to fit a required number of the beats), would be necessary. That way the rest of the stanza poses as if a reason for the light's intellect 'surpassing' that of the humans who are involved in trivial thoughts about appearance and ageing.

The following clause ('as weak as eggs they woke' [9]), although not connected to the previous sentence meaning-wise (it already presents a new thought), is included to the previous thought by the full stop. It is obvious by now, however, that full stops in 'Sunday Ballad' – instead

of marking an end of a sentence, an independent clause or even a thought – seem to mark something other, for instance, possibly a number of lines to be read in one breath. Thus, since full stops have lost their original meaning in syntax and there are no commas used (except in the first stanza), 'old age' (8) could also be seen as the grounds of comparison for the simile 'as weak as eggs' (9), creating thus a succession of actions as follows: 'they woke' (9) 'they thought ...' (10). The latter, whether regarded as a possibility worth affirming or not, only enhances the sense created by a line break in the poem producing a substantive lingering thought – 'they thought their bodies' (10) (although the bodies are, according to the syntactic parsing, intended to 'gleam' in the window as described in the next two lines). What is effected in such a reading is a *senseation* of the non-corporeality of sleep, whereafter bodies would have to, once again, be thought into being. In that context, alongside the line break, the full stop seems to exert a sense of the shift in the consciousness of the two in bed, marking the liminal moment between sleep and wakefulness. This irrational 'chance' gives rise to (at least) two possible misreadings.

The first, after the thinking of the bodies (10), initially follows the rational solution, resorting to the insubstantiality confirmed by the last line of the third stanza which describes the disembodied feeling of 'less like age than air' (12). Next, the producing of a layered experience in the fourth stanza, that was not regarded in the previous illustrative reading, is viewed. Such a reading does not specifically participate in the creating of the particular 'irrational' reading, nor in contributing to an ultimate intended signification, but is presented in order to once again exemplify the possibilities to fracture the images and to cause them to oscillate between the obvious and the unthinkable.

The first line of the fourth stanza resembles what could be called an intermediary line (as the section causing ambiguity in a garden path sentence) – one which could well be attached to the previous line, thus ending the image (the bodies are not quite like air), as well as to the next one (the bodies do not seem so only in blue light, or in any kind of light for that matter). Whereas, at the same time, the image might end with the third line instead (the light that is two doors away) which would, retrospectively, render the air (12) blue. The 'anchor' of the stanza is the phrase 'two trees' (15), the concreteness of which, independent of whether they are 'two doors away' (15) or not, is shattered by the fact that they are 'made less of leaves than sound' (16). The line ending after the word 'sound' leaves ample space for any sonance that might be associated with trees or leaves as drawn from the previous experiences

(e.g. the song of birds). Yet it must be said that the line exerts the sensation of leaves through naming them, even if they are the lesser counterpart than sound, therefore perhaps also foregrounding more the rustling of the leaves. The eighteenth line reveals that the sound can be of any kind that the trees choose to 'describe', which in this instance is the sound of the wind.

Although the first line of the fifth stanza reminds the reader of the existence of the 'two' ('prove *them* wrong' [17]) and via rational parsing in the context of the poem it is clear that it is the 'two' that were 'twined' who get dressed (not two *trees*), the usage of pronouns in the third line of the stanza ('and as *they* dressed' [19]) may act as an interrupter, hinting at the possibility of the trees getting dressed. Another 'irrational' hint is created by the line break after 'dust' (19) instead of 'dressed' – affirming the possibility to dress dust. The latter 'irrational' take, having been triggered by the syntactically 'misplaced' line break, would also present the possibility of the 'dressers' (which according to the misread pronoun could also be trees, whereas the prior marker of 'things half-dressed' [7] will be decisive in parsing) flying through the house and – counter to what is indicated before – to have, eventually, become 'less age than air' (12).

The second misreading, again, emanates from the above-named 'affective' line break (indicating the thinking of bodies [into being]) which enables one to perceive the 'gleaming in the window-square / [that] felt less like age than air' – even if still conveying 'their' point of view – as separated from the bodies of the mentioned 'two'. This particular way of reading makes the idea of 'gleaming' not so much connected to the bodies, but rather as a general occasion that could, here, possibly be attributed also to Light. This, in prospect, gives different weight to the rational reading in which the imagery of wind and dust in the last stanza, belonging to the same category as air, would counter the idea of the weight of ageing bodies. Namely, in line 12 the word 'age', being also freed from the context of old and weak bodies, can effect the meaning of timelessness – extending beyond the dimension of time (and therefore also of embodiment), whereas the word 'air', which has to be opposed to the ungraspable 'age', produces the sensation of something palpable. This 'irrational' queue resonates with the evolvement of the faculties of anthropomorphised Light into Light as an environment ('in blue pedantic Light' [14]), which, in fact, was triggered already by the ignoring of the first full stop at the beginning of the second stanza. It is there where the word 'surpassing' (that in the rational, personifying parsing marks the superiority of Light's intellect) resonates with the

light's disregard of the delimited space of one room defined by the full stop in the first stanza. From the transformation of Light into an environment stems also the conception of the faculties of Light to be superior to those of air. The latter become more easily relatable because of the tactile and kinetic perception of air in comparison to Light's being out of the dimensions of time and space as an abstract and ungraspable notion. Considering such superiority, the wind and dust in the air (18, 20) are revealed as secondary in importance as well. The presence of light, by the fifth stanza, has become self-evident to such a degree that it is no longer mentioned, whereas, in order for the dust to be seen, light is needed.

It could be argued that there appears to be a *senseation* of uncommonness in the commonplace in 'Sunday Ballad', and it can undoubtedly be seen to be produced by formal elements, for instance, by the contrast between the last two lines and the rest of the poem. Specifically, these two lines seem, possibly because of the conjunction 'and', to be distinct from the personification in the rest of the poem. Furthermore, an effect of culmination at the end of the poem can be seen to be created by the evolving rhyme scheme. Expressly, despite the lack of pervading metre and rhyme scheme, there is a noticeable trace of falling out of rhyme by the fifth stanza which is accompanied by the displacement of a line composed of four accentuated beats present in each of the stanzas.[7] Yet, while the formal aspect is involved in 'regulating' the dynamics, the importance of the unthinkable or improbable sensory imagery (for instance, the sense of dust also having agency lingers simultaneously with the sense of it flying unwillingly, as an effect of the breeze), or the 'commonplace' images that language produces through waking the wordmemories (the experience of the suspended dust in the rays of morning light), cannot be dismissed. Thus, the sensory widening of the space from a delimitedness of one room to the rest of the house, and the openness of windows creating the connection to the whole world; or the evolvement of the anthropomorphised Light as a probing, personified beam, in the first; a gleaming reflection of waking bodies on the window pane, in the third; and 'blue pedantic light', in the fourth; into an impersonal omnipresent light without the presence of the particular materiality of a word – a kind of presence through absence – in the last, can be seen to be in accord with the described formal culmination.

To conclude, it can be said that although the traditional poetic devices, both formal and rhetorical, contribute to the experiencing of the quality of the elongated moments, of losing sense of time, space and the self (the

main goal of artefacts according to the Deleuzian viewpoint; Colebrook 2003: 91), acknowledging the 'irrational' lingerings can be deemed to be especially relevant due to their being an equal counterpart in creating the zone of indiscernible corporeal sensation and incorporeal sense between the poem and the reader, for

> [o]nce we are taken out of our selves and the generalities we habitually impose on the world, we can perceive the world in its intensity, as a proliferating expanse of differences that we necessarily 'forget' in order to live with distinct persons and things. We realise that worldly signs, the signs of love and sensuous signs are all contractions of an intense difference, a difference that disrupts thought over and over again, opening a multiplicity of worlds. (Colebrook 2003: 91–2)

The substantive lingerings hidden within the intricacy of the distribution and composition of a poem's material supplement and enhance the rational understanding, the parsing of a syntactic meaning. When the sensory experiences are noticed to be working simultaneously with the formal aspects of the poem, the successful practice of what Seamus Heaney calls 'technique', or Mallarmé's essential language, can be witnessed.

The 'irrational' close reading of the poem 'Sunday Ballad' also confirms that although affective forces are relevant, they, as the immanent Deleuzian philosophy 'prescribes', cannot and ought not be viewed separately of other, more actualised and determinable modes of existence with which they coexist. *Senseation* – a process rather than a static category – is the means of making space for dimensions that in a traditional, rational reading may not be allowed to emerge; but also the means of making visible the invisible.

V. Conclusion

A certain saturatedness has been attributed to poetry through time. The indeterminable intensities that readers experience are individual and difficult to be inserted into a wider discourse when resorting only to their vitalist energetic characteristics. Consequently, theorists tend to favour the representational approaches to language that adhere one or two concrete significations to an image difficult to be escaped in further research. Approaching a poem as a representation of already established truths and dogmatic ideas is avoidable through a reading that commences from the immediacy of Deleuzian sensation and sense combined, and acknowledges even the most 'irrational'

possibilities – those that emerge from not dismissing the ideas outside of the established, stagnant views – inherent in the material of a poem. As this study demonstrates, such affirmation of chance cannot be achieved by merely assuming the significance of a poetic line or image. In order to reveal the smaller ends in making sense by withholding the need for rationalising, theorists ought to begin by acknowledging the substantive quality of the plethora of images – even if seemingly insignificant – produced by the distribution and composition of the poem's material. Such 'irrationality', the affirmation of what is outside of conventional meaning-making, may ultimately prove relevant not only for the dynamics of a poem, but for the transformations of general beliefs and convictions.

Notes

1. Affect studies are, in addition to the two mentioned, manifested in a variety of different trajectories, some of which are also said to attempt at reconciling the two main vectors (e.g. see Gregg and Seigworth 2010: 5–8).
2. When talking about the material of literature, Deleuze mentions words and syntax (2015: 167). In the case of paintings, however, he deems important not only the composition on a canvas, but also the way pigments are mixed in the paint and the material of the canvas along with the way it is coated (Deleuze 2015: 192). Therefore, the current study considers as material any element of poetry that contributes to the effectuating of intensities.
3. Becker admits to being influenced by William James, one of the 'great American Pragmatists', who, according to him, initiated the 'search for opacity in ... one's own philology' (1998: 317). That both Becker's and Spivak's ideas (although Spivak, as will be noted in the article, grounds her explanation in the psychoanalysis of Melanie Klein) agree with James is visible in the latter's explanation of his radical approach to empiricism. James says: 'Practically to experience one's personal continuum in this living way is to know the originals of the ideas of continuity and sameness, to know what the words stand for concretely, to own all that they can ever mean' (2010: 79).
4. For instance, in the case of a GoPro camera, which in the documentary *Leviathan* is mounted to a ship and is capable of filming without a subjective viewpoint, thus also lessening the director's intentions, yet, through movement and sonorous occurrences, creating the uncanny sense of it as a liable character (Murphy 2014: 194–5).
5. 'There is not a conjunction or a preposition, and hardly an adverbial phrase, syntactic form, or inflection of voice, in human speech, that does not express some shading or other of relation which we at some moment actually feel to exist between the larger objects of our thought. If we speak objectively, it is the real relations that appear revealed; if we speak subjectively, it is the stream of consciousness that matches each of them by an inward coloring of its own. In either case the relations are numberless, and no existing language is capable of doing justice to all their shades. We ought to say a feeling of and, a feeling of if, a feeling of but, and a feeling of by, quite as readily as we say a feeling of blue or a feeling of cold' (James 2014: 569–70).

6. Recognition, according to Zourabichvili, is not what defines an encounter. On the contrary, 'the encounter is the very experience [*épreuve*] of the non-recognisable, the failing of the mechanism of recognition (and not a simple misfire as in the case of an error)' (Zourabichvili 2012: 67).
7. The first two quatrains loosely hold the rhyme scheme ABCA and in the third the last couplet rhymes ABCC – both schemes common to ballads. In the fourth stanza, however, rhyme can still be found in the last two lines of the stanza – one as an end rhyme, whereas the last contained in-line (trees-leaves). The last stanza is in free verse.

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Book Review

Arjen Kleinherenbrink (2019) *Against Continuity: Gilles Deleuze's Speculative Realism*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press

I. Introduction

Among the figures of the French continental tradition who might be identified as *the* antagonist for the still-emerging field of object oriented ontology (and, to a lesser degree, speculative realism), Gilles Deleuze would seem, at first blush, as good a candidate as any. Closely associated with Spinozist *natura naturans*, Nietzschean *Wiederkunft* and Bergsonian *multiplicité*, Deleuze's thought is laden with that of his precursors. Despite their variety, the latter are often said to reveal the very essence of Deleuze's thought through the primacy of process and continuity. With these ideas in mind, many readers of Deleuze employ his lexicon uncritically, inheriting its terms without thorough examination of its content, so that concepts such as 'intensity', 'the virtual', 'deterritorialisation', 'flow' or 'assemblage' (to name just a few) easily become ossified into watchwords devoid of the conceptual substance that warranted their initial attraction.[1] In short, a certain image of Deleuze reduces his thought to little more than a vague philosophy of becoming (seducing in its language) at the expense of the irreducibility of entities that Deleuze's work consistently calls forth and demands to be thought.

It is this naive or vulgar image of Deleuze that Arjen Kleinherenbrink targets in *Against Continuity: Gilles Deleuze's Speculative Realism*. Because the notions of process and continuity seem, for Kleinherenbrink, to imply the priority of either an anterior entity or a homogeneous substrate, an ontology characterised by these features will always be guilty of a radical fault: reduction of one being to another. Any elaboration of a metaphysical programme which explains the ontology

of an entity by virtue of its inclusion, causation or relation to another will leave out exactly the *being* of that entity, what keeps it from being another thing. Contrary to this tendency, Kleinherenbrink argues that Deleuze is in fact a champion of absolutely irreducible individuals – rather than flows, becoming and so on. Such individuals constitute the bedrock of his ontology. The consequence of this shift in how one understands his ontology is that Deleuze is not merely a precursor for the field of speculative realism but is one of its superior figures, having already anticipated many of its problems. Indeed, in one of his more controversial arguments, Kleinherenbrink claims Deleuze's endorsement of a virtual realm of continuity is restricted to *Difference and Repetition*, an ontological mistake rectified in subsequent texts. Instead, Deleuze, from the *Logic of Sense* to his final texts, was a philosopher wholly dedicated to the radical *discontinuity* between entities.

II. Summary

With a view to explicating such a premise, Kleinherenbrink advances a systematic reading of Deleuze's philosophy under the aegis of what he calls 'machinic ontology'. The 'machine' accordingly stands in Deleuze's ontology as both fundamental and ubiquitous: all machines are irreducible to other machines, and all entities whatsoever are machines. Elaborating the consequences of Deleuze's oft-repeated motto that 'relations are external to their terms', these two features define what Kleinherenbrink names the 'externality thesis'. By virtue of his reading of 'externality', Kleinherenbrink's work sits well with a number of recent attempts at developing a 'flat ontology', such as those put forward by Graham Harman, Tristan Garcia, Levi Bryant and Manuel DeLanda (among others). Central to this view, and corollary to each machine's irreducibility, is the rejection of any transcendent first or final machine into which other machines may fall. This rejection subtends both Kleinherenbrink's reading of Deleuze's critique of representation and what he calls Deleuze's sustained crusade against 'internalism'. Nonetheless, despite its ontological irreducibility, the machine is not ontologically static. A machine is always constituted by other machines, but it also has a structure which determines both the machine's being-in-itself (its 'virtual' or 'withdrawn' aspect) as well as its relations with other machines (its 'actualisation' or 'manifestation'). Taken together, this allows Kleinherenbrink to argue for an image of Deleuze as, at once, a realist philosopher who insists on the full ontological

reality of everything that is; and a speculative philosopher who claims that the being of a machine necessarily withdraws from all ontological access. Thus, the remainder of the book is dedicated to elaborating Kleinherenbrink's 'machinic ontology', including especially the externality thesis, the fourfold structure of machines, and a theory of their relations. These, in turn, are punctuated by 'intermezzos' that show how Deleuze intersects or collides with contemporary continental realists.

Given the externality thesis, wherein every entity harbours an irreducible element of itself, a necessary question becomes inevitable: what is the precise anatomy of the entity such that it allows for an inscrutable ontological privacy? This question receives a properly schematic answer in Kleinherenbrink's fourfold division of machines, or the 'machine thesis'. Throughout Deleuze's corpus, Kleinherenbrink detects a tendency towards a universal ontological structure cleaved symmetrically between two differing twofolds: the actual and the virtual. While Kleinherenbrink maintains Deleuze's familiar terms here, his reading argues not for virtual and actual *realms* but 'an internal difference in kind between a virtual and actual *aspect* that constitutes the ontological structure of any entity whatsoever' (Kleinherenbrink 2019: 37). Each twofold aspect of a machine is constituted by an instance of the *One* – so that there is *this* irreducibility or *this* relation – and an instance of a *Multiple* – so that there can be a distinction between *this* and *that* irreducibility or relation. Despite its lucidity, Kleinherenbrink only brings this about through some fairly extreme textual condensation, excising pieces from all over Deleuze's corpus as it suits his schema.

The actual 'One', its unity, is defined as 'Sense' (synonymous with 'sense event' and 'partial object') and its 'Multiple' as 'Quality' (synonymous with 'flow'). Largely derived from Kleinherenbrink's idiosyncratic readings of *Logic of Sense* and *Anti-Oedipus*, Sense comprises the unity of an actual encounter between machines, while Quality is what ensures that experience is a differentiated, contiguous flow: an encounter must involve determinations (qualities) *of* something (the sense of which a determination is said). Yet, both elements of this dichotomy are effects. According to Kleinherenbrink, the actual unity of Sense is the 'expressed', which indicates its virtual expression. Sense is a minimally specified, yet sterile, noumenon: it is that which points away from the encounter from within the encounter, towards the virtual unity of the machine. Quality, by contrast, is 'inherently variable' (Kleinherenbrink 2019: 135); it is constantly modified by other sense

events involved in machinic production, modifications that nonetheless prevent all encounters from being reduced to a single totalising Sense.

On the other side of the fourfold, there is the virtual twofold of 'Body' (synonymous with 'Figure', 'Body without Organs', 'Problem') and 'Idea' (synonymous with 'Desire', 'Singularity', 'Intensive Matter', 'Power', 'Code'). Like the dichotomy of the actual above, the Body and the Idea allow the virtual aspect to be both unified and differentiated. According to Kleinherenbrink, *the Body* is a 'transcendental unity, irreducible to relational dimensions such as history, possibilities, composition, empirical qualities, users, and functions … that aspect of each machine which enters into nothing and into which nothing enters' (Kleinherenbrink 2019: 87–8). This absolute withdrawal is what resists integration or actualisation, but it also constitutes the properly emancipatory or nomadic element of machines, according to Kleinherenbrink. In addition to staving off an 'undifferentiated abyss' into which all individuals find the same transcendental conditions, *the Idea* also coordinates the internal conditions of the appearance of machines in relations with other machines. Ideas are the non-relational yet still mutable essences of machines. They are *essences* (as opposed to accidents) since they maintain priority (logically or ontologically) over the actual determinations of machines in their relations, but they are, nonetheless, made mutable by and through these relations. The transformation of machines, along with their possible creation and destruction, raises questions about how the privacy of machines entertains real ontological becoming, to which we return below.

In view of the machine thesis, wherein everything is a produced machine, including its variable Ideas and inscrutable Body, Kleinherenbrink presents a new reading of the Deleuzian syntheses. Immensely abbreviating and compiling parts of *Difference and Repetition*, *Logic of Sense* and *Anti-Oedipus*, Kleinherenbrink reinterprets the three syntheses of connection, disjunction and conjunction, as a 'universal medium or background' (Kleinherenbrink 2019: 40) for the indirect interactions of irreducible machines: the manifestation of relations, transformation of the virtual Ideas (essences) and the creation of new machines. The first synthesis – habit-connection-production – accounts for actual manifestations and the 'basic fact of relating' (Kleinherenbrink 2019: 112). Insofar as the actual is experience – and an experience cannot itself experience another experience – the encounter between machines happens not between their actual twofolds but rather between a virtual twofold – the Body and Idea as a machine's particular 'point of view' – and another machine's actual

twofold. What keeps safe the irreducibility of a machine, paramount to the integrity of the externality thesis, is that this relation is unilateral for the Body: 'The carpentry of beings is forged one unilateral relation at a time, and each relation exclusively runs from a virtual body … to the actual and manifest aspect of one or several other machines' (Kleinherenbrink 2019: 114). This recalcitrant relation between the virtual body and actual manifestation – what Kleinherenbrink calls 'contraction' – is meant to explain how machines in themselves (or their virtualities) never directly touch. Between the Body itself and the 'perspective' it helps constitute, the connective synthesis preserves discontinuity even as it produces continuity in actual experience. The distribution of the continuous raises more questions for us below.

The second synthesis – pure memory-disjunction-registration – accounts primarily for the intensive becoming proper to Deleuzian essences. However, it also explains how the virtual twofold can become a point of view for contraction and thereby ground the connective synthesis itself. Flattening the profundity of Deleuze's account, Kleinherenbrink understands disjunction as the inexhaustibility of a machine's Idea so that 'a relation never fully absorbs an entity in its being encountered, and conversely it cannot fully deploy an entity in having an encounter' (Kleinherenbrink 2019: 190). But it has also a second dimension. Insofar as the virtual aspect of a machine contracts actual manifestations, it undergoes a mereological transformation: 'anything contracted into an encounter with me is part of me' (Kleinherenbrink 2019: 193). Thus, between the first and second syntheses, a circle of production begins to emerge. Despite its mutability, Kleinherenbrink is quick to underline that only the virtual Idea undergoes variation; the Body remains unwounded by the introjection of new parts (variation without incorporation). What truly allows for two machines to remain irreducible to their relations is that the establishment of a relation is in fact the creation of a new, surplus machine.

The last synthesis – future-conjunction-consumption – involves the genesis of machines; through it, relations do not threaten the irreducibility of that which they relate but, rather, secure it. In fact, this is implied by Deleuze's commitment to univocity. Everything begins in a contingent encounter, but what comes of the encounter also has full being or reality, however tenuous an existence it leads. In Kleinherenbrink's example of the perception of a tulip, one can never reduce this newly formed machine to either the perceiver or the actual tulip, and thus 'all relations imply that something becomes detached from the immediate production of an actuality' (Kleinherenbrink 2019:

225–6). Similar to the synthesis of disjunction, the mereological aspect is the driving motor: in the encounter of sense events between different machines, a relation is forged that has a virtual itself that is irreducible to the connective 'perspective' of both machines but whose Idea is drawn from those same sense events. Because this happens in every machinic relation and all machines owe their genesis to other machines, Kleinherenbrink elaborates the third synthesis in terms also of its futural expression in *Difference and Repetition*: the necessary production of the new is nothing other than the eternal return itself. Importantly implied by its irreducibility (what Kleinherenbrink also calls here 'independence of the product to production'), the order between the machines, and the conditions of their existence, are always decided locally, immanently and between the machines in play in a given conjunction. This is why the eternal return only returns difference, or why it ramifies the whole of chance with each throw of the dice. The only absolute guarantee of being is also the principle of its ungrounding, and the wellspring of that which did not exist before. Conjunction, Kleinherenbrink rightly sees, gives irreducibility its absolute ontological necessity.

III. Immanent Criticism

Against Continuity presents, perhaps, the boldest attempt yet to present a holistic reconstruction of Deleuze's ontological system. Given the fact that each of Deleuze's works takes on new lexical and conceptual registers even while recasting old ones, this is a momentous task fraught with perils for any reader of Deleuze. These challenges are what makes Deleuze a philosophical wellspring rarely equalled, but they are also responsible for many widespread misreadings and controversies regarding even the most basic concepts in Deleuze's repertoire. Despite the incredible leverage which Kleinherenbrink gets out of his fourfold schema and his interpretation of the externality thesis, there are nevertheless several complications which present themselves both in the immanent logic of his reconstruction and in the manner by which his approach to exegesis attenuates the philosophical richness of Deleuze's thought.

Continuity: Beginning with the former, there is an issue with Kleinherenbrink's system in relation to the guiding polemic of *Against Continuity*. Whatever analytical traction the founding gesture of substituting a continuous virtual process with a discontinuous virtual aspect gives Kleinherenbrink's reading, and despite providing a polemical and rhetorical bulwark against some of the worst quasi-

mystical readings of Deleuze, Kleinherenbrink's premise nonetheless contains its own philosophical hang-ups that must be taken into consideration in turn.

For one, it is not obvious why the concept of continuity *must* be contradistinct from that of the discrete or the individual. For example, no one would deny that the real number line involves continuity. Between any two points on the line there is a continuum of numbers that make up the distance. This does not stop the real number line from being distinct from both that of which it is a part (e.g. the complex plane) and that which is a part of it (the numbers which make up the line). In terms of the latter, these numbers constitute this continuity itself and yet each number is distinct from every other and from the line as a whole. We see no reason to assume that this is not ontologically generalizable. The notion of continuity seems not only to be compossible with the notion of irreducibility (whether virtual or actual) as it presents itself in Deleuze's work, but Kleinherenbrink's reading seems to demand some notion of continuity between the virtual and the actual (one example might be in the form of an infinite regress, implied by the convertibility of relation and machine in conjunction) in order to give machines both full irreducibility as well as full mutability. Kleinherenbrink even admits to the necessity of continuities on the side of the actual, but his rejection of the virtual as 'realm' (though much is right in this account) prevents him from seeing that continuity pervades the entire breadth of ontology.

Kleinherenbrink's trajectory is a welcome one; it still remains our opinion, nevertheless, that one of Deleuze's signal achievements was to do away with the opposition between the continuous and the discrete and, in so doing, show the robustness of their perpetual relations of grounding or re-emergence on different registers: something which is grounded in continuity in one stratum is discrete in the next, so that – importantly – the continuous is in no way in conflict with the singularity and irreducibility of each entity in its equal claim to being. If continuity is *actually* manifest, and the Ideas of machines emerge by virtue of these manifestations, how is the withholding of the virtual rigorously maintained? Might we think an excess proper to the continuous? Continuity, it seems, need not appeal to a false metaphysical depth (a homogeneous realm or undifferentiated abyss) in order to penetrate to the heart of each thing in its irreducibility and mutability.

Privacy: Concomitant with the notion of discontinuity is the notion of the withdrawal of the machine, that which, according to Kleinherenbrink, constitutes its proper being-in-itself, its irreducibility to that which it encounters, that which generates it, and that which it

generates. Much like the philosophy of Harman, this implies that no thing has ultimate ontological access to any other thing. The meaning of Kleinherenbrink's interpretation of the externality thesis blooms from this initial commitment. At the same time, in order to save machines from being eternal objects, each machine can be affected by its relations, change its nature, and be created and destroyed. This suite of commitments together presents certain inconsistencies. First, some form of ontological access is implied by any relation, change, becoming, and so on (even the possibility of speculation on 'absolute withdrawal', if justifiably true, assumes a form of ontological via epistemological access, however tenuous or indirect). Thus it is unwarranted to assume that withdrawal and irreducibility are two sides of the same coin, since it is the former that is meant to vouchsafe for the latter, and is not possible to assume without self-refutation for the argument from access given above. Withdrawal is also refuted by textual evidence, such as Deleuze's invocation of the 'absolute proximity' of beings (Deleuze 1994: 37),[2] where full ontological access of every being to every other licenses Deleuze's commitment to univocity. If this difference between the ontological privacy and existential publicity of the machine is insisted upon (*de jure* and not merely *de facto*), does it not sneak equivocity in through the back door in a reformulated guise of Heidegger's 'ontological difference' (the difference between being and beings)? If not, how is this difference to be maintained and accounted for, since it plays a spinal role in Kleinherenbrink's metaphysical programme?

Along these lines, one wonders about the validity of calling this thesis an 'externality' thesis, since it implies, first and foremost, the *interiority of the machine* rather than the exteriority of relations. While the distinction may sound somewhat tautological, it has very widespread consequences for the theory of the constitution of entities. It is more plausible to us that the externality of relations means that these 'outside' relations maintain their own ontological validity not from withdrawal of relata but from the relational constitution of the relata themselves, along with the fact of the possible migration, traversal or transformation of entities out of their originary genetic nexus. Although we must again praise Kleinherenbrink's attempt to genuinely think this predicament in the substance and detail of his theory (especially through the conjunctive synthesis), his original commitment to the privacy of entities hampers what may otherwise have been a less conceptually tortured expression of these metaphysical implications. Through the problem of ontological privacy, the theory of relations – often so rich with particularity in Deleuze's descriptions and examples – suffers a

Procrustean fate in *Against Continuity*, yoked as relations are to the fourfold bed of Kleinherenbrink's machines.

Multiplicity: Accordingly, Kleinherenbrink's fourfold provides philosophical solutions only by retreating to a schematic identity. In an attempt to disambiguate the elements of the fourfold, Kleinherenbrink gives a succinct distribution of these elements: 'If the Figure is what machines *are* and actual manifestations are what they *do*, then *desire* is what they *have*' (Kleinherenbrink 2019: 148). Yet the machinic distribution between *being*, *having* and *doing* is dissonant with the strict isomorphism between the virtual and the actual that undergirds the fourfold of *Against Continuity*. Just as the *multiple of quality* distinguishes the *empty unity of sense*, so too does the *multiple of the Idea* distinguish the unity of the *Body*. In his zeal for 'externality', Kleinherenbrink neglects a Deleuzian thesis of equal importance: that the conditioned do not resemble their conditions – the latter being different in kind (Deleuze 1994: 69). To forget this insight is precisely to forget that one cannot trace the transcendental from the empirical via resemblance without paying the price of confusing real conditions with general conditions of mere possibility (Kant's problem). Indeed, Kleinherenbrink sometimes has trouble disambiguating his fourfold, as when he notes the similarity of the virtual Body and actual Sense as 'neutral, sterile, and impassible' (Kleinherenbrink 2019: 127) but never clarifies the source of this identification.

While the mirrored structure of the fourfold does seem to be endorsed in *The Fold*, the citation used by Kleinherenbrink himself actually suggests a non-unilateral structure where Deleuze argues that relations are completed, not only one-to-multiple and multiple-to-one, but in a veritable *Omnis in unum* (Deleuze 1993: 145).[3] These supplementary relations are conveniently left undeveloped in Kleinherenbrink's subsequent explication of the syntheses, as these relations form the basis for precisely what would trouble the clear distinctions Kleinherenbrink advocates for: these relations conjure up *zones of indiscernibility*, a recurrent theme in Deleuze's later work. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, becoming is a 'communication', whose reality is found 'in that which suddenly sweeps us up and makes us become – a *proximity, an indiscernibility* that extracts a shared element' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 278–9). This difficulty with Kleinherenbrink's schema could perhaps be boiled down to a fundamental misunderstanding of what characterises a multiplicity, or what counts as its ontological essence.

IV. Reading Deleuze

Finally, apart from the immanent logical problems that Kleinherenbrink's reconstruction presents, there are several issues of reading Deleuze in *Against Continuity* which present problems for Kleinherenbrink's work and for Deleuze studies in general. These concern which models of scholarship are important and redeemable in continuing to read Deleuze as a figure in the history of thought.

To begin, one has to ask oneself how *Against Continuity* operates textually. It stands apart from many texts (probably even from some of the more holistic and systematic readings of Deleuze) in that Kleinherenbrink is not concerned with hermeneutic exercises. He isn't interested, for its own sake, in developing an interpretation integrated with recapitulation. This makes him unlike many of the strictly 'philosophical' readings of Deleuze's work that one can find in English, readings where fidelity to the text and context is paramount (where fidelity falls back on transmission of putative information). Neither is he interested in constructing a genealogy of the Deleuzian corpus, within which one might track the development or transformation of terms or concepts through Deleuze's philosophical life. (Many monographs have already cleared this path.) Instead, Kleinherenbrink presents a strictly unitary account of Deleuze's ontology that seeks to isolate certain ontological constants without which the rest of Deleuze's work, perhaps, could not function. The author's approach in this case is, therefore, in keeping with the spirit of Deleuze's own practice of the history of philosophy, since Deleuze himself can be imagined as extracting similar structures or systems from the philosophers he so cherishes (Spinoza, Nietzsche, Bergson). In doing so, Deleuze produced an image of these philosophers somewhat unrecognizable to the eyes of many of his contemporaries. Furthermore, reading this way pushed up against received notions about the function and material of the history of philosophy, whose contents were understood as given, over and done, simply in the past. For Deleuze, by contrast – as perhaps for all genuine philosophers – the history of philosophy is always up for grabs, just because it is productive of philosophy itself. Insofar as it fails the test of productivity, the history of philosophy loses its force and its reason. All this may be said, to a degree, of Kleinherenbrink, since he presents one of the boldest proposals in Deleuze studies to date and attempts to push his reading up against many contemporary problems in philosophy. But we must also ask: what delivers this appraisal in *Against Continuity*,

and how does it relate to Deleuze's own historical impulse? Here we can outline only a few consequential tendencies.

In the exegesis of a philosopher one can be hamstrung by a dilemma between producing trivial, regurgitative readings of the work and readings having little or no resonance with the original. While *Against Continuity* avoids both of these pitfalls, Kleinherenbrink's reconstruction (his revisionism) presents definite weaknesses regarding its fidelity not only to the *letter of the text* but, more seriously, to the *spirit of the philosophy*. This may showcase his independence as a thinker, as well as the autonomy of the problems which he brings Deleuze to bear on, but it is worth examining all the same. For instance, Kleinherenbrink's use of quotation shapes his approach to exegesis as well as the rhetorical substance and textual authority of the book. His primary quotational device is to take single sentences (or phrases) from varying works in order to complete his own thought and confirm his theses. This is a technique that, in part, he probably employs in conscious emulation of Deleuze's historical monographs. The critical difference with *Against Continuity* lies in the apparent insensitivity that Kleinherenbrink sometimes displays for the impetus of Deleuze's thought in a given quote, something that Deleuze, in his short quotes and eclecticism, rarely loses sight of in other authors (even where his interpretations are intentionally controversial). Such insensitivity is by no means uniformly true in Kleinherenbrink's reading, but the lack of context in his quotation is prevalent enough that there are many instances (for example, on the notion of 'sense') where he falls into flagrant, if productive, misreadings. Some are intentional and serve the ends of his schema; others appear to be caused by innocent ignorance of (or wilful disregard for) the content of a concept or argument, or the role it holds in the system or structure Deleuze elaborates. This insensitivity also inclines us towards a general suspicion of Kleinherenbrink's main objectives; it begins to chip away at our charity towards his machinic system as a reading of Deleuze's oeuvre.

A connected problem, by no means the least relevant for Kleinherenbrink's project, concerns the way in which apparent differences in terms, concepts and problematics are covered over in his reading of Deleuze. Accordingly, to name just a single example, we find the terms 'Desire', 'Idea', 'Power', 'singularities' and even 'code' treated as strict synonyms, rather than as a set of connected concepts that find among themselves zones of indiscernibility. Methodologically, what the will-to-synonymisation implies – in its desire for total and unique sense, in which distinct things are definitively separated – goes against both

Deleuze's theory of being as well as his conception of systematicity, which displaces the schematic paradigm in favour of a dynamical and problematic understanding of system. For these reasons, and others we could not spare words for, any *fruitful* reading of *Against Continuity* (many of which seem possible) must also be an extremely *cautious* one.

Against Continuity is a 'problematic' reading of Deleuze: problematic in the positive, Deleuzian, sense and, at times, in the pejorative sense too. It has faults, to be sure, but it is also a book without trepidation, full of intellectual imagination, one which has stirred in us (at least temporarily) serious doubts about our own readings of Deleuze, and through them, brought us to some of the most genuine re-engagement with the beating heart of Deleuze's thought of any secondary work we've encountered. There are many works that hew closer to Deleuze's 'intention', but few that inspire as deep a reacquaintance with Deleuze's philosophy.

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Notes

1. See, for instance, Ian Buchanan's (2017) essay 'Assemblage Theory, or, the Future of an Illusion' in this journal, which diagnoses this problem in relation to the use in the social sciences of the term 'assemblage'.
2. See *Difference and Repetition*, 37: 'There, however, where they are borne by hubris, all things are in absolute proximity, and whether they are large or small, inferior or superior, none of them participates more or less in being, nor receives it by analogy.'
3. *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, 145: 'Whence the existence of a cycle, "*Omnis in unum*," such that the relations of one-to-multiple and multiple-to-one are completed by a one-to-one and a mulitiple-to-multiple, as Michel Serres has shown.'

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