'incompossible' in the 'same' *identical* world], [where] the dice throw has replaced the game of Plenitude," the principle of the best of all possible worlds governed and selected by God's goodness and universal intuition. Time has radically entered altered being. If there is a God, there is no time (since He sees everything at all times displayed at once); but if time is real, there is no divine "intellectual intuition" *except on the plane of immanence* where the concept roams through its tensors at the speed of thought and folds back into chaos to drink from the source; and "the monad can no longer include the entire world as in a closed circle modifiable by projection, but opens itself onto a trajectory or expanding spiral that distances itself farther and farther from any center" (Deleuze 1988, p. 188). The ideal game is only this chaocacocosmos where everything returns repeat because there is no beginning or end of time, but only a mid milieu where I am writing you reading, reading you writing, if we well prehend each other in this mobile instance. For "the true subject of the eternal return is the intensity, the singularity . . . will to power as open intensity" in this virtual world where "each thing opens itself to the infinite of predicates through which it passes"—maximum communication!—"on condition that it lose its identity as concept and as ego or self" (Deleuze 1969, p. 344). For the Ego Idea governs the category of substance, inside and out; the One World Universe conditions the series of all causes; and God (Logic) monitors the distribution of exclusive identities (Deleuze 1969, p. 343). But in the system of Anarchist, "the anti-God determines the passage of each thing through all possible predicates" (Deleuze 1969, p. 344). This is what is happening, obscurely and distinctly now, in this indiscernible chaosmos of "history." The world becomes a Grand Canyon, the counter-ego a crack or a dissolving, dissipative structure, god becomes Dionysus, "divine dismemberment" (Deleuze 1969, p. 206), or Baphomet, "prince of modifications," and all the rest, ourselves, *mobile figures forming at the crest of waves.* For "this" world is the result of this series originating in that singularity, which will continue and prolong itself up to the next one.

Notes

1. "A Philosophical Concept," in *Who Comes after the Subject*, Eduardo Cadava, Peter Connor and Jean-Luc Nancy, eds. (New York: Routledge, 1991). Nietzsche already spoke of a *Subjekts-Vielheit* (subject-multiplicity) in *Beyond Good and Evil*, while for Kant the purpose of subjective synthesis was to combine the "manifold" (multiplicity) in intuition but also to unify it transcendentally.
2. "[A] fractional number of dimensions is the index of a properly directional space (with continuous variations in direction, and without tangent); what defines smooth space, then, is that it does not have a dimension higher than that which moves through it or is inscribed in it; in this sense it is a flat multiplicity, for example, a line that fills a plane without ceasing to be a line; space and that which occupies space tend to become identified, to have the same power . . . " Gilles Deleuze, *A Thousand Plateaus* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1987), p. 488.
3. Differen*t*iation is the self-causing potential of the Idea, Aion and Spatium (dynamic space-time of Body without Organs), its self-differing into incompossible spacetimes and bodies, intensive particles and matter-functions, divergent series of singularities wherein alone it consists in itself (its plane of immanence), self-synthesizing in disjunction "a" multiple spirit-souffle of all series, "aleatory point of singular points"; while differenciation is the process of individuation—incarnation and presencing together in the same "compossible" world, the actual world. The idea-world or chaosmos complicates all series, virtual and actual. A virtual becomes possible to realize or actualize when an idea condenses into a concept, as the event is beginning to assemble its components by stepping out to self-encounter; perhaps it enfolds its virtue in the Idea from the absolute beginning beyond eternity, transcendental preexistence, or infratemporal a priori. This differential repetition (*t/c*) in virtual spacetime of preindividual, nonpersonal singularities (static series) or intensities (dynamic) forms the topic of *Différence et répétition* and *Logique du sens*. "Static" does not mean lacking directional displacement, it defines a temporal synthesis of indeterminacy (preparing the *concept* of time-direction) as prelude to Deleuzian synthesis: the infinite proliferation of incompossible series of timelines, lifelines, all included—or rather, "made and undone"—in "the same motley world . . . of captures rather than closures"; where even our "captures"—of knowledge and power, of desire, of information—"draw [us] outside" into an absolute future without foreknowledge or interiority, even in divine intellectual intuition. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Le pli: Leibniz et le Baroque*, (Paris: Minuit, 1988), p. 111. The *only* time *in this sense* is the future, the outside, chance, "emission of singularities" as in a Mallarmean constellation. But this outside (time) is our interiority. See note 12.
4. With a further right twist of his gadfly attitude, an antipsychiatrist like Thomas Szasz can go from exposing the "myth of mental illness" as a psychiatric invention or intervention to denouncing "schizophrenics" for simulating incompetence to stand trial and pretending to be disturbed when they commit atrocities, to avoid personal responsibility. *Insanity: The Idea and Its Consequences* (New York: Wiley, 1987).
5. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), pp. 39, 309, et passim (quoting Lacan).
6. Ilya Prigogine and Isabelle Stengers, citing Whitehead ("the many become one and are increased by one"), comment: "no element of nature serves as permanent support of

changing relations, each draws its identity from its relations with the others . . . each existing [thing] unifies in the process of its genesis the multiplicity which constitutes the world, and adds to this multiplicity a supplementary set of relations." *La nouvelle alliance* (Paris: Gallimard, 1979), p. 112. In *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze and Guattari only subtract the one in order to relaunch the process of becoming or "genesis."

7. The tensor is an expression of force vectors as metadimensional: "Mathematical being, generalization of the vector, defined in a space of n dimensions by n^k components (k being the order of the tensor) and whose *properties are independent of the chosen system of coordinate axes*. A vector is a tensor of order 1." *Petit Robert*, s. v. (my emphasis). Mandelbrot's constructions of fractional dimension seem to generate spontaneously "out of chaos" by nonlinear processes involving tensors. But Deleuze borrows and remodels the mathematical concept of tensor in order to define an essential activity of "self"-constructing forces, which perceive or "prehend" (Whitehead) other forces to compose a power field or desiring machine that varies its coordinates (changes nature and dimensions) with every "translation" (movement) it undertakes. Thus he has radicalized the concept of event as *change of nature*, Guattari's deterritorialization, to the degree that "every thought emits a throw of the dice" (Mallarmé), initiates a potential re-ordering of time.

8. This can be painful and go against the grain, "against nature." For example, an obsessional "structure" of tightly controlled ritual operations—as a function of what? All that tight webbing of regulations has the purpose of avoiding an encounter with the line of flight, which thus defines the obsessional behavior, apotropaic, phobic converse or "conversion," which negatively mimes the act it is avoiding. Or a society that defines itself by its "regimes of control" and becomes obsessed with internal or external enemies, subversion. To break out is to break down (according to the fundamental human or obsessional phantasm).

9. Martin Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, trans. James S. Churchill (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962; originally published in 1929). Deleuze's reading of Kant permeates his late-sixties work and the two volumes on cinema (especially the second); it is summed up rapidly and with extreme density in the 1983 preface to *Kant's Critical Philosophy*. Cf. Gilles Deleuze, *L'image-temps* (Paris: Minuit, 1985), p. 111: "[T]he actual is objective, but the virtual is the subjective . . . time itself, pure virtuality which splits and doubles itself into affecting and affected, 'the affection of self by self' as definition of time." On the virtual currency of Lucretian (meta)physics, see Michel Serres, *La naissance de la physique* (Paris: Minuit, 1977) and Ilya Prigogine and Isabelle Stengers, *La nouvelle alliance* (Paris: Gallimard, 1979).

10. Gilles Deleuze, *Différence et répétition* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968), pp. 116ff.

11. "Once existence is no longer produced, nor deduced, but simply posed (this simplicity drives all our thought to madness) and once it is abandoned to this position and by it at the same time, it becomes necessary to think the freedom of this abandon." Jean-Luc Nancy, *L'expérience de la liberté* (Paris: Gallimard, 1988), p. 13.

12. "It is we who are internal to time . . . Time is not the interior in us, but just the opposite, the interiority in which we are, in which we move, live, and change" (*L'image-temps*, p. 110). It emerges from Deleuze's *Foucault* (Paris: Minuit, 1986) that the outside-future becoming "interiority" is deeper within ourselves than "our own" interiority as defined by habits, periods, programmed movements, consciousness, and memory (cf. *Différence et répétition*, pp. 96–115).

13. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?* (Paris: Minuit, 1991), p. 149, my emphasis.

14. "[T]he *order of time* [concerns] the coexistence of relations or the simultaneity of elements interior to time. The third [time-image or synthesis] concerns the *series of time*, which joins the before and the after in a becoming, instead of separating them: its paradox is to introduce an interval which lasts [*qui dure*] into the moment itself" (*L'image-temps*, p. 202).

15. Gilles Deleuze, *Logique du sens* (Paris: Minuit, 1969).

16. "Here out ahead, there remembering, in the future, in the past, under a false appearance of present," Stéphane Mallarmé, "Mimique," quoted in *Logique du sens*, p. 80.

17. Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, trans. Robert Hurley (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), p. 86.

18. It is also true that the subject-concept emerging from the "new Hegel" of Henrich, Zizek, and Badiou is not without close affinities with Deleuze's absolute continuum of becoming (diagram), which replaces the subject-object schema. Deleuze's relations with "Hegel" and "Lacan" are too complex to summarize, but the difference seems to bear less on the process of unfolding the idea into any "figure" at any "moment" (cf. *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie*, p. 16) than on the construction of time-lines, which in Deleuze are in virtual coexistence within "incompossible worlds," all insisting always virtually now in this world, "remembering themselves" in the manner of Sheldrake's "morphic fields of resonance" and emerging in the manner of Prigogine's "dissipative structures." I think that this radical neo-Leibnizian simultaneity and panmathematical theory of negentropy would make little sense to Hegel, though the latter had already grasped the essential as concerns a theory of the subject-object indiscernible. See, e.g., the introduction to the *Phänomenologie des Geistes*. Deleuze's objections to the "negative transcendence" of desire determined as lack by castration are well known; nevertheless it was Lacan who initiated the critique of "Oedipus" and affirmed the "disappearing apparition" of a desire that is the only real.

19. The "informal diagram" consists in "force relations" drawn into a "map of density, intensity," "virtual, potential" relations between "fluent matter" and "diffuse function"; the concrete machines are "assemblages, devices or mechanisms [*agencements, dispositifs*]" effectuating the force relations of power through institutions (*Foucault*, p. 44ff). More generally, the abstract machine-diagram is the virtual side of the archival strata laid down in history or "the geology of morals"; the *agencements* actualize the "decisions" of the virtual machine, its "judgments," but all begin to mix and shuffle and communicate on the BwO, the synthesizer or abstract machine.

20. See Christian Jambet, *La logique des Orientaux* (Paris: Seuil, 1985), pp. 52–73.

21. The preceding paragraph refers to *Différence et répétition*, chapter 2 et passim, and to *A Thousand Plateaus*, plateau 11.

22. Kant defines the will as "a kind of cause" balancing between freedom and necessity, thus located not in time, but at the turning point or horizon of thought, of time and event (world-origin). Cf. the third Antinomy and the second Critique. Deleuze defines the Idea as "dialectical" (in *Différence et répétition*), but without the illusions of negation, opposition, resemblance, identity, or analogy in relation to "this" actual world. The Idea has nothing to do with logical possibility, everything to do with virtual reality. It is the Ideal Game, nomadic "self," singular encounter with "the unconscious of pure thought" (*Logique du sens*, p. 76), outside thought (the future origin of the world).

23. When the cosmologist assembles the differential equations governing the singularity, when Marcel thinks of his grandmother, when I imagine being with C., our thought and our emotion emit signs that cross the intermediary spacetime potential to "couple" and resonate with that other time, that other being, that originary difference of intensity, which thus comes back to us by a "forced movement . . . [that] overboards the base series" in a "return of greater amplitude." Cf. *Différence et répétition*, p. 154f. and Gilles Deleuze, *Proust et les signes* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1964–1976).

24. Pierre Klossowski, *Nietzsche et le cercle vicieux* (Paris: Mercure, 1969), pp. 93–95 (for this quote and the following).

25. Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), p. 24, translation modified. To throw the dice is to affirm the chance combination, but the combination is already "the affirmation of necessity," "the number of destiny which brings the dice back. It is in this sense that the second moment of the game is also the two moments together or the player who equals the whole" (pp. 26–27). In playing dice with the past that sent us here we are replaying the present, throwing singularities back into a future that will have brought us to this quasi-aleatory, "Markov" point of linking back. "The singular points are on the die; the [ontological] questions are the dice themselves; the imperative is the act of throwing. Ideas are the problematic combinations that result"; while "questions express the relation of the problems with the imperatives they come from" (*Différence et répétition*, p. 255).

26. See Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1929), p. 185 on the schema of modality as the *Inbegriff*, "paragon" of time.

27. "Chaos chaoticizes, and undoes all consistency in the infinite. The problem of philosophy is to acquire a consistency without losing the infinite in which thought plunges" (*Qu'est-ce que la philosophie*, p. 45).

28. Deleuze cites the philosopher-mathematician Albert Lautmann:

> The geometric interpretation of the theory of differential equations shows us two absolutely distinct realities: there is a field of directions and the topological accidents that can arise in it, as for example the existence in the plane of *singular points to which no direction is attached*, and there are the integral curves with the form they take in the neighborhood of the singularities of the directional field (*Logique du sens*, p. 127 n.)

—i.e., the pullulating virtual self-differentiating point-folds, and the actual geometric figures they form in their elastic vicinity. But the self-shaping freedom-ego is itself the geometro-dynamic tensor ("aleatory-nomadic point of singular points") to be analyzed and synthesized. The only subject is the multiplicity: "The problem of the unconscious [has to do with] peopling, population" (*A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 30): multiple-cities swarming with "social Ideas" (*Différence et répétition*, pp. 240ff.) of crowds and gangs, the mob (*mobile vulgus*), riots and assemblies, packs or bundles of intensities, emotional turning points, the variable moods of neighborhoods (cf. *A Thousand Plateaus*, passim, and *Logique du sens*, p. 67).

29. A composite-word concept invented in *Différence et répétition* meaning the breakdown, "collapse" (*effondrement*), and "ex-foundation" of categorial schemes; the prelude or preface to their *brassage* (shuffling, brewing, mixing) and recomposition, mutation, or abandonment. For a condensed summary of Deleuze's "radical critique of the attributive [categorical] scheme" (*Leibniz et le Baroque*, p. 103), Kantian or Platonic, his invention of nomadic

"complexes of space and time," "phantastic notions" forming "conditions of real experience" for an immanent ethic-esthetics of "univocity"—in which perception becomes experimental and reality multiplies in technature ("each point of view is another city, the cities being joined only by their distance and resonating only across the divergence of their series, of their houses and streets" [*Logique du sens*, p. 203], of incompossible plans and schemes vying for effectuation in actuality)—see *Différence et répétition*, p. 364f.; *Logique du sens*, pp. 300ff.; *Leibniz et le Baroque*, pp. 103–112.

6

Deleuze: Serialization and Subject-Formation

Constantin V. Boundas

MANY CONNOISSEURS of the debates surrounding the lives and the deaths of the poststructuralist subject complain that the underdetermined content of the notion "subjectivity" often leaves the debate without a point. The jury is still out, trying to nail down the precise moment of the subject's ingress in the poststructuralist body, and voices are raised for the reprieve of the praxiological subject or for the memorial repetition of the postmessianic subject, which is "never yet p."[1] But was it ever clear that the poststructuralists had so unceremoniously ousted the subject from their discourse?

It will be foolish, of course, to deny that the death of a certain subject has really been wished for and that it has, perhaps, really taken place. Its death has been wished for in the wake of a certain deadly violence perpetrated against the Other,[2] and, because of this, the resurrection of another self and of an (otherwise) Other must understandably wait for the fulfillment of the critique of the Cartesian, Kantian, and Husserlian subject and for the unmasking of the fraudulent accreditation that the subject had received in classical and modern texts. All this is well known. But what the blurred, composite picture of the poststructuralists renders invisible is the fact that not everyone who wished the death of "the" subject and the advent of a new entity in its place did share the same motivation for the wish or the same vision for the new dawn.

Deleuze undoubtedly is among those who contributed decisively to the critical unmasking of old pretensions and to the hopeful invigilation for the arrival of the new. An important "theory of subjectivity" traverses his entire work, beginning with the essay on Hume and reaching impressive depth and precision with his essay on Leibniz. What is remarkable about this contribution is that it combines a radical critique of interiority with a stub-

born search for "an inside that lies deeper than any internal world."[3] In this sense, the search for the fold—"the inside as the operation of the outside" (Deleuze 1988, p. 96)—that Deleuze gallantly attributes to Foucault, is as much his own lifelong project and search as it was (for a more limited time span) his friend's.

In recent discussions, the hypothesis has been put forward that the structure of the subject can be elucidated through a better understanding of the structure of the narrative.[4] The resources of phenomenology and hermeneutics have been brought to bear upon this hypothesis with some promising results. But these results are of course not free from the integrative and coherentist presuppositions of the kind of tradition that phenomenology and hermeneutics tacitly assume. Gadamer and Ricoeur, it is true, have called for a perpetual, hermeneutic constitution and reconstitution of the self to follow the dispossession of the (naive or narcissistic) ego. I fail to see, however, what else this passage from the first to the second naivety—to speak like Ricoeur—entails, besides subjectivity reclaiming identity from the smoldering fires of difference. Neither the first nor the second naivety dispenses with the phenomenologist's belief that the life of the subject is given narrative structure by the subject itself "as it constructs a self who is then seen as the initiator of its actions and projects."[5] How would such a narrative structure help decide among competing narratives in those cases in which we strongly suspect that the narratee is the victim of self-deception, trapped in distorted communication, or systematically blinded by ideological prejudices? Traps and blindnesses of this kind affect the very *ideal* of the unity of the self that phenomenology and hermeneutics postulate as a zetetic principle. No such postulate can handle the fragmentation that affects the coherence of a personality or the multiple narratives that can be generated from the life of one individual. Why should a narrative strive after the coherence of the lived "inner-time" consciousness? Why not think of narratives that can accommodate, without compromise, fragmentation and multiplicity? The usual response to these questions is that the fragmentation of the subject brings about loss of meaning and the collapse of personality. But even if this were the case for the life of the self-constituting self, why would the frittering of (existential) meaning prevent the narrative biographer from making sense of her data? The standard edition of Freud's works is full of case studies (often in narrative form) of patients with shattered selves. It is very difficult indeed to privilege the sort of narrative that phenomenology and hermeneutics present as *the* narrative.

But if we turn to Deleuze, for whom narrativization is serialization, chances are that the yield may be instructive and helpful. For Deleuze, the process of narrativization is a veritable serialization, because it depends upon an originary disjunction governing the distribution of singular points along

two, at least, diverging series. Since, in most narrative cases, the number of interacting series is greater than two, various conjunctive syntheses at work tend to establish bundles of series, which then begin to gravitate toward one or the other of the originary disjuncts.[6] Serialization, as Deleuze understands it, is zeugmatic, both in its form of expression and in its form of content. It is zeugmatic, first of all, with respect to the formation of a single series that, on the basis of connective syntheses, prolongs or extends a single line, placing singularities, contiguously, next to each other. It is zeugmatic also in the way in which, through conjunctive syntheses, bundles of series are grouped together. And finally, it is zeugmatic with respect to the *sui generis* operations of an originary, inclusive, disjunctive synthesis that places series in communication and in resonance with one another, the very moment that it separates one from the other.

Deleuze has always insisted that this last, disjunctive synthesis would not function without the very special intervention of an agent that he named "object = x"—a name calculated to displace Kant by endowing his text with the cipher of difference that it lacks. Being the simulacral effect of the originary disjunctive synthesis (founding and yet inaccessible), the object = x leaps from one series to another, "always absent from its place" and never totally landing or transferring itself to any one series; for, if it did, the result would be premature closure and an abrupt end of the narration.[7]

Now, my wager in this essay is that a powerful theory of subjectivity can be found in Deleuze's texts and that the zeugmatic arrangement of relevant segments of these texts—in other words, a serialization—may serve us well in the articulation of this theory. I am indeed convinced that the only way to assess correctly Deleuze's contributions to a theory of subjectivity is to read him the way he reads others: we must read him according to the series he creates, observe the ways in which these series converge and become compossible, and track down the ways in which they diverge and begin to resonate. A relentless vigilance is necessary in every step of such a reading. It will be a mistake, for example, to take each book of Deleuze for one series, and to try to establish compossibility or resonance among books. I do not doubt that the names of those that Deleuze reads and writes about stand for singular points (intensities), capable of generating series. In this sense, one could, with justification, speak of a Hume series, a Bergson series, a Leibniz series, etc. But none of these series is coextensive with the text or texts that bear the name of the thinker after whom a series has been named. Books and series do not coincide. This is why it would be better to talk about the "Hume-effect" series, the "Leibniz-effect" series, etc.

At any rate, provided that one takes adequate precautions, there is no harm in trying to spread Deleuze's contributions to a theory of subjectivity along several series, which could each be identified by means of the question/

problem that it helps to introduce. The Hume series: how does the mind become a subject?; the Bergson series: how can a static ontological genesis of the subject be worked out beginning with prepersonal and preindividual singularities and events?; the Leibniz series: how can there be a notion of individuality which is neither a mere deduction from the concept "subject"—in which case it would be contradictory—nor a mere figure of an individuality deprived of concept—in which case it would be absurd and ineffable?; the Nietzsche-Foucault series: how can a dynamic genesis of subjectivity be constructed, where the subject would be the fold and the internalization of outside forces, without succumbing to a philosophy of interiority?; the Nietzsche-Klossowski series: how is it possible to think the subject in terms of inclusive disjunctions and simultaneously affirmed incompossible worlds? These series would have run along their own lines of flight, without ever permitting the construction of any planes of consistency between them, were it not for Deleuze's concepts "chaosmos" (= chaos + cosmos) and "cracked I" (*Je fêlé*), which, in their capacity as portmanteau words, circulate among the series and make possible the inclusive, disjunctive affirmation of all of them at once (Deleuze 1990, p. 176).[8] It is chaosmos, that is to say, the becoming-world, that posits the constitution of the subject as a task, and chaosmos again that guarantees that the constituted subject will not emerge as a substantive *hupokeimenon* but rather as an always already "cracked I."

Before I go any further, though, I wish to make a few preliminary remarks. First of all, the effort to articulate a theory of subjectivity is not made easier by the multitude of terms with a family resemblance that are available to us and between which we move, as we talk, without respecting the important differences that separate one from the other. I am thinking about terms like "subject," "self," "I," "person," "particular," "individual," which do not all have the same meaning. In order, therefore, to keep things as crisp as possible I wish to indicate here that I follow the practice adopted by Manfred Frank.[9] I speak of "subject" or "the subject" whenever I refer to a particular subject, and when I do so, I understand that a person is a particular entity that can be deduced from the universal structure "Subject." I retain the term "individual" for a singular entity that cannot be deduced from the universal structure Subject. Occasionally, and in accordance with Deleuzian practice, I make use of the term "singular" or "singularity" in order to refer to preindividual and prepersonal elements that are indispensable for the constitution of individuals and persons. In other words, I side with Frank and Schleiermacher in thinking of personality as the mode of being of a particular entity, and of individuality as the mode of being of a singular entity. In the context of the ongoing debates surrounding subjectivity, this means that I side with Frank and Schleiermacher against Leibniz, because Leibniz's individuals are really particulars, to the extent that they are derived from the whole by

means of a process of limitation. But, for Schleiermacher, the individual cannot be deduced from a concept, because it is the individual that provides the whole with its own concept. As Frank puts it, "it is the intervention of the individual that prevents the structure from ever coinciding with itself, and from ever being self-present" (Frank 1988, p. 93).

Despite the differences between the hypotactic, hermeneutic discourse of Schleiermacher and the paratactic serializations of Deleuze, the centrality of the notion of individuality without a concept is equally well marked in both. Neither Schleiermacher nor Deleuze think of the individual as the ineffable. As Bruce Baugh has pointed out in his reading of Deleuze, "the individual is not a bare particular, a 'this' like any other 'this,' but a singularity that has a determinate content in virtue of its actual genesis, that is, in virtue of the history of its coming to be."[10] If, in Baugh's words again, individuality is a function of individuating causal processes and the affair of intersecting series that bring it about, the actuality of the individual cannot fail to be the basis of the multiplicity that is the a priori condition of concepts, and the singularity of this actuality is a function of its historical genesis.

Now, these remarks presuppose an extended argument that I have not yet offered—the kind of argument that Deleuze entrusts, in segments, to his series. And it is to these series that I now turn my attention.

The Bergson Series

I name the series after Deleuze's long-standing commitment to Bergson, and to Bergson's skepticism about the alleged "apodeictic evidences" of consciousness that continue to feed phenomenological investigations. This series mobilizes segments of Deleuzian texts as different as *Bergsonism, Différence et répétition, The Logic of Sense,* and *Cinema 1* and *2*;[11] intersects with concerns about subjectivity of different textures generated by the reading of Leibniz, Nietzsche, Foucault, and Klossowski; and creates a frame for the discussion of individuality in the twin volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia.* The Bergson series tends to be severe and uncompromising toward rival theories of subjectivity. But Deleuze is not severe or uncompromising only because of an allegiance to the (now) fashionable narratives decrying the plight of Others as the oppressed, suffering innocents and the unwilling victims of a neurotic, identitarian self. Not that Deleuze holds these narratives to be false, but, for him, these narratives often confuse empirical assessments and political vigilance with transcendental determinations and with the kind of vigilance that only an originary *epoché* can provide. *The Logic of Sense*, for example, warns against this confusion, in the clearest of terms:

> "The error of all efforts to determine the transcendental as consciousness is that they think of the transcendental in the image of, and in the resemblance to, that which it is supposed to ground . . . [But] the transcendental field is no more individual than personal, and no more general than universal" (p.99).

An early text of Deleuze on Hume, which clearly belongs to the Bergson series, had already argued that the subject is not given, and that the mind, before it becomes subject, is, in fact, a set of singularities.[12] That early text had already made the subject a task to be fulfilled (Deleuze 1990, p. 105). In its later segments, the Bergson series assumed the responsibility for the fulfillment of this task and strove to articulate a veritable "static ontological genesis" of the subject. It was *Différence et répétition* that set up the parameters within which this static genesis had to be worked out. In this work, Deleuze shows how unwise it is to entrust the philosophy of difference to the impure data of the conscious, perceptual field. Such a field, he argues, may provide us with the concept in search of an idea but can never mobilize the idea in search of a concept. In the name, therefore, of his "new image of thought," Deleuze prepares for the reduction of the conscious, perceptual field and argues that this reduction is the only gesture capable of setting up the investigation of a world that he now calls "non-human" or "pre-human." It is this world that will function in his texts as the real transcendental ground of visibilities, statements, and fields of interiority.

From this early text down to the latest, motivating the entire Bergson series and governing the selection and the articulation of its segments, is the desire to displace consciousness and its function of casting light upon things, in order to restore to things their pure phosphorescence. Beyond the evidence of consciousness, the Bergson series will discover singularities and events, that is, the intensive magnitudes, out of which the human world, with individuals and subjects populating it, must be constituted. Unlike metaphysics and transcendental philosophy, which tend to think of singularities as being already encompassed by the form of a self or of a person, Deleuze looks for the singular that is neither individual nor personal. Only such impersonal and preindividual, "nomadic" singularities can be allowed to function as the building blocks of the transcendental field. This is the task of the genealogist: to begin with events and singularities and to account for the constitution of a world of things on this basis alone (Deleuze 1968, pp. 173ff). Events and singularities have, therefore, priority over things, and the error of the traditional duplication of the empirical in the transcendental is that it leaves us with things that are recognizable, instead of allowing us to savor the radical contingency of differences in their multiple repetitions.

All this, of course, reads like a research project with several unknowns in it. One must find out first of all what a singularity is. What is the being of the singular? What are the atoms and the building blocks of the transcendental field? Deleuze's ingenious answer—*the singular is the event*—redirects these questions: What is an event? What is the being of an event?

Crucial on the way to answering these questions is the sharp distinction that Deleuze makes between events and states of affairs in his repetition of the Stoic deconstructive reading of Plato's ontology (Deleuze 1990, pp. 109–17). For the Stoic Deleuze, states of affairs are accidents (in the Aristotelian sense) that affect bodies or are caused by bodies. A line of ontological difference runs between, on one hand, bodies and their relations (qualities, states of affairs, their mixtures) and, on the other hand, "incorporeal events." Bodies and their mixtures are actual, they exist in the present, and they causally affect other bodies and other mixtures. But they also cause "incorporeal" events, which are virtual—albeit real. These events exhibit toward bodies and their mixture a *quasi-causal efficacy*, they elude the present, although they are responsible for making it pass, and they simultaneously affirm the future and the past. They do not preexist bodies or states of affairs—they insist or subsist. As a result, the only two modes of insistence of the incorporeal event that is virtual are the being-past or the being-future.

The event, in other words, as Deleuze understands it, is never what is happening in the present, but eternally that which has just happened and that which is about to happen. The best verbal mode, therefore, capable of referring to events is, in Deleuze's opinion, the infinitive. To green, to cut, to grow, to die, are the best designations possible for pure incorporeal events. Infinitives guarantee *specificity* and determinacy without imposing subjective or objective coordinates. They also guarantee *reversibility* between past and future, since by themselves they are atemporal matrices. Finally, they stand for a selection of forces, intensities, or acts—rather than for a display of substances and qualities.

The advantages of this Stoic/Deleuzian move are significant. Becoming (whether as becoming-world or as becoming-subject) in the name of which this entire philosophy is mobilized, cannot be constituted through a juxtaposition of "immobile segments." Participation in immobile segments has always been responsible for the hieratic and static world of Being. On the other hand, forces seized *in actu*, liberated from substances that function as their support and vehicle, do seem better candidates for a diagrammatic mapping out of becoming: infinitives name forces that are neither active nor passive but both at once, since the quasi-causal function of the infinitive is always already reversible. It is important to notice that, by means of this Stoic conceptualization of the event, Deleuze is capable of assigning Being to

bodies and their mixtures, and inherence, or "extra-Being," to pure events. The ontological difference between "to be" and "to insist" now controls the temptation to raise Being and presence to the plateau of the supreme ontological instance, as it subordinates Being to the unlimited and indefinite category of something in general (Deleuze 1990, pp. 148–53).[13]

The Leibniz Series

This series prolongs the previous one and resonates together with it. The problem that governs the selection and the articulation of the segments that make it up is this: How can there be a notion of individuality that is neither a mere deduction from (or specification of) the concept Subject (in which case the notion of individuality would be contradictory) *nor* a mere figure without a concept (in which case it would be absurd and ineffable)? This series involves, in a special way, texts like *Le Pli: Leibniz et le baroque* and *Foucault*. On the other hand, earlier writings like *Différence and répétition*, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*,[14] and *The Logic of Sense* are not at all alien to the deployment of this series. By means of it, Deleuze brilliantly explores the resources of baroque mannerism—and equally so, Stoic and Whiteheadian strategies—in order to define the individual as a unique point of view upon the world. In fact, for Deleuze, individual and world are correlative notions. "The world is in the monad, and the monad is in the world" is Leibniz's statement, but it finds its Deleuzian resonance in *Le Pli* (Deleuze 1988, p. 68). The individual explicates and unfolds the world, which is implicated, included, and folded in it. The entire world series is "in" the individual, although only a segment of it gets to be expressed by the individual with any degree of clarity: this is the segment that coincides with the point of view on the world occupied by the individual.

This Deleuzian move gives the *in-der-Welt-sein* an interesting twist, in positing that an individual is always already inside a world understood as a circle of convergence; individuals and worlds are inseparable, because worlds may be formed and thought only in the vicinity of the individuals who occupy and fill them. One then begins to see how the Leibniz series will work out the details of the static genesis of subjectivity, which was envisaged for the first time seriously in the Bergson series: the point, we remember, was to show how individuals and worlds can be constituted against the background of the transcendental field, instead of being found (read: placed) ready-made in it. The Leibniz series will show that a singularity is extended analytically over a series of ordinary points until it reaches the territory or the vicinity of another singularity. A world is constituted, on the condition that several series converge. In other words, a world envelops a set of singularities selected

through convergence, and the mechanism for its formation is conjunctive synthesis. Inside worlds, individuals are being constituted, as they select and envelop a finite number of the singularities available to them. It follows that the law of their synthesis is connection, that is, connection of singular points.

Starting, therefore, with singularities, Deleuze goes on to describe their actualization in a world and in the individuals who are parts of this world. To be actualized means to extend over a series of ordinary points: in other words, to be selected according to a rule of convergence, to be incarnated in a body; to become the state of this body, and to be renewed locally for the sake of limited new actualizations and extensions. Individuated worlds are formed only when series that depend on one singularity converge upon a series that depends on other singularities. Deleuze's fondness for Leibniz is located at this precise point: the "compossibility" of series is the indispensable condition for the "worlding" of worlds.

Now, even if this is an acceptable account of the constitution of the individual, Deleuze is aware that the self or the person is no less the product of a constitution and that, therefore, a static ontological genesis of it is also indispensable. With respect to persons or selves, the Leibniz series provides the following account: The individual is formed within a world that was understood as a *continuum* or as a circle of convergences. The person, as a knowing and acting subject, emerges when something is identified inside worlds that are incompossible, and across series that are divergent. In this case, the person as subject would exist vis-à-vis the world (*Welt*), whereas the living individual existed in her surrounding world (*Um-Welt*) and this world insisted in her. In the last analysis, Deleuze is prepared to admit that there is something = x common to all worlds. Consequently, the universal subject would be the becoming person that corresponds to something = x, common to all worlds, just as particular subjects would be the persons corresponding to a particular something = x, common to several, but not to all, worlds (Deleuze 1990, pp. 109–17).

Now, all this would be unintelligible if the world of the Leibniz series were an extended magnitude made up of *partes extra partes*, and the individual, a substance. But of course this is not the case. The world, according to Leibniz-Deleuze, is included in every individual as a predicate, and not as an attribute. We must recall here the role that *The Logic of Sense* assigned to attributes and predicates. Attributes express qualities and essences, whereas predicates stand for incorporeal events and form, by means of these, series of individuals and worlds (pp. 276–77). The air of paradox that surrounds Deleuze's account of the static ontological genesis of subjectivity finds here its legitimation. In a remarkably striking and challenging move, world and subject are turned into (intensive) events. "The world itself [writes Deleuze] is an event; being therefore an incorporeal [virtual] predicate, the world

must be included in each subject as its ground. Each one draws from this ground the 'mannerisms' corresponding to his or her point of view [aspects]. The world is predication, the mannerisms, particular predicates, and the subject, that which goes from one predicate to the next, as from one aspect of the world to the next" (Deleuze 1988, p. 71).

The world of the Leibniz series is as fictional as the world of the earlier Hume series, and the subject, as delirious here as it was there. But the world is here fictional and the subject delirious in a special and new sense. When Deleuze says that the world exists only in the individuals expressing it, he adds immediately that it exists in them virtually. That which is virtual, though, for Deleuze-Leibniz and Bergson, is not the unreal or the merely possible. The virtual is the real that has not yet been actualized. To say, therefore, that the world is fictional is not to say that the world is not real. It is to say that the world does not have the extensional universality of a concept. The world, for Deleuze-Leibniz, is a metaphysical entity, a unique converging series, and a *veritable individual*. The world is a fiction, but its real constitutive powers are not at risk. It is the fiction of a concept, and yet a real individual in the process of constituting other real individuals.

It is around this point that the Leibniz series and the Bergson series encounter each other and strengthen Deleuze's resolve to reduce subject-formations to molecular singularities. But the transcendental reduction involved here is no more reductive than the famous phenomenological reductions used to be: the molecular singularity uncovered as the non-further-divisible unit of the transcendental field is not by itself sufficient to constitute anything at all. An entire theory of serialization, with the connective, conjunctive, and disjunctive operations at its disposal, must be deployed in order to account for molar, personal, and subjective arrangements. To say, therefore, as Deleuze does, that events/predicates are preindividual singularities and that the world is ontologically prior to the individuals expressing it, or to say, as he does, that the individual is the actualization of preindividual singularities, is half the story. The other half of the story is told in the series to which I now turn my attention and which I call the Nietzsche-Klossowski series.

The Nietzsche-Klossowski Series

This series is governed by the question "How can one think in terms of inclusive disjunctions or how can one simultaneously affirm incompossible worlds?" In the texts of Klossowski that give the series one half of its name, Deleuze admires "the dissolution of the Self [which] ceases to be a patho-

logical determination . . . [and] become[s] the mightiest power, rich in positive and salutary promises" (Deleuze 1990, p. 283). In Nietzsche's perspectivism, which gives the series the other half of its name, Deleuze discovers a "divergence which is no longer a principle of exclusion, and a disjunction, no longer a means of separation. Incompossibility becomes now a means of communication" (p. 174). Next to Nietzsche and Klossowski, Leibniz may indeed have been the grand theorist of the event, but he never failed to be also the grand advocate of god: the principle of sufficient reason, placed by him in the service of the theological, reassuring discourse of the "best possible World" subjected divergence and disjunction to a negative use. His individual/points of view come to be and to form series only insofar as they all converge upon the same town. But with Nietzsche and Klossowski, diverging series become objects of simultaneous affirmation, insofar as their divergence is affirmative and affirmed. "[A]nother town," says Deleuze, "corresponds [now] 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, their houses and their streets" (p. 174).

The problem that this series raises concerns the conditions that must be fulfilled in order for the disjunction to function as a synthetic operation, making possible the connection of singularities and the conjunction of series. It is *Différence et répétition*, *The Logic of Sense*, and *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*[15] that take up the problem of the conditions and, as we know, come up with intriguing answers.

Accelerations and decelerations, leaps across molar thresholds, transversal movements, aparallel evolutions, affirmations and negations, resonances and rhythms—or, more simply, the sort of event that Badiou designates as "*what singularizes continuity in each of its local folds*" (Badiou 1989, p. 168)—constitute the propelling forces of the becoming-compossible of series that diverge. Deleuze's elaborate theory of repetition belongs here, where "each thing . . . is unique, intrinsically different from every other thing," and where "similarity arises against the background of this '*disparité du fond*'"[16]

The Tournier Series

But often the itinerary of the Nietzsche-Klossowski series is felt to be more ragged than it actually is when one follows it without adequate preparations. Analogically (but only analogically) speaking, thinking the compossibility of diverging series without any preparation is like attempting elaborate phenomenological descriptions without the *ascesis* of the epoché. Hence, the importance assumed by the Tournier series, which prolongs and deepens the

problematic of the Nietzsche-Klossowski series. I name it after Michel Tournier, whose book *Friday* Deleuze has made the object of a beautiful meditation.[17] In Deleuze's appropriation of the novel, *Friday* is an elegant description made by a "radical phenomenologist" of what an insular world would come to be like, were other people to disappear. With Tournier, Deleuze seeks the effects of the presence of other people in our everyday world, in order to conclude what Otherness is, and also what it would be like to live without other people.

Tournier's Robinson, on his desert island Speranza, initially alone, later on with Friday, is progressively "dehumanized," while his world is returned to its constitutional elements. Unlike the earlier Robinson of Daniel Dafoe, Tournier's Robinson is not bound to the recollection of origins from which only an accident separates him, but rather he is in the grips of a "futurist repetition," which drives him along with the inexorable necessity of a death drive. Instead of producing or reproducing, he deviates and becomes a pervert. This deviation/perversion/dehumanization of Robinson and the return of the island to its elements establish themselves irreversibly, as the gradual erasure, from Robinson's consciousness, of the structure of alterity moves inexorably toward its final stages. His prolonged isolation on the desert island sets in motion a slow process leading to the elimination of all traces of other people.

Why did Deleuze undertake this meditation? His choice of Tournier's fiction is dictated by his desire to test the hypothesis according to which the structure Other is equiprimordial with the structure subject, *only in the case* that it is from the very beginning endowed with individuality and personality. But then, instead of accepting complacently the ready-made, Deleuze asks that the constitution of the Other, no less than the constitutions of the individual and the person, be accounted for. In an important sense, therefore, the erasure of alterity explored by the Robinson hypothesis corresponds to the radicalization of the phenomenological intuition. If the reduction of the structure Other is, as Deleuze argues, *eo ipso* reduction of subjectivity, and if such a reduction does not cause the world to fritter away into nothingness, there must be ways to think this new domain, beyond the Other and beyond the self.

Let us pursue this line of thought for a little while longer. From the phenomenological point of view, that is, from the point of view that Deleuze provisionally adopts here, Other and self are strictly contemporaneous. But contemporaneity should not be taken to mean equiprimordiality. The phenomenological evidence that establishes contemporaneity between self and Other is (according to Deleuze) derivative; self and Other are not primordial, but rather constituted structures (Deleuze 1990, p. 301).

But what exactly is in the Other that we bracket? In the absence of others, Deleuze observes, objects entering Robinson's field of perception hit him without pity like projectiles. A brutal opposition between light and darkness, with no transitions to protect the eye, marks the spot that the retreating others leave unoccupied. The soft margins and the cushions that these others provided are now out of play. Speranza, the island, having turned into a world of absolute distances and unbearable repetitions, displays a meanness that no longer can be assigned to the inhumanity of other people. Foreclosure of the Other discloses a world of necessity, where the virtual and the possible can no more find a firm foothold. The elements that, in the presence of others, sedimented and stratified, made up Speranza, are now liberated and volatilized, and Robinson begins to lose his personological and subjective coordinates, as if haunted by a powerful—and yet un-Freudian—death drive. And without the others, Robinson's desire is for the first time really restored to him; separated from its object, desire is spared its former obligatory detour through sexuality and finds its telos, perfection, and completeness within itself: it becomes a veritable nonhuman desire. Speranza's becoming-Other parallels the becoming-Other of Robinson, and a new structure—Deleuze calls it the structure of perversity—emerges for the first time. This new structure corresponds to the world without others—the world with the Other foreclosed (pp. 303–304).

It is the absence of the Other that helps release the double of a world until then captive and enveloped inside the Other. The double is not emerging as a replica, but rather marks the rising to the surface of liberated elements. Robinson finally understands that the "Other is the grand leveler, and consequently that the destructuration of the Other is not a disorganization of the world, but an upright organization, as opposed to the old recumbent organization" (pp. 312–313). Yesterday's dreaded simulacra emerge into the light of the surface as friendly phantasms. "Initially, [Robinson] experienced the loss of others as a fundamental disorder of the world . . . But he discovers (slowly) that it is the Other who disturbs the world" (p. 31). What is then this Other that has the ability to disturb the World?

The Other, concludes Deleuze, is not inside the field of perception, one structure only among others (it is not the paradoxical instance of a subject that can be my object). *The Other* is the structure that conditions the entire field of perception, along with its functioning, and renders possible *ab initio* the constitution and application of the categories of subject and object. "It is not the ego [writes Deleuze] but the Other as structure which renders perception possible" (Deleuze 1991, p. 309). Inhabiting the transitions from one object to another, relativizing distances and differences, and assembling a background from which forms surge forth and fall back in

harmony, the Other renders perception possible, because it spatializes (forms, unforms, or coordinates spaces) and temporalizes. Without this, perception would not be possible.

Notice that "perception" has retained in the texts of Deleuze its lived, phenomenological resonance, and that the Other has been implicated as the condition *sine qua non* for the kind of perception that opens itself up to the phenomenological gaze. But as the story unvelops, instead of being firmly and irreducibly rooted in the natural evidences of the phenomenological intuition, the Other must go, and along with it, the privileges given to phenomenology and to the kind of perception that sustains it. Of course, for all this to happen, the Other must, first, be depersonalized and desubjectified. If the function of the Other, as Deleuze argues, is coextensive with the smooth operation of the entire perceptual field, it is because the Other is the expression *of a possible world*. Its absence, therefore, would bring about the collapse of the possible and the triumph of the necessary. And given Deleuze's decision to make self and Other contemporaneous, the foreclosure of the Other brings along with it inevitably the foreclosure of the self.

We are now ready to take stock of the segments of the Tournier series. In fact, this series is made up of two subseries. One of them has the Other, as the structure of a possible world, or more simply, as the structure of the possible, sustaining the reality of the self. In a sense, self and Other are here deployed along the axis of the possible, the contingent, or the axis of the play of mirrors. The second subseries, the one of the liberated elements, singularities, events, intensities, and inclusive disjunctions, is called "virtual." It is the series of the simulacrum in the process of becoming-phantasm. It is the *imaginary* and *phantasmatic* series.[18]

We recall that the Bergson series sharply distinguished between the possible and the virtual: the possible is not real, it is the realizable; whereas the virtual (being already real) is the actualizable. In the Tournier series, the reduction of the possible allows, for the first time, the emergence of the virtual. Since the subseries of the possible is made of segments of personality and subjectivity, it is the reduction of subjectivity that allows the manifestation of the subseries of the phantasm. There are displacements at work here that we must not overlook. The reality of the self, in the first subseries, cannot be maintained without the possibility of the Other, which occupies the same series. The real slides toward the possible, and the possible feeds the real. But the self is *not* the realization of the possible Other. The Other lives as a permanent possibility in the interstices between selves, but it goes no further. As for the virtual of the second line, its reality is guaranteed, but not its completeness. The virtual, according to Deleuze, its reality notwithstanding, finds its completeness in its becoming-actual—

in its actualization. The real suffers from a limitation: it cannot be without the possible. The virtual suffers from an incompleteness: it seeks its completeness in its actualization.

But the actualizations of the virtual (the phantasm, the event, the singular) initiate the intensive constitutions of the individual. There would be no self and no Other without the virtual. There would be no possible or actual without the phantasmatic virtual. In other words, the second subseries sends us over, once again, to the first. Persons and subjects are the extensions of intensities, the dilations of contractions, and the domestications of differences. The subseries are then repeated without end, because of an instability internal to them and a lack of equilibrium. They repeat themselves, thanks to an agent of repetition that circulates between them, places them in communication, and makes them vibrate, without ever eliminating the disjunctive duality that characterizes them. This agent of repetition is the virtual energy of the phantasmatic series whose disjunctive potential always already exceeds the noematic content of the real, the possible, and the actual. According to Deleuze, it can be designated equally well by the expressions "chaosmos" and "cracked I," both chosen to remind us that becoming-world and becoming-subject are never-ending tasks of constructing and deconstructing identities.

The Nietzsche-Foucault Series

Finally, one last series—the Nietzsche-Foucault series—seems to be designed to make all the others move. The Leibniz series gives us the building blocks for the static ontological genesis of the subject. The Nietzsche-Klossowski series displays the extensive and intensive rules governing the synthesis of these blocks. The Nietzsche-Foucault series sketches, for the first time, the segments and the lines of a dynamic genesis of the subject. It mobilizes texts like *Foucault, Le Pli, Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, but also *Nietzsche and Philosophy*,[19] *Spinoza, Practical Philosophy*,[20] and, once more, *The Logic of Sense*. The subject is now introduced as the result of a process of folding and as an internalization of an outside that no folding can ever exhaust. The outcome, in Deleuze's words, is the constitution of "an inside that lies deeper than any internal world."

None of the series that we studied until this point has within itself the reason for the serialization (subject-formation): no clear reason has been given as to why—beginning with singularities and events—individuals, persons, and subjects come to be formed as they do. The Tournier supplement to the Nietzsche-Klossowski series provides a powerful description of

the intensive reduction of the possible for the sake of the virtual, but not a clear motivation for undertaking it. It is the Nietzsche-Foucault series that attempts to make good these deficiencies, building around the rich notions of *fold* and *outside*, the dynamic genesis of the subject.

The space between preindividual singularities and the full-fledged subject is here filled with forces that, once bent and folded, complicate the outside inside a fold—a term that Deleuze borrows from Foucault and uses to designate the subject. Inaugurated by the Greeks, this series marks the captivation of outside forces and invents the subject "as a derivative or as the product of 'subjectivation'" (Deleuze 1988, p. 101). When the Greeks decided that the mastery of others must go through the mastery of oneself, the folding of outside forces by means of a series of practical exercises was already on its way.

We should note that Deleuze does not entrust the bending and folding responsible for the dynamic genesis of the subject to any agent who would ride the waves of the conflicting forces, and perhaps intentionally give them sense and direction. Such an agent, according to his view, would be redundant in the context of intersecting forces, for which spontaneity and receptivity are essential characteristics. "Force," says Deleuze, "is what belongs to the outside, since it is essentially a relation between other forces: it is inseparable in itself from the power to affect other forces (spontaneity) and to be affected by others (receptivity)" (pp. 100–101). It is the individual who causes the outside to fold, thereby endowing itself with subjectivity, as it bends and folds the outside. The subject of the Nietzsche-Foucault series emerges dynamically as the "relation which a force has with itself," or as the "affect of self on self" (Deleuze 1991, p. 101).

We should also note that the outside, in this series, maintains its ontological priority. "It is never the other," writes Deleuze, "who is a double in the doubling process, it is a self that lives me as the double of the other . . . [T]he primacy can(not) be reversed: The inside will always be the doubling of the outside" (Deleuze 1991, pp. 98, 99). It follows that, in the Nietzsche-Foucault series, the fold that names the absolute interiority of the subject cannot be conceived on the model of an oppositional relation between a substantive subject bent upon itself and an external world. Nor is the inwardness of this subject the mere reflection of an outside: the fold is never a mere reflection. Rather, Deleuze's outside is the irrecuperable and inexhaustible source of negentropic energy and of capture-resisting subjectivity. As such, and here Monique Scheepers is right, it has, in the segments of the Nietzsche-Foucault series, a clear political significance.[21]

The outside is not another site, but rather an off-site that erodes and dissolves all other sites. Its logic, therefore, is like the logic of difference,

provided that the latter is understood in its transcendental, and not in its empirical, dimension: instead of difference between x and y, we must now conceive the difference of x from itself. Like the structure of supplementarity whose logic it follows, the outside is never exhausted; every attempt to capture it generates an excess or a supplement, which in turn feeds anew the flows of deterritorialization and releases new lines of flight. As Pascal Levoyer and Philippe Encrenaz have recently argued, the outside is Deleuze-Leibniz's virtual that is always more than the actual; it is the virtual that haunts the actual and, as it haunts it, makes it flow and change.[22] A Heideggerian *es gibt* bestows upon forces the role of both the subject and the object of forming and unforming processes. This same *es gibt* permits Deleuze to endorse Foucault's claims about the primacy of resistances: "There will always be a relation to oneself which resists codes and powers; the relation to oneself is even one of the origins of these points of resistance" (Deleuze 1988, p. 103). To the extent that the subject, for Deleuze, is the result of the folding of the outside, that is, of bending forces and making them relate to one another, the subject is the individual who, through practice and discipline, has become the site of a bent force, that is, the folded inside of an outside.

Notes

1. Calvin O. Schrag, for instance, has argued for the reprieve of the praxiological subject, and John Fekete complained about the eclipse of the critical memory of a subject which is "never yet p." See C. O. Schrag, *Communicative Praxis and the Space of Subjectivity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), esp. part 2. See also Fekete, *The Structural Allegory: Reconstructive Encounters with the New French Thought* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), p. xviii.

2. For a gathering of dissonant voices on this violence and the possibilities of containing it, see *Who Comes after the Subject?*, Eduardo Cadava, Peter Connor and Jean-Luc Nancy, eds. (New York: Routledge, 1991).

3. Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, trans. Sean Hand (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), p. 96.

4. See, for example, David Carr, *Time, Narrative and History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), passim. See also his "Narrative and the Real World," *Theory*, no. 15 (1986): pp. 118–31.

5. Richard Holmes and Mano Daniel, "Biography and Anti-Narrativism: Sartre's Flaubert," unpublished ms. of a lecture given to the Ontario Philosophical Society Meetings, Trent University, October 26, 1991.

6. On series and the formation of series, see Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, trans. Mark Lester with Charles Stivale, Constantin V. Boundas, ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), pp. 36–47. See also Michel Pierssens, "L'appareil seriel," *La Critique générative* (Paris: Seghers, 1973), pp. 265–85.

7. Deleuze's debt to Lacan at this point is obvious and always acknowledged. See *The Logic of Sense*, pp. 42–47.
8. For a discussion of portmanteau words see *The Logic of Sense*, pp. 42–47.
9. Manfred Frank, *Die Unhintergehbarkeit von Individualität* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1986). I consulted the French translation of this text, *L'ultime raison du sujet*, trans. Veronique Zanetti (Le Mejan: Acte Sud, 1988).
10. Bruce Baugh, "Deleuze and Transcendental Empiricism," *Man and World*, vol. 25, no. 2 (1992).
11. *Bergsonism*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Zone Books, 1988); *Différence and répétition* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968); *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986); *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (London: Athlone, 1989).
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17. See "Michel Tournier and the World Without Others" in *The Logic of Sense*, pp. 301–321. Originally published as "Une théorie d'autri" (Michel Tournier), *Critique*, vol. 23 (1967): pp. 503–525.
18. For a discussion of the phantasm, see *The Logic of Sense*, pp. 210–16.
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III. Desire and the Overturning of Platonism

7

Nietzsche's Dice Throw: Tragedy, Nihilism, and the Body without Organs

Dorothea Olkowski

> Ultimately, no one can extract from things, books included, more than he already knows.
>
> —Friedrich Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*

THIS PAPER IS BOTH a tangent and a collision in relation to my current interest in Deleuze's work. It is a tangent insofar as I began by questioning that assemblage in Deleuze's work that might be called the "body," but the tangent led me here to this detour into Nietzsche. Awakened from a relatively uncritical position by Elizabeth Grosz's paper *A Thousand Tiny Sexes* (included in this volume, pp. 187–210), which discusses feminist concerns with Deleuze-Guattari's notion of the body, I finally asked in what sense the body-assemblage as construed by Deleuze-Guattari might be gendered male, or might carry the inscription of Deleuze-Guattari themselves. It seemed to me that if Deleuze and Deleuze-Guattari's body-assemblage were inscribed with either their own names or with the name of some other male philosopher (Nietzsche, for example), this would have vast reverberations for their rethinking of desire as well.

In investigating the body, it became clear to me that I had to go back to Deleuze's work on Nietzsche. This was the collision. I have long avoided Nietzsche. In fact, I have for years found Nietzsche unreadable. The parody of woman as Truth, the male hysterical notion of Will to Power, Nietzsche's invention of the Greeks and Greek philosophy, and Pierre Klossowski's acknowledgment that in spite of or even because of the fragmented text, Nietzsche's own voice and values are everywhere in his writing—all this left

me uncomfortable with Nietzsche, even Deleuze's Nietzsche. To complicate matters, I found myself in disagreement on several key issues with Judith Butler's essay on Deleuze's notion of desire (which I had turned to in hope of some clarification).[1] While admiring Butler's historical placement of Nietzschean desire, I cannot, as she does, find any dialectic at work in Deleuze's reading of Nietzschean force; nor could I agree with her interpretation of force as some sort of naturalistic, organic eros. Yet, given my concern about the possibility of a gendered inscription on the body-assemblage and my interest in philosophical approaches to the body in general, I began this paper, a paper which I believe can only be prefaced with Nietzsche's claim from *Ecce Homo* that no one can extract from things more than she already knows.

In *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Deleuze raises this important question about what the body is: "We do not define it by saying that it is a field of forces, a nutrient medium fought over by a plurality of forces. For, in fact, there is no medium, no field of forces or battle. There is no quantity of reality, all reality is a quantity of force."[2] The body is not a medium and does not designate substance: it expresses the relationship between forces. The term "body" does not simply refer, for Deleuze, to the psychophysiological bodies of human beings. Bodies may be chemical, biological, social, or political, and the distinction between these modes is not ontological. If anything, it becomes for Deleuze (with Guattari) semiological, a question of different regimes of signs. Ultimately then, the "body" is too general a term for Deleuze-Guattari. "Body" is too easily taken to be a thing, final, finished, and fully formed. But if the body is not a thing, but multiple, implicated in a multiplicity of elements in a variety of possible sign systems, then the sense of "body" can only be articulated in terms of each system of signs, semiotics informed by pragmatics. For Nietzsche, this takes place on the level of evaluations.

Active Force and Nietzsche's Creation and Critique

Nietzschean evaluations are not simply values; they are the ways of being, the modes of existence of those who evaluate. "So," writes Deleuze, "we have the beliefs, feelings and thoughts we deserve given our way of being or style of life" (Deleuze 1983, p. 1). Attention to the origins of values signifies precisely the differential element of their origin—which, for Nietzsche, is the distance and difference between high and low, noble and base. Nietzsche writes:

> [T]he judgement "good" did not originate with those to whom goodness was shown. Rather, it was "the good" themselves, that is to say, the noble, the powerful, high-stationed and high-minded who felt and established

> themselves and their actions as good, that is, of the first rank, in *contradistinction* to all the low, low-minded, common and plebeian (emphasis added).[3]

As noble and powerful, the high-minded called themselves "good." In so doing they created "good" as a value. Looking around at the common and lowly, the high-minded and powerful called them "base," thereby signifying a critique of all that is common and plebeian. When evaluations are carried out in this manner, on the basis of a noble way of life, they carry the value "good." Deleuze does not concur with Nietzsche's valuations, rather he draws the conclusion that such evaluations are both critical and creative, both *ethical and aesthetic*; they constitute an active difference at the origin and so are active. It is, perhaps, the avoidance of Nietzsche's judgments and the insistence on both the ethical and the aesthetic dimensions of Nietzsche's thought that distinguish Deleuze's reading of the Nietzschean texts, and which serve as loci for much of Deleuze's rethinking of philosophy. There is, writes Deleuze, an "aesthetic form of joy" instituted as affirmation and creation, and not as the passive sensation of Kantian aesthetics. Of equal if not greater importance, there is an "ethic of joy" instituted through evaluating the origin and genesis of a value. Both of these active practices are involved in the Greek concept of the tragic, both contribute to the affirmation of life without justifying or redeeming it (Deleuze 1983, pp. 17, 18).

Difference at the origin, as constituted by Nietzschean affirmation and evaluation, may account for the fact that not all evaluations actually are the result of what Deleuze calls an active force; most evaluations, in fact, can be traced back to revenge and are the result of a base way of living—reaction. How is it possible that in the history of the West, what Deleuze calls *reactive* forces have dominated the process of evaluation? The answer requires a careful look at the singular history of a thing; for the history of a thing (including that of a body) is the succession of forces that take hold of it, as well as the *struggle* between those forces for possession of it (Deleuze 1983, p. 3). Nietzsche points to how we miss the history of a thing in the face of its uses.

> But purposes and utilities are only signs that a will to power has become master of something less powerful and imposed upon it the character of a function; and the entire history of a "thing," an organ, a custom can in this way be a continuous sign-chain of ever new interpretations and adaptations (Nietzsche 1969, II, 12; p. 77).

Given this, given the history, the succession of independent processes of subduing forces, resistances, reactions, and counteractions, "[t]he form [of

a thing] is fluid, but the 'meaning' is even more so" (Nietzsche 1969, p. 78). Only a genuine critique (active ethics) makes it possible to investigate the forces that take hold of something. Such a critique was never carried out until Nietzsche did so. "In Kant, critique was not able to discover the truly active instance which would have been capable of carrying it through . . . it never makes us overcome the reactive forces which are expressed in man, self-consciousness, reason, morality, and religion" (Deleuze 1983, p. 89). Deleuze claims that rather than carrying out a critique of knowledge (reason), morality, and religion, Kant simply justifies them because he *believes* in the reigning system of values. Kant's critique of pure reason is carried out by reason, but from the outside, from a traditional transcendental point of view, the point of view of conditions that are prior and external to the conditioned. Kant never provides an account of the genesis of reason, understanding, and its categories. Kant never asks the questions: Who wants this kind of reason? What will wills such a reason? What is the history of this reason? What forces dominate it? Such questions are fundamental to Nietzsche's genetic and plastic principles, which "give an account of the sense and value of beliefs, interpretations and evaluations" (Deleuze 1983, p. 93); while in Kant's critique, reigning values are simply subjectivized, rather than evaluated, heading off, blocking the creation of new values.

With this assessment, Deleuze pursues themes that will be central to *Anti-Oedipus*. Like a theologian, declare Deleuze and Nietzsche, Kant installs the priest and the legislator *in us*, a move that in no way eliminates the positions of subject and object, noumenon and phenomenon, priest and believer, a move that, in fact, serves only to justify current knowledge, morality, and religion, "When we stop obeying God, the State, our parents, reason appears and persuades us to continue being docile because it says to us: it is you who are giving the orders" (Deleuze 1983, p. 92). This is why, according to Deleuze, thought must think against reason and oppose reason, and thinkers must oppose all reasonable beings (Deleuze 1983, p. 93). Becoming a genealogist, the philosopher no longer affirms and incorporates existing values; she creates new ones; she is the philosopher of the future, Nietzsche's "relatively superhuman type,"[4] whom Nietzsche also describes as "man, insofar as he wants to be gone beyond, overcome"—insofar as he is overcome in the creation of a different way of feeling, another sensibility—or, as Deleuze writes, "the overcome, overtaken man" (Deleuze 1983, p. 94). Thinking against reason and becoming a genealogist require new principles that enable "man" to be gone beyond. To carry out this project, Nietzsche relies on the notion of force.

"Force," as Deleuze defines it, "is the appropriation, domination and exploitation of a quantity of reality" (Deleuze 1983, p. 3). Forces are quanti-

tative and qualitative; the difference in quantity between two forces is a "differential" element, a quantitative element of *difference between* two forces, and it generates the qualitative element of a force, that is, the force as active or as reactive, for "[i]n a purely quantitative world, everything would be dead, stiff, motionless."[5] Thus, forces are constituted differentially, just as, for example, in Saussure, the sense of words in language are constituted differentially. But there is an important difference; in Saussure, the words make sense only insofar as they are differentiated from one another in relations of negativity. This will not be the case for the Nietzschean conception of force as Deleuze sees it.

The absence of dialectical negativity in the relationship between forces is extremely important for Deleuze, and this is certainly part of the attraction Nietzsche holds for him. Though critics of Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche have attempted to uncover hidden dialectics lurking among differences, this is an impossible move in terms of Deleuze's articulation of Nietzsche's ontology, aesthetics, and ethics. If the force that dominates does so, not by means of negation, but by affirming and enjoying its own difference from other forces, no negation is present. This is Nietzsche's empiricism: instead of negation, difference as affirmation and enjoyment. "Dialectic is labor," but "[Nietzsche's] empiricism is an enjoyment" (Deleuze 1983, p. 9); it is affirmation, a feeling of pleasure and power. The differential element, the relation to other forces, must always be present; no force can be quantitatively determined apart from its relation to other forces, yet each force is positive. This is, of course, essential to Deleuze's conception of desire. There are not two equal forces of any kind (whether physical or cultural), because such equality would, by eliminating the differential relation between forces, be the elimination of any determination of force (Deleuze 1983, p. 43). "Difference in quantity is, therefore, in one sense, the irreducible element of quantity" (that is, it generates quality); but then it is also necessarily the case that difference in quantity is "the element which is irreducible to quantity itself" (Deleuze 1983, p. 44). This strange remake of metaphysics bears repeating lest it be misread: *difference* in quantity is the element that is irreducible to quantity itself.

Heraclitus and Justice

For Nietzsche, of all philosophers, Heraclitus is the most innocent and most just thinker precisely because Heraclitus was able to think the difference in quantity that generates quality. In *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*, Nietzsche writes:

> While Heraclitus' imagination was eyeing this never-ceasing motion of the cosmos, this "actuality," like a blissful spectator who is watching innumerable pairs of contestants wrestling in joyous combat and refereed by stern judges, a still greater intuition overtook him. He could no longer see the contesting pairs and their referees as separate; the judges themselves seemed to be striving in the contest and the contestants seemed to be judging them. Now, perceiving basically nothing but everlastingly sovereign justice itself, he dared proclaim: "The struggle of the many is pure justice itself! In fact, the one is the many. For what are all those qualities, in essence?"[6]

The answer that Heraclitus settles on, according to Nietzsche, is that qualities, not substances, are the game Zeus plays, the game of fire itself, since if everything is fire there is nothing opposite to it (Nietzsche 1987, pp. 58, 60). Even as it appears that opposite qualities diverge out of a single force, still "light and dark, bitter and sweet are attached to each other and interlocked at a given moment" (Nietzsche 1987, p. 54). And while one or the other may momentarily ascend, such ascendancy is not permanent; it is not the establishment of a stable substance; it is just one moment in an ongoing process. According to Nietzsche, *only a Greek* was capable of such an idea, and this is because it is modeled on the individual Greek's role in society:

> Just as the Greek individual fought as though he alone were right and an infinitely sure measure of judicial opinion were determining the trend of victory at any given moment, so the qualities wrestle with one another in accordance with inviolable laws and standards that are immanent in the struggle (Nietzsche 1987, p. 55).

There are two points to be made here: one, Heraclitus sees construction and destruction as innocent and this proves significant for Deleuze's philosophy of the flux; two, the name inscribed on noble and base evaluations, as well as on the Nietzschean terms *self-affirmative* and *passive* (as opposed to Deleuze's terms, *active* and *reactive*), is that of the Greek individual "fighting as though he alone were right": the Greek individual, knightly, aristocratic, with a privileged soul and with an "ease of mind" that quickly transforms itself into carelessness, remissness, frivolity; "man," that beast of prey; in short, the heroic Greek (Nietzsche 1969, I). Such a model is not inconsequential for Nietzsche, and it seems to me to be important to know if this heroic Greek is also inscribed in Deleuze's invocation of the notion of force and in the struggle of forces to dominate bodies.

In Nietzsche's reading of Heraclitus, only the limited human mind recognizes *hubris* in this struggle. No guilt, no injustice for Heraclitus; only a

perception of diminished qualities. Guilt and injustice are like ice. Ice is not the opposite of fire, it is just a diminished warmth. For the fire god, there is no injustice. What calls new worlds into being is not *hubris* but the "self-renewing impulse to play" (Nietzsche 1987, p. 62). Certainly, in all life there is destruction, but such destruction, such satiety, is like a child throwing her toys away from time to time in order to start over. "In this world only play, play as artists and children engage in it, exhibits coming-to-be and passing away, structuring and destroying, without any moral additive, in forever equal innocence" (Nietzsche 1987, p. 62). Deleuze's comment on this point is only that "Heraclitus is the tragic thinker," for "[t]he problem of justice runs through his entire work" (Deleuze 1983, p. 23). Sharing in fire, in the logos, Heraclitus sees construction and destruction as innocent, as radically just. Such recognition constitutes tragic thought.

The Being of Becoming and the Dice Throw

In order to get a better sense of what is at stake for Deleuze in the treatment of force, I would like to turn to *Différence et répétition*[7], a text that seems to draw out, in a lengthy exposition, many of the themes approached in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. Deleuze is careful here to leave behind the image of the Greek hero. From the point of view of *Différence et répétition*, there is no denying that what is at stake is the nature of the ontological proposition that "[b]eing is univocal . . . from Parmenides to Heidegger, it is the same voice which is repeated, in an echo which forms by itself alone the entire deployment of the univocal" (Deleuze 1968, p. 52). Being, however, is not a genus, and Deleuze replaces the Aristotelian model of judgment and the echo of being with a propositional model. The proposition expresses *meaning*; the *referent* expresses itself in the proposition. But propositions do not have the same "meaning" even though they have the same "referent," and such distinctions, notes Deleuze, though real, are neither numerical distinctions nor ontological distinctions: they are formal, qualitative (that is, *essential*, in the phenomenological sense), or semiological (Deleuze 1968, pp. 52–53). Why say this? Why say that formally distinct meanings are not themselves ontological, but that they relate to being, their "single, ontologically one, referent"? In a second crucial shift of Aristotle's metaphysics, Deleuze writes that being is not said in many ways; being is expressed "in one and the same sense" of each of its (numerically) distinct designates (*le designé*). So while the meaning of being is "ontologically" the same for each of its numerically distinct designates (being is the same for each designate), still "these differences do not have the same essence" they do not themselves have the

same meaning (Deleuze 1968, p. 53). If it can be shown how it is possible for being to speak with a single voice, to be "said" of difference itself, then being is not equivocal; it is univocal, and being is said of differences, none of which have the same meaning.

How does Deleuze develop the notion that being is said of difference, of the differential element, and what contribution can this discussion make to clarifying the theory of force as the nondialectical differential element? Deleuze finds this metaphysics of flux in the Nietzschean image of the game of chance. Nietzsche's will to power is the differential element between quantities of force, and it is precisely this *difference* that constitutes forces in tension as active or reactive, that is, as qualities (Deleuze 1983, p. 50). Furthermore, the relation between forces is subject only to chance. Every body is nothing but the arbitrary relation of force with force; every body, every difference between forces, in Deleuze's terminology, and every "will to power" in Nietzsche's, is chance and nothing but chance (Deleuze 1983, p. 40). In this sense, existence must be understood, in Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche, as radically innocent and as just, a game of chance. Deleuze quotes from *Zarathustra*:

> [I]f ever I have played dice with the gods at their table, the earth, so that the earth trembled and broke open and streams of fire snorted forth:
>
> for the earth is a table of the gods, and trembling with creative new words and the dice throws of the gods.[8]

If existence is a game of chance, then it is a serious game because it is also a game of the necessity of chance, a game played by gods with dice and the earth as their table. But that is not all.

> Above all things stands the heaven of chance, the heaven of innocence, the heaven of accident, the heaven of wantonness . . . you are to me a dance floor for divine chances, that you are to me a gods' table for divine dice and dicers! (Nietzsche 1961, p. 186.)

So, concludes Deleuze, chance is played out on two tables: on the earth and in the heavens, yet there is only a single dice throw at a time. Each single dice throw is played out on the earth—as the *affirmation of becoming—and also in the heavens—as the affirmation of the being of becoming.* Each dice throw affirms chance, but the numbers on the die affirm the *necessity* of chance as the being of becoming. The necessity of chance is precisely what constitutes its innocence and even wantonness; it releases all things from having a purpose. In this way, the necessity of chance in the dice throw is an affirmation, and force can only be understood as an affirmative and thor-

oughly nondialectical element. Only such an affirmation can actually lead to an ethic of joy, which heads off guilt and bad conscience. It is the only way to create chance and multiplicity (the being of becoming), that is, there is only *one* way to combine being and becoming so as to have innocence, necessity, and multiplicity instead of mere probability. Deleuze explains:

> Nietzsche identifies chance with multiplicity, with fragments, with parts, with chaos: the chaos of the dice that are shaken and then thrown . . . To abolish chance by holding it in the grip of causality and finality, to count on the repetition of throws rather than affirming chance, to anticipate a result instead of affirming necessity—these are all the operations of a bad player (Deleuze 1983, pp. 26, 27).

For the skilled dice player, there is an incommensurability between chance and cause; Nietzsche himself has stressed this: "We have absolutely no experience of a cause . . . We have combined our feeling of a will, our feeling of 'freedom,' our feeling of responsibility and our intention to perform an act, into the concept 'cause'" (Nietzsche 1968, p. 551). For the skilled player, the idea of a goal has been removed from the process, and, in spite of this, the player affirms the process, experiences every moment, every dice throw, as good and valuable, as pleasure (Nietzsche 1968, p. 36). But for lack of critique, we slip into playing badly, we forget that the interpretation of the qualities of forces and interpretation itself require critique.

Will to Power

Since will to power is the differential and genetic element, will to power is, for Nietzsche, what interprets; it "estimate[s] the quality of force that gives meaning to a given phenomenon, or event, and it measures the relation of the forces which are present" (Deleuze 1983, p. 53). And will to power evaluates. "The will-to-power as genealogical element is that from which senses derive their significance and values their value" (Deleuze 1983, p. 54):

> I emphasize this major point of historical method all the more because it is in fundamental opposition to the now prevalent instinct and taste which would rather be reconciled even to the absolute fortuitousness, even the mechanistic senselessness of all events than to the theory that in all events a *will to power* is operating (Nietzsche 1969, p. 78).

As such, each phenomenon is a "sign" or a "symptom" whose meaning is found only in an existing force, and, as Deleuze (perhaps generously) reads

this in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, "The whole of philosophy is nothing but a symptomatology, and a *semiology*. The sciences are a symptomatological and semiological system" (Deleuze 1983, p. 3). The symptoms they study are the "appropriation, domination, exploitation of a quantity of reality" by force (insofar as such quantities are force); each force is a "sense" (what metaphysics calls an appearance and science refers to as "cause") (Deleuze 1983, p. 3). Thus, for Deleuze, it is absurd to presume that something underlies sense or to claim that forces refer to a physics, when precisely these presuppositions of philosophy are the subject of Nietzsche's creative critique. Force is sense and insofar as forces in tension constitute bodies or phenomena, each phenomenon is a sign whose meaning is a force that must always be evaluated. In a sense, there is no "nature," or, at best, nature is a history, so that not only is desire semiotically (not linguistically) and culturally constructed, but all of nature is semiotically constructed, in "regimes of signs"[9]—or, as Nietzsche would have it, it is evaluated. History, desire, nature, all are constituted out of evaluations, which is, of course, another way of saying ethics—genuine critique.

If will to power is to interpret and evaluate the relation of forces and to determine them as noble or base, it must have its own qualities by means of which it can designate forces. These qualities are affirmation and denial. Deleuze also rereads these qualities, not in oppositional terms, and not in terms of the Greek hero, but as action and reaction: "On the one hand, it is clear that there is affirmation in every action and negation in every reaction. But, on the other hand, action and reaction are more like means, means or instruments of the will to power which affirms and denies, just as reactive forces are instruments of nihilism" (Deleuze 1983, p. 54). They are means in the profound sense that affirmation is the very act of becoming active and negation is the act of becoming reactive: "The signification of a sense consists in the quality of force which is expressed in a thing: is this force active or reactive and of what nuance? The value of value consists in the quality of the will to power expressed in the corresponding thing; is the will to power affirmative or negative and of what nuance?" (Deleuze 1983, pp. 54–55).

Since forces are purely quantitative, and their relations with other forces are purely chance, only the quality of will to power is subject to human interpretation. So Nietzsche, still using the model of the heroic Greek, asks of will to power in each case: Is it affirmative or negative? By which he means, is it creative or slavish? (Deleuze 1983, p. 205, n. 14). The signification of a sense and the value of a value can be derived or determined only in terms of the differential relations between forces, that is, in terms of quantity and quality, and they are not a function of some underlying principle, nor of some telos. No doubt this is part of Deleuze's claim in the very first chapter of this text

that evaluation is both ethical and aesthetic, in the senses of critical and creative. Evaluations are not judgments based on knowledge, but ways of being. I repeat: "This is why we always have the beliefs, feelings, and thoughts that we deserve given our way of being or our style of life" (Deleuze 1983, p. 1). The body we have is the body we live—in this sense, the one we deserve.

Additionally, it appears that the negative is not entirely absent from Nietzsche's theory of force, but I cannot emphasize strongly enough that its role and status are entirely different here than they are within dialectic. At first, it appears as though the negative is located at the origin, in difference—in the difference between active and reactive forces, since it exists as a quality of will to power, as will willing negation, willing denial, rather than not willing at all. This reading is endorsed by Vincent Pecore, who claims, "Genealogy means 'origin' but also 'difference . . . in the origin'; and will to power is both the 'differential element' through which values, like signs, define themselves and a motive force behind the creation of values that is either active or reactive, affirmative or . . . dialectical."[10] And yet only active force, in complicity with affirmation, affirms difference. In Deleuze's rethinking of this, reactive force acts by *limiting* active force, restricting it in complicity with negativity and denial, and separating active force from what it can do (Deleuze 1983, p. 57).[11] So when Pecore says that the differential nature of will to power (both critical and creative) is dialectical at the origin—this reading succeeds only by separating will to power from what it can do (Pecore, p. 40). That is, he reads its critical aspect as a negative force that can somehow act negatively without dissolving into nihilism, and not as merely a diminished quality of active force. From Deleuze's perspective, it is Pecore's own reading that suffers from being reactive:

> This is why the origin itself, in one sense, includes an inverted self-image; seen from the side of reactive forces the differential and genealogical element appears upside down, difference has become negation, affirmation has become contradiction. An inverted image of the origin accompanies the origin; "yes" from the point of view of active forces becomes "no" from the point of view of reactive forces and affirmation of the self becomes negation of the other (Deleuze 1983, p. 56).[12]

Active forces are active by means of their self-affirmation. Reactive forces operate by denying the other, rather than by affirming themselves. Yet when active forces see themselves in the upside-down mirror of reactive forces, that is, when they are evaluated and interpreted from the perspective of reactive forces, their image is perverted into an image of evolution, like the Hegelian notion of contradiction. This is Deleuze's understanding of Nietzsche's critique of Hegel; Hegel's is a reactive thought, product of

reactive forces, which *begin* by denying the *other*, by denying the difference at the origin, and by seeing active force as a derivative element that evolves out of originary reaction. The importance of this to Deleuze's thought about Nietzsche cannot be underestimated without missing the point of Deleuze's work in general.

Will to Power as Desire

The upside-down mirror of reactive forces has also contributed to a base interpretation of will to power by means of a base interpretation of desire. The relation between active and reactive force is the same relation as that between desire and law. Citing Plato's *Gorgias*, Deleuze comments on Plato's discussion with the sophist Callicles and introduces both the notion of desire and that of the law. Like Callicles, Deleuze seems to agree that whatever separates (active) force from what it can do is to be characterized as law, and it appears that Nietzsche himself endorses this:

> [L]egal conditions can never be other than *exceptional conditions*, since they constitute a partial restriction of the will of life, which is bent on power . . . A legal order thought of as sovereign and universal, not as a means in the struggle between power-complexes but as a means of *preventing* all struggle in general . . . would be a principle *hostile to life*, an agent of the dissolution and destruction of man, an attempt to assassinate the future of man, a sign of weariness, a secret path to nothingness (Nietzsche 1969, p. 76) .

Law, by separating active force from what it can do, leads to nihilism. The upside-down mirror image of reactive forces and negative will do precisely this. For Callicles, as for Nietzsche, says Deleuze, the weak cannot form a stronger force by banding together, rather, reactive forces can only stop active forces from doing what they do by confronting them with the upside-down image. Like Nietzsche, Callicles maintains that the slave does not cease to be a slave even when he is triumphant: "from the point of view of nature concrete force is that which goes to its ultimate consequences, to the limit of power or desire" (Deleuze 1983, p. 59) and which, consequently, has the strongest capacity for being affected; it can stand the most (Deleuze 1983, p. 62). The slave then, is a slave by reason of a weak capacity to be affected and to act. But Socrates, relying on a negative and dialectical notion, can only comprehend desire as an experienced pain followed by the experience of a pleasurable satisfaction—a reaction, property, or symptom of a reactive force. Whereas, for Deleuze, desire is the limit of a power in the sense that

"every body extends its power as far as it is able" (Deleuze 1983, p. 206, n. 17).[13] Limit, in this sense, is "that point from which it [a force] deploys itself, and deploys all its power" such that "the smallest becomes the equal of the greatest as soon as it is no longer separated from that which it is capable of" (Deleuze 1968, p. 55). Nietzsche calls such desire *will to power*[14]—a desire that does not need to be interpreted. Deleuze drops this heroic expression and simply emphasizes that desire is what experiments with forces (Deleuze and Parnet 1987, p. 95).

In *Différence et répétition*, Deleuze creates anew the concept of law apart from the upside-down mirror. In Aristotle (and Plato), entities have different degrees of being, as if there were only so much being available for distribution. This occurs because "[t]here is a hierarchy which measures beings according to their limits, and according to their degree of proximity or distance in relation to a principle" (Deleuze 1968, p. 55). For Deleuze, such a measure of being is also a measure of power, a measure of law and the limits of law. Having rethought the Aristotelian notion of being, he proposes a different kind of law and measure for the "being which is said of difference." Such a measure is a "*nomadic nomos*, without property, enclosure or measure . . . an allocation of those who distribute *themselves* . . . in a space without precise limits" (Deleuze 1968, p. 54). The Aristotelian space of "being said in many ways" is a space that must be divided, shared, hierarchized in accordance with the above-stated principle of proximity to being-itself. The space of "being said of difference" is without this principle. It is characterized by Deleuze as a "wandering distribution," a "delirium" (without property, enclosure, or measure) free to fill up space and to leap beyond that limit (Deleuze 1968, pp. 54–55).

When force is separated from its power, from what it can do, it turns upon itself and denies itself in accordance with the law that divides and subtracts (takes power away). Of course, for Nietzsche, that law was originally the sphere of the active, strong, spontaneous, and aggressive warrior. Once the supreme power establishes law:

> [I]t treats violence and capricious acts . . . as offenses against the law . . . and thus leads the feelings of its subjects away from the direct injury caused by such offenses; and in the long run it thus attains the reverse of that which is desired by all revenge that is fastened exclusively to the viewpoint of the person injured: from now on the eye is trained to an ever more impersonal evaluation of the deed (Nietzsche 1969, p. 76).

In this way, through the intervention of law, that is, reactive negativity, active forces actually become reactive. The cure for this is nothingness.

It seems that it is also in this sense that Nietzsche differs fundamentally from Hegel. For although active and reactive forces are difference at the origin, their association with the quality of will to power, that is, with affirmation and negation, ultimately prevents their synthesis. Moreover, it is inappropriate to do what is so often done with the concept of power: to interpret it as the "object of a *representation*" as if "man . . . wants to see his superiority represented and recognized by others" (Deleuze 1983, p. 80). And this, in turn, presupposes the primacy of the identical and of negation over difference, which, in Nietzsche's inscription, is sought only by the sickly, those inhabitants of the "hospitals of culture":

> What do they really want? At least to *represent* justice, love, wisdom, superiority—that is the ambition of the "lowest," the sick . . . The will of the weak to represent *some* form of superiority, their instinct for devious paths to tyranny over the healthy—where can it not be discovered, this will to power of the weakest! (Nietzsche 1969, p. 123.)

This is simply another instance of the inverted mirror, whereby the sick represent themselves as superior by negating the healthy. The representation is necessary to the sickly because it stabilizes the world by providing an identity that sidesteps the will to power as a shaping will: "The joy in shaping and reshaping—a primeval joy!" (Nietzsche 1968, p. 495). This is joy in becoming, which stands opposed to those weak sensations that are regarded not merely as alike, but are "sensed *as being the same*" (Nietzsche 1968, p. 506). As Deleuze makes clear from the beginning (even while disregarding the Nietzschean judgments "sickly" and "healthy"), a representation of power can only be a representation of an already existing power, a current state of affairs, insofar as representation is not a creative act of affirmation.

When a force becomes active it extends its power as far as it is able, as an *affirmation*. When a force becomes reactive, it does so as negative and nihilistic; its will to power is a will to nothingness, and not a will to dialectic (Deleuze 1983, p. 68). One example:

> Mankind itself is still ill with the effects of this priestly naiveté in medicine . . . the entire antisensualistic metaphysic of the priests that makes men indolent and overrefined . . . and finally the only-too-comprehensible satiety with all this, together with the radical cure for it *nothingness* (Nietzsche 1969, p. 32).

For this reason, according to Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche, it is not possible for reactive force to extend its power to its limit and to become more powerfully reactive. Because reactive forces are complicitous with negativity and

denial, they can, through the will to nothingness, the ultimate extension of their force, only negate themselves! (Deleuze 1983, p. 70).[15] They negate their own reactive force. This "active negation" or "active nihilism" is the only way in which reactive forces become active. In other words, negation never negates active force and affirmation—it only separates them from its own power until, weakened, they become reactive. Nor can active affirmation become negative by extending its power to its limit. Given the complicity between active forces and affirmation, such a becoming only enhances the power of active forces. Rather, because of its complicity with negation, reactive force extends the full power of negation—the will to nothingness—to its limit at which point forces actively negate their own reactive negativity, finally becoming active. So Nietzsche writes concerning nihilism: "It reaches its maximum of relative strength as a violent force of destruction—as active nihilism" (Nietzsche 1968, p. 18). This cosmological or physical doctrine is, of course, and must be connected to an ethical and selective doctrine. Deleuze claims that philosophy serves neither church nor state, nor any power. If the job of philosophy is to expose all forms of thought, Deleuze is interested in how such powers dominate, that is, he is interested in the complicity—that mixture of baseness and stupidity—of victims and perpetrators (an interest that seems to also motivate *Anti-Oedipus*), as opposed to "freemen . . . who do not confuse the aims of culture with the benefit of the State, morality or religion" (Deleuze 1983, p. 106).

Untimely Philosophy: Nietzsche's Selective Ontology

Such an investigation is simultaneously and necessarily an investigation of the nature of time. If philosophy serves no power, philosophy is always against its time, a critique of the present world: thus untimely (*Unzeitgemasse*), active, a philosophy of the future. The role of memory in Nietzsche's texts comes to be understood, by Deleuze, as the province of reactive forces. Memory traces constitute the reactive unconscious, and these traces cannot be escaped once they have been received perceptually (Deleuze 1983, p. 112). However, "[t]his involves no mere passive inability to rid oneself of an impression . . . but an active *desire* not to rid oneself . . . Man must first of all have become calculable, regular, necessary, even in his own image of himself" (Nietzsche 1969, p. 58). Even though there is a steady stream of present excitations that should move a body on, still, a reactive consciousness develops to react to the flow of present conscious excitations. The old instincts, limited by law, unable to discharge themselves outwardly, "turn backward *against man himself.* Hostility, cruelty, joy in persecuting, in

attacking, in change, in destruction—all this turned against the possessors of such instincts: that is the origin of the 'bad conscience'" (Nietzsche 1969, p. 85). As a result, "when reactive forces take conscious excitation as their object, then the corresponding reaction is itself acted," while keeping reactive traces in the unconscious (Deleuze 1983, p. 113). Thus, while the "origin, nature, and function" of consciousness must, nonetheless, be renewed, the flows of excitations that reactive consciousness reacts to (by taking them as its object) must keep coming; memory traces must not overflow consciousness or the activity of reactive forces will come to a halt.

What makes this possible is what Deleuze calls "the active super-conscious faculty of forgetting" (Deleuze 1983, p. 113):

> Forgetting is no mere *vis inertiae* as the superficial imagine; it is rather an active and in the strictest sense positive faculty of repression . . . so that it will be immediately obvious how there could be no happiness, no cheerfulness, no hope, no pride, no *present*, without forgetfulness (Nietzsche 1969, pp. 58–59).

But consciousness is the "weakest and most fallible organ" (Nietzsche 1969, p. 84), so forgetting, in its turn, is only functionally active. Reactive in its origins, forgetting must borrow its energy from reactive forces, so it is prone to failures: "excitation tends to get confused with its trace in the unconscious and conversely, reaction to traces rises into consciousness and overruns it" (Deleuze 1983, p. 114). With this, reactive forces cease to be acted. Denied any content to act with, active forces cease to act—they are *separated from what they can do*. With nothing to stop it, and with no renewal of conscious activity, the unconscious memory trace takes the place of the conscious excitation (Deleuze 1983, p. 114). Reaction prevails over action. This is the origin and genesis of *ressentiment*.

For the human being who suffers *ressentiment* neither action nor reaction is possible. So *ressentiment* is characterized by the inability to admire, respect, or love; passivity or whatever is nonacted; and the imputation of wrongs, distribution of responsibilities, and perpetual accusations (Deleuze 1983, pp. 117–118). As a result, the one who suffers from *ressentiment* can only give sense and value from the standpoint of the passive receiver who can neither act *nor even put reactive forces into play*. The passive receiver can only feel. This is why Nietzsche cautions that only someone who suffers *ressentiment* needs others who are evil so as to represent herself as good. And again, only from this point of view, what is evil is judged evil because it does not hold itself back (Deleuze 1983, p. 123). Nietzsche's strong heroes can never prevent themselves from acting—it is only the weak who simply cannot act because,

in them, force is separated from what it can do. Yet from the passive point of view of the weak who cannot admire or respect the strong, the strong are evil because they should separate themselves from what they can do, yet they do not. Unlike active forces, reactive forces, in complicity with negation and denial cannot return, cannot be willed to return. Such a transmutation, of course, is not any sort of fundamental biological or physical process; it is tied to the *feeling* of power, which Nietzsche, in his earlier writing (Nietzsche 1968, p. 42), insisted upon. It is "a new way of feeling, thinking, and above all being (the Overman)" (Deleuze 1983, p. 71). This feeling is in no sense unable to respect, nor is it passive or looking for someone to blame; it is a feeling that is itself an active creation.

The Tragic

"Tragedy is a *tonic*" (Nietzsche 1968, p. 850); it is a tonic to *ressentiment*. Experiencing tragedy, what it can be in its highest form, is a question of forces, thus of quality. In its highest form, tragedy is a force that Nietzsche evaluates as affirmative and noble. Only when it is taken in this way can tragedy be a tonic to *ressentiment*. How are we to read Nietzsche in a way that does not reduce tragedy to a psychological experience like catharsis, or to a historical or personal destiny, an encounter with the gods?

To answer this question, I would like to take up again the theme of *ressentiment*. Deleuze defines *ressentiment* as an aspect of a principle upon which our entire psychology depends—that principle is nihilism, the motor and meaning of all history. All the categories of rational thought (identity, causality, and finality) presuppose a nihilistic interpretation of force as *ressentiment*. To think about tragedy as the tonic for such *ressentiment*, each of us needs to throw out a dice and to ask as Deleuze does, "What would a man [sic] without *ressentiment* be like?" (Deleuze 1983, p. 35). What would life be like without law as limit, without denial? This is a different question for each one who throws the dice.

Zarathustra claims that the past and present are his greatest burden because they have always been interpreted in terms of force as *ressentiment* and not with a dice.

> I should not know how to live, if I were not a seer of that which must come. A seer, a willer, a creator, a future itself and a bridge to the future—and alas, also like a cripple upon this bridge . . . To redeem the past and to transform every 'It was' into an 'I wanted it thus'—that alone do I call redemption (Nietzsche 1961, pp. 160–161).

The problem is that *ressentiment*, the imprisoned will, the "It was," fetters even the liberator. Zarathustra concludes that even while "The will is a creator," still, "[a]ll 'It was' *is* a fragment, a riddle, a dreadful chance—until the creative will says to it: 'But I willed it thus!'" (Nietzsche 1961, p. 163.) The creative will brings joy, and such joy, such pure and multiple positivity is, says Deleuze, what Nietzsche comes to mean by tragedy (Deleuze 1983, p. 36).

Everything gets referred to a force capable of interpreting it, and every force is referred to what it can do (Deleuze 1983, p. 22). And such affirmation affirms chance and the necessity of chance. There are no bets on probability here, no leaps of faith; Deleuze notes that Zarathustra opposes all such moves. Betting on probabilities contradicts the dice throw, or, better said, it eliminates the dice throw by reducing its sheer necessity to mere likelihood. Now I want to recall the epigraph with which I began this essay—the statement that no one can extract from things (books included) more than she already knows. Nietzsche continues this statement by noting that it is a question of experience: "For what one lacks access to from experience one will have no ear" (Nietzsche 1979, p. 70). Tragic thinking, in the sense of joyous and multiple affirmation, is a question, then, of experiences. It is this *existential* basis that distinguishes Nietzsche's tragic thought from any sort of idealism or dialectic. It is, I believe, this existential basis that Deleuze grasps while leaving behind the inscription of Greek heroics.

The question of tragedy becomes, for Deleuze, a question about what we have experienced, and how we have critiqued this experience. But with regard to the first point, what we have experienced is not enough. What is our mode of life?" is not an abstract question. What have I actually experienced? What values do I deserve given this? How do I evaluate? What interests do my evaluations promote? These are all important questions, concrete questions with individual as well as cultural implications. These are the questions presupposed by the dice throw. Do I affirm chance as necessity, or do I play for probability, thereby denying the necessity of chance and fleeing from the experience of the effects of my own ideas?

That said, it needs to be placed in the context of contemporary social life and its territorializations and deterritorializations. None of us is or will be Zarathustra. Still, we must be attuned to "how one becomes what one is" (Nietzsche 1979, p. 253), that is, how the forces that take hold of us struggle for domination. Since we cannot extract what we have not experienced, we tend to read what is interesting to us, what we understand given our own social and personal commitments. But Nietzsche says that we must think on our feet about what we experience, and we must provide ourselves with experiences of the dice throw if we are to think at all. Still, no one can "know" the Overman, know what it is. In a certain sense, we cannot even

read Nietzsche's books and "know" them. No one, none of us understand Nietzsche. Each of us interprets from our own perspectives. Yet, the more perspectives we experiment with and live, presumably, the more of Nietzsche we can read, or, perhaps, the more irrelevant his texts become.

If tragedy is to overcome our pessimism, to throw dice and affirm each experience, tragedy is the tonic to pessimism. If, since the pre-Socratics, and especially since Socrates, we are all pessimists, because all our evaluations are part of a base way of life, the only cure for this, for Nietzsche, is complete nihilism. Partial or small affirmations do not interest Nietzsche—he even sees them as dangerously deceptive. So if we read Nietzsche, it is best if we read with *no interests at all*! This is the *nomadic nomos*, Heraclitean strife, justice, self-renewing creation. Nietzsche's iciness and coldness, living on high mountains, and his solitariness all have the effect of producing a complete and total nihilism—*no interests at all*. This strategy is necessary for Nietzsche because all our interests prior to complete nihilism are interests with a base evaluation; only complete nihilism can transmute/transvalue this base evaluation to something noble, bold, and forceful. Our evaluations after such transmutation will again be merely perspectives, but their point of view will then be affirmative and affirming. This is the importance of eternal return for Nietzsche. Only eternal return guarantees the move to complete nihilism. Tragedy is the means by which he makes this move.

Is this how Deleuze reads Nietzsche? Is there some sort of Deleuzian inscription operating? Deleuze does not deny the necessity of a transmutation of values. As I have indicated, this may even be his main point. But with regard to nihilism and Nietzsche's method for accomplishing it, Deleuze, I believe, remains aware of our contemporary cultural situatedness, and in his work another transmutation occurs. We are all committed to social and personal affiliations. We cannot go sit on top of a mountain; we cannot become icy. There are too many concerns below. So how are we to think the being of becoming in our situatedness? Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche is part of a line of flight that eventually commits him to that process of becoming that is called the Body without Organs, a process that he (with Guattari) finds in the writing of Antonin Artaud. This writing is not Nietzschean pronouncements. It is not poetry. It seems to be closer to something like "performance art" (which often grows out of actual experience). Closer, then, to tragedy than to any other historical art form, though I am unwilling to call up that ancient word "tragedy" to name our contemporary artistic inventions.

Nihilism, then, in the sense of active nihilism, reaches its maximum of relative strength in a violent force of destruction. For Artaud it is the body outside of socially organized, "genital" sexuality, as well as outside of the law,

which castrates and makes impotent, which limits and turns back against "anything that has life or energy."[16] "I don't believe in father/ in mother,/ got no pappamummy" Artaud wails; "I Antonin Artaud, am my son,/ my father, my mother,/ myself" (Artaud 1965, pp. 247, 248). What remains is a crowd; a multiplicity; a pack in smooth, that is, unorganized and unstable, space; intensive matter; a *nomadic nomos*. Since, as Artaud claims, "there is nothing more useless than an organ,"[17] the Body without Organs is what remains when you take everything away: the organization of the body by law, Nietzsche's Greek evaluations, Deleuze-Guattari's own choices of literature and the psychoanalytic fantasy projections which constitute sexuality in contemporary culture. In a certain sense, then, Grosz is right to worry about the existence of personal inscriptions in the body assemblage. But Deleuze-Guattari also incite the removal of all such inscriptions. The removal of these inscriptions leaves nothing—no scene, no place, no support, no interests, nothing to interpret—only the real.[18]

Deleuze-Guattari acknowledge our situatedness in a particular sociopolitical environment when they point to the dangerous consequences of the disorder of the body. Active nihilism is dangerous; "You have to keep enough of the organism for it to reform each dawn," they warn (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 160). Even while opening the body to connections and an assemblage of circuits, conjunctions, distributions of intensity, transmissions, stabilization and destabilization; nonetheless, drug addiction, alcoholism, paranoia, schizophrenia are all possible effects that must not be romanticized. So it is not surprising that what I have called active nihilism, the dissolution of the body under law (the organism), Artaud calls suicide.[19] "If I commit suicide, it will not be to destroy myself but to put myself back together again . . . I free myself from the conditioned reflexes of my organs" (Artaud 1965, p. 56). Suicide, Artaud continues, uproots; it uproots the law that has kept the body organized and makes a place for the Body without Organs.

And it is also not surprising that the Body without Organs is the field of immanence of desire, that is, desire not as lack or even as fulfillment, but desire as a process of production distributed intensively, consistently, without interruption: in short, a field of becomings (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 154). Though Deleuze-Guattari have abandoned Nietzschean inscriptions in the creation of the Body without Organs, one Nietzschean prescription serves well here: experiment with caution. Lodge yourself on a stratum, observe Deleuze-Guattari; experiment with the opportunities it offers, the forces within that field; become a point of transmission; annihilate the genitally, socially, or politically stratified body; make yourself a Body without Organs.

Notes

1. Judith Butler, *Subjects of Desire. Hegelian Reflections in Twentieth Century France* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987).
2. Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), p. 39.
3. Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1969), Part I, Section 2, p. 26.
4. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale, (New York: Penguin Books, 1979), p. 331.
5. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage Books, 1968), book 3, p. 564.
6. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*, trans. Marianne Cowan (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Gateway, 1987), p. 57.
7. Gilles Deleuze, *Différence et répétition* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968).
8. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (New York: Penguin Books, 1961), p. 245.
9. "Regimes of signs" is a term borrowed from Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus. Capitalism and Schizophrenia,* trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987) and refers to semiotic mixtures of presignifying, countersignifying, postsignifying, and signifying elements, which constitute various types of social organization.
10. Vincent P. Pecore, "Deleuze's Nietzsche and Post-Structuralist Thought," *Sub-Stance*, vol. 14 (3), no. 48: p. 40.
11. This is the point, according to Deleuze, of sections of Nietzsche's *On the Genealogy of Morals.* For example, Nietzsche writes, "The active, aggressive, arrogant man is still a hundred steps closer to justice than the reactive man; for he has absolutely no need to take a false and prejudiced view of the object before him in the way the reactive man does and is bound to do. For that reason, the aggressive man, as the stronger, nobler, more courageous, has in fact also had at all times a *freer* eye, a *better* conscience on his side: conversely, one can see who has the invention of the 'bad conscience' on his conscience—the man of *ressentiment!*" (p. 75). This statement is part of an exposition on active and reactive justice that Deleuze takes to be the point of Nietzsche's work, in the sense that the question of affirmation is the question of existence that justifies through affirmation, as opposed to the reactive condemnation of existence.
12. At the "Greek" origin the noble man can "endure no other enemy than one in whom there is nothing to despise and *very much* to honor!" While, "[i]n contrast to this, picture 'The enemy' as the man of *ressentiment* conceives him—and here precisely is his deed, his creation: he has conceived 'the evil enemy,' '*the Evil One*,' and this in fact is his basic concept, from which he then evolves, as an afterthought and pendant, a 'good one'—himself" (Nietzsche 1969, p. 39).
13. What Nietzsche writes in *The Will to Power* is, "There is no law: every power draws its ultimate consequence at every moment . . . A quantum of power is designated by the effect it produces and that which it resists" (Nietzsche 1968, p. 337).

14. Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), p. 91.

15. Nietzsche points to how once the belief in god, and an absolute moral order, "becomes untenable," "[n]ihilism appears at that point . . . One interpretation has collapsed; but because it was considered *the* interpretation it now seems as if there were no meaning at all in existence, as if everything were in vain." Such thinking leads, of course, to that most terrible thought: "existence as it is without meaning or aim, yet recurring inevitably without any finale of nothingness: '*the eternal recurrence*'" (Nietzsche 1968, p. 55).

16. Antonin Artaud, *Anthology* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1965), p. 111.

17. Antonin Artaud, *Selected Writings*, Susan Sontag, ed.; trans. Helen Weaver (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1976), p. 571.

18. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, vol. 2, *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), p. 151.

19. These points were made by Lisa Franklin in an unpublished paper on Artaud and Deleuze-Guattari.

8

Anti-Platonism and Art

Paul Patton

MODERN ART HAS BEEN described as a succession of attempts to propose a definitive answer to the question, "What is art?" With the collapse of the representational ideal at the end of the nineteenth century, painters could no longer continue to refine their means of representing reality while remaining convinced that this was the task of painting alone. For many critics, the increasingly rapid succession of modern art movements, from fauvism and cubism through to pop, amounted to art's continuing investigation into its own nature. For some philosophers, modern philosophy follows a parallel course, offering up a succession of answers to the question, "What is thought?"[1] To the extent that philosophy itself is above all a reflection upon the nature of thought, this is a no less reflexive enterprise than modern art's concern with the nature of art. Moreover, as in the case of the successive styles of modern painting, different approaches to philosophy have tended to define themselves by what they reject. For many, the nature and task of modern philosophy has been defined in terms of the rejection of Platonism. However, it is not always the same Platonism that is envisaged, nor does rejection always take the same form in each case.

Deleuze is among those who have sought to develop a new conception of philosophy under the banner of "the overturning of Platonism." Moreover, he is one of those who has explicitly aligned his new conception of philosophy with the tendency of modern art: "The theory of thought is like painting: it needs that revolution which took art from representation to abstraction. This is the aim of a theory of thought without image" (Deleuze 1968, p. 354). The philosophical equivalent of abstract art, or imageless thought, would be a nonrepresentational conception of thought. Deleuze's own reflection upon the nature and task of philosophy, notably in *Différence et répétition*, is above all a critique of the persistent representationalism in philosophy. The aim of this paper is to explore the common ground between

the abandonment of representation in painting and in philosophy, through an examination of Deleuze's remarks about Plato and modern art in the course of *Différence et répétition*. This discussion also raises the question of the nature of the Deleuzian "overturning" of Platonism. Since this involves inverting the hierarchy established by Plato between copies and simulacra, and since this reversal purports to abolish the very distinction in question, Deleuze's critical strategy with respect to Platonism appears similar to that of deconstruction. However, a comparison of the respective readings of Plato on this point by Deleuze and Derrida reveals that the similarities between them are more apparent than real.

In the visual arts in particular, the transition to modernity was precipitated by a crisis in and eventual abandonment of the representational theory of art. The search for aims other than the representation of appearances traversed a variety of alternatives, from the expression of feeling and emotion to the exploration of the formal possibilities of visual experience, before returning to a different version of the idea that visual art is essentially concerned with appearances. Much postmodernist art is explicitly concerned with the reproduction of appearances. The shock value in some cases derives from the fact that what is reproduced is the appearance of earlier artworks themselves. Artists such as Sherrie Levine rephotographed or repainted all or part of works by earlier artists. However, this is not just a return to the old ideal of art as representation, and not simply because it involves second-order representation, by reproducing appearances of appearances of reality. The crucial difference lies not in the objects depicted but in the conception of the artist's task: the reproduction of appearances rather than their representation. For production, at least in one of its senses, essentially involves the transformation of a raw material into a product. It is therefore inseparable from the creation or the institution of a difference where none existed before. The means of production, which include the artist's conceptual as well as physical materials and techniques, are the means by which this difference is created. By contrast, representation, at least in one of its senses, essentially involves the maintenance of an identity; the reappearance of that which appeared before.

In fact, artistic representation has always relied upon specific materials and techniques for reproducing appearances, which inevitably introduce a difference into the appearance reproduced. The question is not whether painting ever in fact achieved the representation of appearances in any strict sense, but what it took to be its objective and goal. For the tradition of realist or representational art, the goal was the reduction and eventual elimination of observable difference between the original and the copy. For some late modern or postmodern artists, the goal is exactly the opposite:

the production of difference, the manifestation or illustration of difference, by means of perceptual similarity. Borges gave a literary formulation of this strategy in imagining the project of a little-known twentieth-century poet and novelist who undertakes to recreate Cervantes's *Don Quixote*. Borges's story tells us that he succeeded at least in composing some fragments that repeated the original word for word, yet the different possibilities for interpreting the twentieth century text mean that it is not the same novel: "The text of Cervantes and that of Menard are verbally identical, but the second is almost infinitely richer. (More ambiguous, his detractors will say; but ambiguity is a richness)" (Borges 1962, p. 52). Deleuze comments that this story shows us how "the most exact, the most strict repetition has as its correlate the maximum of difference" (Deleuze 1968, p. 5). Duchamp and then Warhol offered visual realizations of a similar strategy, the former by employing ready-made objects as sculptural artworks, thereby transforming the status and nature of the appearance represented, the latter by recreating a series of banal objects, Brillo boxes made from plywood and hand-painted to resemble the mass-produced commercial item. The rediscovery and reutilization of such gestures in the postmodernist work of Sherrie Levine and others is therefore not a return to the old ideal of art as the representation of appearances, unless we understand "return" in precisely the sense Deleuze gives to both repetition and the eternal return: repetition is the displacement, disguise, or transformation of that which is repeated; return is the mode of being of that which differs. The return of representation in this sense is the differentiation or transformation of representation itself: no longer the maintenance of identity, but the production of difference. Modern art has come to see its task not as the representation of appearances, but as their repetition; not as the production of copies, but as the production of simulacra.

In *Différence et répétition*, Deleuze announces that "the task of modern philosophy has been defined: to overturn [*renverser*] Platonism" (Deleuze 1968, p. 82). What this means depends both upon what one understands by Platonism and what this operation of "overturning" is supposed to involve. *Renverser* carries both the sense of "overcoming" as well as that of "overturning" or "reversing," an ambiguity that is reflected in the fact that various English translations of Deleuze's formulation of the task of philosophy have used both of these terms. In fact, I shall argue, both senses are involved in Deleuze' s version of the escape from philosophy's Platonic past: like Nietzsche, he proposes an overcoming that proceeds by inverting certain aspects of Platonism. It was Nietzsche who in the first instance proposed this definition of the task of philosophy. In a note in the *Nachlass*, he referred to his own philosophy as an "inverted" or "reversed" Platonism (*umgedrehter*

Platonismus).[2] For Nietzsche, Platonism was both a moral and a metaphysical construct, and something to be overcome on both of these planes. From a metaphysical point of view, Platonism consisted of the distinction between the realm of Ideas or that which truly is, and the sensuous realm of relative nonbeing or mere appearance. Platonism constructs a hierarchy within reality, and a corresponding hierarchy within ourselves, which makes even the best parts of human life no more than copies or imitations of the truly real. Overturning Platonism on this plane cannot consist in simply inverting the metaphysical order and affirming the reality of the sensuous, for that merely changes the places occupied within the same persistent structure. What is required is the abolition of that structure itself, as Nietzsche suggests in "How the 'Real World' at Last Became a Myth": "We have abolished the real world: what world is left? the apparent world perhaps? . . . But no! with the true world we have also abolished the apparent world!" (Nietzsche 1968, p. 41). Commenting upon the need to change the ordering structure as a whole, Heidegger describes this overcoming of Platonism as an inversion such that "philosophical thinking twists free of it" (Heidegger 1981, p. 201).

Nietzsche's attempt to think beyond the moral structure of Platonism is, if anything, a clearer example of such an evasive maneuver. From Nietzsche's own supramoral point of view, Platonism was the primary form of the nihilism that has dominated European thought. This "dogmatist's error," as he calls it in the preface to *Beyond Good and Evil* (Nietzsche 1973, p. 14), amounted to the devaluation of temporal and corporeal human existence by opposing to it a higher realm that is the natural home of gods, "the good in itself", and of the soul once freed of "that prison house which we are now encumbered with and call a body" (Phaedrus, 250c). In its Christian form, "Platonism for the people," as Nietzsche calls it, this nihilism has defined the nature of human existence up until the modern period. For several reasons, overturning Platonism on the moral plane cannot mean simply inverting the existing hierarchy of value: firstly, because that is the path that leads to secondary nihilism or loss of faith in the highest values, and thus to the kind of despair expressed by Zarathustra's prophet, for whom "Truly, we have grown too weary even to die; now we are awake and we live on in sepulchers!" (Nietzsche 1969, p. 156); secondly, because what we have become is in part the result of centuries of Christian education of the human spirit. As a result, Nietzsche argues in *On the Genealogy of Morals*, the very possibility of overcoming nihilism depends in part on the attachment to values such as truthfulness, which are themselves the products of the Christian-Platonic tradition. Rather than simply inverting the respective values attached to soul and body, the overturning of Platonism requires the development of a new conception of what we are as embodied beings, and a new evaluation of the

life of such beings: a new ontology and a new ethics of human existence.

For Deleuze, overturning Platonism is both a part and an emblem of the larger task undertaken in *Différence et répétition*, namely the critique of the representational conception of thought that has dominated the history of philosophy since Plato, and the elaboration of an alternative conception of "thought without image." Thought understood as a process of representing some external reality means that the distinctions drawn in thought are projected back onto the object itself, so that thinking properly becomes a matter of following what Socrates calls the "objective articulation" of the object (Phaedrus, 265e). Deleuze argues that the philosophy of representation relies upon a series of timid and conservative presuppositions regarding the activity of thought. According to this dogmatic image derived from common sense, thought is supposed to be a fundamentally benign activity, the exercise of a universal human faculty that has a natural affinity with the truth. Its paradigm cases are not creative acts such as the invention of new concepts, but simple acts of recognition (this is a finger, or a piece of wax; snow is white), which are supposed to involve only the application of existing concepts to sense experience. Its products are discrete and disinterested items of knowledge, rather than a violence we do to things ("thought is primarily trespass and violence" [Deleuze 1968, p. 181]). Against this image of thought, Deleuze defends a conception of thought as something to which we are provoked precisely by those phenomena we do not recognize, or by forces from outside our habitual range of experience. Only by abandoning the banal model of recognition in favor of something closer to the Kantian sublime is it possible to conceive of thought as an essentially creative activity: thought as the creation of concepts, where concepts themselves are understood as existing only in immediate relations with forces and intensities outside thought.

The dominant tradition in the history of philosophy has developed a theory of thought within the shadow of this dominant image. In general terms, the successive accounts of the instruments and means of representation given by particular philosophies have contributed to a shared philosophical understanding of the nature of conceptual thought. For Deleuze, the coherence of this tradition is defined by its suppression or exclusion of difference in favor of a logic based upon identity, resemblance and similitude. These have become the unquestioned values that govern the theorization of thought itself, with the result that it becomes impossible to think difference as such. Plato occupies a place apart in the development of this philosophy of representation, both with respect to the presuppositions of the dogmatic image of thought, which he does not always accept, and with respect to the precedence of identity over difference. While he agrees that metaphysics,

understood as the theory of conceptual representation, should be defined with reference to Platonism, Deleuze argues that Plato provided a somewhat incomplete version of the philosophy of representation. The doctrinal basis of representation in Plato is confined to his theory of Ideas or Forms. As such, it lacks the systematic character of the theory of categories later developed by Aristotle. Only with the theory of categories defined as the conditions of possible experience does philosophy acquire "the elementary concepts of representation" (Deleuze 1968, p. 93). By contrast, the aim of the theory of Ideas is not the specification of objects in terms of their place within a differential tableau of genus and species, but rather selection among rival claimants, the separation of the true or the authentic from the merely apparent or the inauthentic by tracing the lineage back to a foundation. With Aristotle, difference is specified within a conceptual order that covers the entire range of possibilities, from the largest differences, which appear in the form of the analogical relation to being among its genera, to the smallest differences, which distinguish the various species of object. With Plato, difference as such, or pure difference, still appears in the intervals between founded and unfounded claimants, or between things themselves and their simulacra (Deleuze 1968, p. 84).

Deleuze's attempt to think beyond the terms of the dominant metaphysical tradition involves precisely the attempt to develop a thought capable of comprehending pure difference. In order to do so, he draws upon some of the elements of anti-Platonism scattered across the pages of Plato's dialogues. He suggests that the ambivalence toward representation found in these texts makes it both inevitable and desirable that the overturning of Platonism should conserve aspects of Plato's thought. Insofar as it is correct to see Deleuze's "overturning" of Platonism as proceeding from a reversal of sorts between conflicting aspects of Plato's thought, then this procedure mimics in advance Deleuze's larger strategy in relation to the philosophy of representation. For here too, having traced its elaboration through the philosophies of Aristotle, neo-Platonists, Descartes, Leibniz, Kant, and Hegel, Deleuze then draws upon neglected aspects of the work of these thinkers, as well as the work of others who form a "minor tradition," such as Duns Scotus, Spinoza, Nietzsche, and Bergson, to develop an alternative conception of the nature of thought. A closer examination of the treatment of Platonism by Deleuze may therefore serve to illustrate the nature of his critique of the philosophy of representation as a whole.

Plato's texts provide a conception of a world whose basic structure is that of a system of representation. Only the Forms are ultimately and absolutely real. The earthly manifestations of qualities such as beauty or justice, or material objects, such as a bed, are only imitations of the Forms themselves.

In the "*Timaeus,*" for example, the world itself is presented as a copy or "likeness of that which is apprehended by reason and mind and is unchallengeable" (*Timaeus,* 29a–b). The Forms are the key to Plato's representationalism, since they are the original or essential natures that serve as foundations for the true nature of objects and qualities in the sensuous world of human existence. Platonism thus turns on this distinction between the original and its imitations, the model and its subsequent copies. Moreover, it is this distinction that underpins the subordination of difference to identity. For the original or model is supposed to be defined by an exemplary self-identity: only the Forms are nothing other than what they are, Courage being nothing but courageous, Piety nothing but pious, and so on. These qualities are then defined in terms of their "participation" in the original. They are likenesses or copies, which truly express the nature of the Form, defined as such by virtue of a special kind of internal resemblance to the original. Thus, for example, the cabinetmaker does not make "that which really is" but rather "something that resembles real being" (*Republic,* 597a). In this way, Deleuze argues, the ontological difference between original and copy is defined with reference to a prior identity and resemblance. Difference itself is a derivative term, coming in third place, as it were, behind identity and resemblance: "Difference is only understood in terms of the comparative play of two similitudes: the exemplary similitude of an identical original and the imitative similitude of a more or less accurate copy" (Deleuze 1968, p. 166). The theory of Forms thus provides key elements on which subsequent metaphysics was able to build. In this respect, Deleuze argues, "Platonism thus founds the entire domain that philosophy will later recognize as its own: the domain of representation filled by copies-icons and defined not by an extrinsic relation to the object, but by an intrinsic relation to the model or foundation. The Platonic model is the Same, in the sense that Plato says that Justice is nothing more than just . . . The Platonic copy is the similar: the pretender who possesses in a secondary way" (Deleuze 1990, p. 259).

With Plato, Deleuze argues, we see a philosophical decision of the utmost importance being taken, that of subordinating difference to the primary relations of identity and resemblance. However, precisely because Plato was the first to theorize the world of representation, and because he does so with only the meager resources of the theory of Forms, this conceptual configuration does not go unchallenged within the dialogues. The subordination of difference to identity in Platonism, he suggests, is analogous to the situation of a recently captured wild animal, whose resistance testifies to its untamed nature—soon to be lost—better than would its behavior in a natural state (Deleuze 1968, p. 83). In particular, the ordered and hierarchical world of

representation is constantly threatened by figures of another kind, or another nature, whose essence lies precisely not in resemblance to the real nature of things, but in their capacity to simulate such natures. Chief among these is the archenemy of the Platonic philosopher, the Sophist, who is described as "a sort of wizard, an imitator of real things" (*Sophist,* 235a). At the end of the dialogue, Socrates defines the Sophist by his power to simulate or "mimic" the wise, mimicry having been defined in turn as the production of semblances using one's own person as instrument. As such, he concludes that "the Sophist was not among those who have knowledge, but he has a place among mimics" (*Sophist,* 267e). Similarly, writing, which is described in the *Phaedrus* as "a kind of image" of living discourse, does not produce true wisdom, but only its semblance (*Phaedrus,* 275b, 276a). Finally, the "imitative poets" discussed in book 10 of the *Republic* do not produce imitations of the true nature of things, but only imitations of their appearances (*phantasma*). As such, they threaten to corrupt the minds of all those who do not possess the antidote of knowledge (*Republic,* 595b). Because of this, Socrates recommends their exclusion from the ideal community: "On this, then, as it seems, we are fairly agreed, that the imitator knows nothing worth mentioning of the things he imitates, but that imitation is a form of play, not to be taken seriously, and that those who attempt tragic poetry . . . are altogether imitators" (*Republic,* 602b).

It may seem that the difference between these two figures is a difference within the order of representation itself. On the one hand, the poets who recount myths are assimilated to painters and condemned as "altogether imitators." On the other hand, Socrates himself has recourse to myth in the *Phaedrus* in order to explain the true nature of love, thereby painting "after a fashion, a picture of the lover's experience in which perhaps we attained some degree of truth" (*Phaedrus,* 265b). On this basis, it is tempting to suggest that the ambivalence within Platonism with regard to representation emerges within the concept of imitation (*mimēsis*), in terms of which the order of representation is defined, threatening the very coherence of that concept. One might therefore seek to undermine the Platonic order of representation from within, by arguing that the very concept of imitation/representation is infected with the same kind of ambivalence or indeterminacy found in other terms such as *pharmakon.*

This is the strategy adopted by Derrida in his brief discussion of the notion of imitation in "Plato's Pharmacy" (Derrida 1981, pp. 137–139). He argues that the very deficiency for which Plato condemns the painters and poets is already present in the notion of imitation. Painters only represent the bed as seen from a certain angle, thereby internalizing in their images a certain difference between the appearance and the bed itself: "Does a couch

differ from itself according as you view it from the side or the front or in any other way? Or does it differ not at all in fact though it appears different, and so of other things?" (*Republic*, 598a). However, copies already internalize a difference between themselves and the object copied, necessarily so if they are to remain copies or imitations. Derrida is here relying upon the argument of the *Cratylus*, to the effect that a perfect imitation is no longer an imitation at all but another instance of the same thing.[3] In other words, imitation or copying depends upon the maintenance of a difference between the copy and the thing imitated: "If one eliminates the tiny difference that, in separating the imitator from the imitated, by that very fact refers to it, one would render the imitator absolutely different: the imitator would become another being no longer referring to the imitated" (Derrida 1981, p. 139). The concept of imitation appears to cover a continuum: at one end of the scale, imitation becomes the reproduction of the real itself, the repetition of the same; at the other end, where it copies only the appearance of the thing, it becomes mere simulation. Whereas the poets are rejected by Plato because they produce mere simulacra, Derrida suggests not without irony that writing, which Plato elsewhere describes as "a kind of image" of living speech, imitates speech perfectly because it no longer imitates at all. Imitation (*mimēsis*) is thus an inherently ambivalent concept, Derrida argues, structurally analogous to *pharmakon*:

> [I]mitation affirms and sharpens its essence in effacing itself. Its essence is its nonessence. And no dialectic can encompass this self-inadequation. A perfect imitation is no longer an imitation . . . Imitation does not correspond to its essence, is not what it is—imitation—unless it is in some way at fault or rather in default. It is bad by nature. Since (de)fault is inscribed within it, it has no nature; nothing is properly its own. Ambivalent, playing with itself by hollowing itself out, good and evil at once—undecidably, *mimēsis* is akin to the *pharmakon* (Derrida 1981, p. 139).

For Deleuze, by contrast, the difference between two kinds of imitation or copy is only apparently a distinction drawn within the realm of representation itself. In reality, it is a distinction between those figures that truly or internally resemble what they appear to resemble, and those which only superficially resemble that of which they are images. Between copies and simulacra there is no common ground, they are not like two species of the same genus but two completely different kinds of being. It is sometimes suggested that the distinction is one between more or less degenerate copies, copies more or less removed from the original, as suggested by the trilogy of Form-couch-imitation in *Republic* book 10. Deleuze insists that this obscures the real difference, which is one of kind. In the *Sophist*, Plato draws a distinc-

tion among images themselves between "likenesses" (copies) and "semblances" (simulacra) (*Sophist,* 236b–c). The former truly resemble the original, as in the example of life-size portraiture, which "consists in creating a copy that conforms to the proportions of the original in all three dimensions and giving moreover the proper color to every part" (*Sophist,*, 235e). The latter only appear to be likenesses to the unfavorably placed spectator. To a spectator with an adequate view of the illusory object it "would not even be like the original it professes to resemble" (*Sophist,* 236b). The class of such semblances would include, for example, sculptures of colossal size, which involve distortion of the true proportions so that the figure appears correct to the observer; or the image produced by a painter, which only appears to be a bed when seen from a certain angle in front of the frame.

The difference between likenesses (copies) and semblances (simulacra) is a matter of the basis of resemblance in each case: identity of dimensions, proportions, and tones in the one case; superficial or apparent resemblance on the basis of difference from the original in the other. Copies represent the Forms because they resemble them. They share an internal, spiritual resemblance with the ultimately real things themselves. In this sense, Deleuze argues, the Platonic model is defined by its self-identity, while the copy is defined by its exemplary similarity to the model. By contrast, the simulacrum "is built upon a disparity or upon a difference, it internalizes a dissimilarity" (Deleuze 1990, p. 258). Thus, in the case of the colossal sculptures, the appearance of correct proportion is only produced by the departure from parallel proportions, by the difference between the internal relations of the illusory copy and those of the figure it resembles. Or in the case of the painter, the appearance of a bed necessarily internalizes one perspective on the object, thus a difference between a bed and any such appearance of a bed. In sum, simulacra produce an effect of resemblance, but only on the basis of internal differences between themselves and the object resembled. With simulacra, the priority of identity and sameness over difference, which characterizes the world of representation, is reversed.

The exclusion of the poets is supported by the claim that they do not imitate the real nature of those things of which they speak, but only their appearances. For this claim to be sustained in turn, Plato needs some criterion for distinguishing between proper imitations or representations and simulacra. Similarly, in order to secure the crucial differences between the philosopher and the Sophist, or between speech and writing, there must be some criterion for distinguishing between the two terms in each case. On this basis, Deleuze argues, "the whole of Platonism . . . is dominated by the idea of drawing a distinction between 'the thing itself' and the simulacra" (Deleuze 1968, p. 91). This, rather than the opposition between Forms and

imitations or representations, is the crucial task of Platonism. Deleuze argues that the intention of Platonism is not just to distinguish the true claimant from the false, but to exclude the latter, thereby establishing the priority of the well-founded copies, and repressing the simulacra. "Platonism as a whole is erected on the basis of this wish to hunt down the phantasms or simulacra which are identified with the Sophist himself, that devil, that insinuator or simulator, that always disguised and displaced false pretender" (Deleuze 1968, p. 166). Frequently, this result is achieved by recourse to myths, such as the account of the soul as a winged chariot in the *Phaedrus*. Deleuze argues that such myths are precisely the means by which Plato's method of division is able to provide a foundation for the distinction it seeks to draw between true claimants and mere pretenders.

But why this desire to repress or exclude simulacra? It would be easy to interpret the hostility toward the poets in the *Republic* book 10, as little more than a self-serving exercise designed to establish and protect the cultural authority of those equipped with the antidote of knowledge. The use of the theory of Forms to draw a threefold distinction between truth, opinion, and mere illusion allows Plato to disqualify the poets from the ranks of those who know. However, is this anything more than a rhetorical exercise that implies, but does not prove, that philosophers are able to represent the true nature of things? Perhaps it is not, but the argument serves a deeper, moral purpose, as the remainder of the argument against the poets shows. Whereas poets have a tendency to corrupt the minds even of the good, and to encourage and nourish the lower parts of the soul, the Platonic philosopher embodies a different kind of world: a stable and hierarchical world without excessive emotion, where neither persons nor things appear as other than they are. This is a world that prefers the calm, ordered life of the soul governed by reason to the disorderly and passionate life of the soul moved by poetry. "What appears then, in its purest state, before the logic of representation could be deployed, is a moral vision of the world. It is in the first instance for these moral reasons that simulacra must be exorcised and difference thereby subordinated to the same and the similar" (Deleuze 1968, p. 166). It is this desire to exorcise simulacra that ensures the primacy of identity and the subjection of difference. In Plato's case, Deleuze argues, "a moral motivation in all its purity is avowed: the will to eliminate simulacra or phantasms has no motivation apart from the moral. What is condemned in the figure of simulacra is the state of free, oceanic differences, of nomadic distributions and crowned anarchy, along with all that malice which challenges both the notion of the model and that of the copy" (Deleuze 1968, p. 341).

Given this understanding of Platonism, Deleuze's manner of overturning it is, at one level, a straightforward reversal: "Overturning Platonism then

means denying the primacy of original over copy, of model over image; glorifying the reign of simulacra and reflections" (Deleuze 1968, p. 92). However, given that simulacra are defined in terms of their power to create an illusion of sameness, to assert the primacy of simulacra is also to deny the very existence of the world of representation. For to the extent that simulacra do imitate the appearances of things, they threaten to undermine the very possibility of distinguishing between true and false, or between things themselves and mere illusions. In line with his suggestion that Plato himself provides the means to overturn Platonism, Deleuze suggests that this is what occurs at the end of the *Sophist*: the Eleatic Stranger offers a definition of the Sophist such that he can no longer be distinguished from Socrates himself. "Socrates distinguishes himself from the Sophist, but the Sophist does not distinguish himself from Socrates, placing the legitimacy of such a distinction in question." (Deleuze 1968, p. 168) Twilight of the icons .

To assert the primacy of simulacra is to affirm a world in which difference rather than sameness is the primary relation. In such a world, there are no ultimate foundations or original identities; everything assumes the status of a simulacrum. Things are constituted by virtue of the differential relations that they enter into, both internally and in relation to other things. This is a world of bodies defined only by their differential intensities or powers to affect and be affected, a world of qualitative multiplicities defined only by their powers of transmutation, a world of rhizomatic assemblages and nomadic war-machines. In such a world, the mode of individuation of things would be more akin to that of an electrical signal, understood as that which flashes between differential potentials, or to that of haecceities, understood as complex configurations of intensities. In this sense, Deleuze's "overturning" of Platonism prefigures the means by which he develops a conception of a world in which the play of difference rather than the relations of identity and resemblance expresses the nature of things. Asserting the primacy of simulacra thus "makes the Same and the Similar, the model and the copy, fall under the power of the false (phantasm). It renders the order of participation, the fixity of distribution, the determination of hierarchy impossible. It establishes a world of nomadic distributions and crowned anarchies" (Deleuze 1990, p. 263).

Because this "overturning" is also a means of overcoming the order of representation, Deleuze's critical strategy may appear to resemble the double gesture of deconstruction. It appears to involve a similar succession of phases: first, the overturning of the hierarchy established between identity and difference, and the resultant affirmation of a conception of thought based upon difference, where sameness becomes a derivative or resultant effect; second, and as a result of this initial overturning, the very structure of

representation, which established the hierarchy in the first place, is dissolved: "The simulacrum is not a degraded copy. It harbors a positive power which denies the original and the copy, the model and the reproduction" (Deleuze 1990, p. 262). The excluded term thus returns to disorganize and subvert the very structure that ensured its exclusion. However, this apparent resemblance conceals a fundamental difference between Deleuze and the strategy of deconstruction. Whereas the Derridean response to the primacy of identity within Platonism is to seek to reduce its stable structures of opposition to shifting sands of ambivalence or undecidability, the Deleuzian response amounts to pursuing differences such as that between copies and simulacra to the point at which they become differences in kind. In this case, the difference in kind emerges with regard to the concept of difference itself.

Derrida does not pursue the interrogation of representation in Plato beyond showing that difference is internal to both the notion of simulacrum and that of likeness or copy itself. In particular, he does not ask whether it is in fact the same difference in each case. That it is the same is suggested by the fact that he refers to simulacra as copies of copies (Derrida 1981, p. 138).[4] In the case of the imitation of appearances, the difference between imitator and imitated, which is necessary for imitation to occur, is redoubled. It is of this difference in the second degree which makes the product a simulacrum rather than a copy. The simulacrum would then be a second-order copy, the difference between copy and original redoubled. This understanding of simulacra is explicitly rejected by Deleuze: "If we say of the simulacrum that it is a copy of a copy, an infinitely degraded icon, an infinitely loose resemblance, we then miss the essential, that is the difference in nature between simulacrum and copy" (Deleuze 1990, p. 257). In other words, Deleuze does ask whether it is the same difference in each case, and answers in the negative. His answer relies upon the claim that Plato himself introduces a qualitative distinction between two kinds of imitation: good imitations or copies and bad imitations or simulacra. The difference between them depends upon the nature of the similitude in each case; for the good copies, an exemplary similitude based upon a sameness of proportion, or "internal resemblance" to the thing itself; for the bad copies or simulacra, an apparent resemblance based upon difference in proportion, or difference in kind from the thing itself.

The difference between these two kinds of imitation, however, affects the nature of the difference between the imitation and the imitated in each case. In the case of the good copies, the difference between imitation/copy and original is a difference within resemblance, so to speak; a difference between things that are in the essential respects the same. Within the Platonic world of representation, difference is a secondary or derived relation, the similarity

of the copy to original (hence their sameness or generic identity) being primary. The difference between a simulacrum and what it simulates, by contrast, is of another order altogether. The simulacrum is not in essential respects the same as what it simulates, but different. Although it reproduces the appearance of the original, it does so as an effect. Here, the apparent identity of the two is the secondary, derived relation, while it is their difference that is primary. Deleuze takes this feature of simulacra as the basis for identifying another conception of difference, a "free difference" not subject to the structure of representation that governs the Platonic universe.

Aesthetic modernity provides Deleuze with one example of a world in which difference has free reign. He suggests that modernity is defined by the power of the simulacrum (Deleuze 1990, p. 265). Since simulacra in turn are defined by their power to produce an effect of resemblance by means of difference, the power of the simulacrum is equivalent to the power of repetition, in the sense in which Deleuze opposes repetition to representation. Just as difference takes on a new sense within the context of a world in which difference is the primary relation, so repetition in this context is no longer repetition understood as the recurrence of the same. Art has always involved repetition, but repetition in the sense that simulacra "repeat": "Art does not imitate, above all because it repeats . . . (an imitation is a copy, but art is simulation)" (Deleuze 1968, p. 375). The distinctive feature of modern art is that it has come to appreciate this aspect of its own nature. One of the exemplary moments at which it does so is in pop art.

With pop, art became conscious of itself as the production of simulacra. Warhol's "serial" works, with their reproductions of newspaper and publicity photographs in different tones and sizes, self-consciously draw attention to the manner in which they reproduce images of images. However, because these works repeat images, thereby simulating a pervasive feature of modern life, they risk missing the essential point in relation to the simulacral character of art. Even before those works, Warhol had exhibited a whole room full of simulacra at his Stable Gallery show in 1964: hundreds of plywood boxes silk-screened so as to closely resemble boxes of Brillo, Campbell's soup, Kellogg's Cornflakes, and other supermarket merchandise.[5] However, Warhol was not engaged in trompe l'oeil. It is important to distinguish the material objects exhibited by Warhol, which were simulacra in the strict Platonic sense, from the artwork proper, which, as Arthur Danto has convincingly shown, cannot be identified with its material support.[6] Warhol's installation makes the point that artistic invention (the production of difference within the art world) is possible using simulacra as the material support. His choice of banal objects to simulate only serves to emphasize the fact that it is not the resemblance to real objects that makes these artworks. More generally, this

work shows that art is a matter of simulation, but that simulation is a matter of displaced or disguised repetition. Simulation is the production of an effect rather than the reproduction of an appearance. The effect in question may be an effect of resemblance, or may be produced by means of an effect of resemblance, but these have no particular privilege in a world of simulacra.

To the extent that Warhol's work still plays with the idea of representation, it is not the most appropriate aesthetic correlate to Deleuze's nonrepresentational conception of thought. Abstract expressionism is perhaps a better example: the huge canvases of Pollock or Newman make no attempt to represent anything—unless perhaps in the paradoxical sense in which Kant speaks of representing the unrepresentable—but every attempt to transmit states of experience or to produce effects in the viewer. It is with this function of art that Deleuze seeks to align a nonrepresentational conception of thought. Concepts would no longer be considered images of things, but things in their own right, which might transmit intensities or provide means of interaction with other events and processes. The countertradition in the history of philosophy provides numerous instances of such a practice of thought. For example, Deleuze proposes a "double reading" of Spinoza's thought, such that it would be defined not just in terms of its extraordinary conceptual apparatus, but also in terms of the effects or vital impulses generated by the *Ethics*, and which make Spinoza "an encounter, a passion" (Deleuze 1988, p. 130). Kierkegaard and Nietzsche are also precursors in this project, insofar as they can be considered creators "of an incredible equivalent of theater within philosophy" (Deleuze 1968, p. 16). This is a theater that deploys concepts as signs capable of directly affecting the souls of readers. The practice of philosophy that is entailed by Deleuze's nonrepresentational conception of thought is therefore one that embraces precisely that power of poetry that rendered it most dangerous in Plato's eyes.

Notes

I am grateful to Moira Gatens and Paul Thom for their helpful comments on this paper.

1. On philosophy, see, for example, Jean-François Lyotard, "Presenting the Unpresentable: the Sublime," *Artforum* 20, no. 8 (1984). On painting, see Arthur Danto, "The End of Art," *The Philosophical Disenfranchisement of Art* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986) and "Approaching the End of Art," *The State of the Art* (New York: Prentiss Hall, 1987).
2. "My philosophy reversed Platonism: the farther from true beings, all the more purer more beautiful better it is. Life in illusion as goal" (Stanley Rosen, *The Ancients and the Moderns: Rethinking Modernity* [New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989], p. 210).
3. "Let us suppose the existence of two objects. One of them shall be Cratylus, and the other an image of Cratylus, and we will suppose, further, that some god makes not only a representation such as a painter would make of your outward form and color, but also creates an

inward organization like yours, having the same warmth and softness, and into this infuses motion, and soul, and mind, such as you have, and in a word copies all your qualities, and places them by you in another form. Would you say that this was Cratylus and the image of Cratylus, or that there were two Cratyluses? Cratylus: I should say that there were two Cratyluses" (*Cratylus*, 432b–c).

4. Christopher Norris restates this conception of simulacra: "It is on these grounds that Plato argues his case against poetry, along with other forms of aesthetic mimesis. For what the mind is taken in by when it credits such manifest illusions is in truth the mere copy of a copy . . . This bad mimesis thus operates at a double remove from reality" (Christopher Norris, *Derrida* [London: Fontana, 1987], p. 61).
5. Charles F. Stuckey, "Warhol in Context," in G. Garrels, ed., *The Work of Andy Warhol* (Seattle: Bay Press, 1989), p. 14.
6. Arthur Danto, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981). In arguing this point, Danto also makes use of Borges's story "Pierre Menard, Author of Don Quixote."

IV. The Question of Becoming-Woman

9

Toward a New Nomadism: Feminist Deleuzian Tracks; or, Metaphysics and Metabolism

Rosi Braidotti

Beispiele paranormaler Tonbandstimmen
Was sind paranormale Tonbandstimmen?
Es sind Stimmen unbekannte herkunft.
Es sind paranormaler Tonbandstimmen.
—Laurie Anderson, "Example #22," *Big Science*

Introduction

FEMINISTS' RELATIONSHIP to Deleuze's thought is ambivalent. In this paper I will try to spell out the points of intersection between the Deleuzian project to transform the images of thought and feminist theorists' figurations of changing female subjectivities, taking as my guiding light the notion of materialism. I will approach "feminist theory" not in a monolithic mode, but in Deleuze's sense of the problematic one.[1] It refers both to a political practice and a discursive field marked by a specific set of methodological and epistemological premises, which I would call the political practice of sexual difference. This practice is the claim to material and symbolic recognition on the part of politically motivated women: the "female feminist subject"[2] is a new epistemological and political entity to be defined and affirmed by women in the confrontation of their multiple differences, of class, race, sexual preference.[3]

Feminist thought is the movement that makes sexual difference operative, through the strategy of fighting for the social equality of the sexes. Feminism

is the question; the affirmation of sexual difference as positivity is the answer. Feminist thought aims to locate and situate the grounds for the new female feminist subjectivity. Feminism is about not restoring another memory, but rather installing a countermemory, that is to say, to paraphrase Foucault, a critical genealogy. Accordingly, I see feminist theory today as the activity aimed at articulating the questions of individual gendered identity with issues related to political subjectivity, connecting them with the problems of knowledge and epistemological legitimation.

I would like to pursue here the central notion of feminist poststructuralism, namely, the revaluation of metadiscursive language, which Jane Flax describes as the metamethodological mode[4] and Teresa de Lauretis, as critical theory.[5] At this particular moment of feminist theory,[6] it is urgent to think about the nature and the status both of thinking in general and of the specific activity known as theory. One of the central issues in feminist theories of subjectivity today is how to reconcile historicity, and therefore agency, with the political will to change, which entails the (unconscious) desire for the new, which, in turn, as Deleuze teaches us, implies the construction of new desiring subjects.

I want to emphasize that desire is what is at stake in the feminist project of elaborating alternative definitions of female subjectivity. The attempt to activate a discursive ethics based on sexual difference as a site of empowerment of women is both an epistemological and a political move. The question is how to determine what I call the points of exit from the phallogocentric mode, i.e., the angles through which women can gain access to a nonlogocentric mode of representation of the female feminist subject. The notion of desire in this configuration is not a prescriptive one: the desire to become and to speak as female feminist subjects does not entail the specific content of women's speech. What is being empowered is women's entitlement to speak, not the propositional content of their utterances. What I want to emphasize is women's desire to become, not a specific model for their becoming.

The feminism of sexual difference should be read as emphasizing the political importance of desire as opposed to the will, and as stressing the role of desire in the constitution of the subject. Not just libidinal desire, but rather ontological desire, the desire to be, the tendency of the subject to be, the predisposition of the subject toward being. Jean-François Lyotard, in his work on postmodernism,[7] supports this distinction and stresses its conceptual importance. The modernist project is understood, firstly, in terms of the complicity of reason, truth, and progress with domination and, secondly, as the marriage of the individual will with the concept of capital. In other words, argues Lyotard, modernism marks the triumph of the will to have, to

own, to possess, with the correlative objectification of the subject; postmodernism undoes this connection, emphasizing the libidinal, i.e., unconscious roots of subjectivity.

In other words, feminist theory, far from being a reactive kind of thought, expresses women's ontological desire, women's structural need to posit themselves as female subjects, that is to say, not as disembodied entities, but rather as corporeal and consequently sexed beings. Following Adrienne Rich[8] I believe that the redefinition of the female feminist subject starts with the revaluation of the bodily roots of subjectivity and the rejection of the traditional vision of the knowing subject as universal, neutral, and consequently gender-free. This "positional" or situated way of seeing the subject is based on the understanding that the most important location or situation is the rooting of the subject into the spatial frame of the body. The first and foremost of locations in reality is one's own embodiment. Rethinking the body as our primary situation is the starting point for the epistemological side of the "politics of location," which aims at grounding the discourse produced by female feminists in a network of local, i.e., very specific conditions (sex, race, class).

The body, or the embodiment of the subject, is a key term in the feminist struggle for the redefinition of subjectivity; it is to be understood as neither a biological nor a sociological category, but rather as a point of overlap between the physical, the symbolic,[9] and the material social conditions.[10]

In other words, the starting ground for feminist redefinitions of female subjectivity is paradoxical: it is a new form of materialism that inherits the corporeal materiality of the poststructuralists (especially Foucault and Deleuze) and thus places emphasis on the embodied and therefore sexually differentiated structure of the speaking subject. The variable of sexuality has priority in the bodily materialism thus advocated. In feminist theory one *speaks as* a woman, although the subject "woman" is not a monolithic essence defined once and for all, but rather the site of multiple, complex, and potentially contradictory sets of experience, defined by overlapping variables.

The female feminist subject thus defined is one of the terms in a process that should not and cannot be streamlined into a linear, teleological form of subjectivity: it is rather the site of intersection of subjective desire with willful social transformation. As de Lauretis puts it, feminist theory embodies its own specific difference, which is the simultaneous "double pull" of critical negativity (the deconstruction of phallo-logocentric knowledge) and the "affirmative positivity of its politics." Feminist thought is "a developing theory of the female-sexed or female-embodied social subject, whose constitution and whose modes of social and subjective existence include most obviously sex and gender, but also race, class and any other

significant sociocultural divisions and representations; a developing theory of the female-embodied social subject that is based on its specific, emergent, conflictual history."[11]

The feminist subject of knowledge as "eccentric"[12] is an intensive, multiple subject, functioning in a net of interconnections. I would add that it is rhizomatic, embodied, and, therefore, perfectly artificial; as an artifact it is machinic, complex, endowed with multiple capacities for interconnectedness in the impersonal mode. It is abstract and perfectly, operationally real.

The task for feminist theory is how to think of identity as a site of differences. Women occupy different subject-positions at different times; the task is also how to think through this multiplicity. In turn, this puts a great deal of emphasis on the question of how to rethink alterity and otherness. What is at stake here is how to restore intersubjectivity so as to allow differences to create a bond—a political contract among women—so as to affect lasting political changes. It is the affirmation of a new kind of bonding, a collectivity resting on the recognition of differences, in an inclusive, i.e., nonexclusionary manner.

This definition of the feminist subject as a multiple, complex process is also an attempt to rethink the unity of the subject, without reference to humanistic beliefs and without dualistic oppositions, linking instead body and mind in a new flux of self. The implications are far-reaching. The first level is the issue of what counts as human in a posthumanist world. What is at stake in the question is how to evolve forms of representation for the alternative female feminist subjectivity: what is the form of thought best suited to a feminist humanity, i.e., to a feminist collective subject?

The second issue concerns feminism specifically, and it involves the challenge to reassemble a vision of subjectivity after the certainties of gender dualism and sexual polarization have collapsed, privileging notions of process, complexity, and the multilayered technology of the self. In other words, feminism is about accountability; it is about grounding a new epistemology and a situated ethics; it is about foundations.

All other differences notwithstanding—and they are considerable—I want to argue that the various feminist figurations of a new female subjectivity gain by intersecting with Deleuze's project of transforming the very image we have of thinking, and with his new vision of subjectivity as an intensive, multiple, and discontinuous process of interrelations. The aim is what bell hooks rightly calls "radical postmodernism,"[13] namely, the bringing about of an antirelativistic, specific community of historically located, semiotic, material subjects, seeking connections and articulations in a manner that is neither ethnic- nor gender-centered. And the question is how to do so concretely, in the here and now of the feminist political practice.

Rhizomatic Thinking[14]

The imperative to think differently about our historical condition brings critical philosophers like Deleuze together with feminist intellectuals; they share a concern for the urgency, the necessity, to redefine, refigure, and reinvent theoretical practice, and philosophy with it, in a mode that is not molar/reactive/sedentary, but rather molecular/active/nomadic. The central concern that ties them together is the crisis of the philosophical logos and the need to invent new images of thought to put in place of the classical system of representation of theoretical thought. The challenge for feminism and philosophy alike is how to think about and adequately account for changes and changing conditions: not static formulated truths, but the living process of transformation.

In a previous study[15] on Deleuze, I ran a two-pronged argument: while stating my skepticism at the idea of a "crisis" of the philosophical subject that takes place at the same time as the historical emergence of women as a political and theoretical force, I argued for the relevance and usefulness of Deleuze's critique of the language of metaphysics to feminist theory. I stressed the point that Deleuze is relevant not only for what he has to say about women, the positivity of desire,[16] or sexuality and embodied, sexed identities. Of rather greater relevance is the redefinition of thinking, and especially of the theoretical process, as a nonreactive mode that accompanies Deleuze's new vision of subjectivity.

These two points are interrelated. The embodiment of the subject is for Deleuze a form of bodily materiality, but not of the natural, biological kind. He rather takes the body as the complex interplay of highly constructed social and symbolic forces. The body is not an essence, let alone a biological substance. It is a play of forces, a surface of intensities: pure simulacra without originals. Deleuze is therefore of great help to feminists because he deessentializes the body, sexuality, and sexed identities. The embodied subject is a term in a process of intersecting forces (affects), spatiotemporal variables that are characterized by their mobility, changeability, and transitory nature.

Accordingly, thinking is for Deleuze not the expression of in-depth interiority, or the enactment of transcendental models; it is a way of establishing connections among a multiplicity of impersonal forces.

I think that the most fruitful starting point for a feminist adaptation of Deleuze's thought is precisely his effort to image the activity of thinking differently.

In his determination to undo the Western style of theoretical thought, Deleuze moves beyond the dualistic oppositions that conjugate the monological discourse of phallo-logocentrism.

Quoting Scotus, Deleuze stresses the extent to which, in Western thought, being is univocal, it is One, the Same, and it asserts its sameness through a series of hierarchically ordained differences. In other words, the classical notion of the subject treats difference as a subset of the concept of identity as sameness, that is to say, adequation to a normative idea of a being that remains one and the same in all its varied qualifications and attributes.

This univocity has been captured by the moral discourse of Western metaphysics, which therefore rests on an inherently normative image of thought. Modernity is for Deleuze the moment when this image collapses, opening the way to other forms of representation.

In trying to define the conceptual landscape of modernity, Deleuze goes back to the classical roots of materialism. In so doing, he gives a genealogical line of thinking that, through Lucretius, the empiricists, Spinoza, and Nietzsche, emphasizes activity, joy, affirmation, and dynamic becoming. Deleuze opposes it to the "sedentary," guilt-ridden, life-denying moralizing tone of most Western philosophy: a dogmatic image of thought that Deleuze tracks all the way down to psychoanalysis.

Adopting Nietzsche's figurative style of speech, Deleuze dubs as "slave morality" Lacan's negative vision of desire, his metaphysical notion of the unconscious, and his emphasis on castration and repression.[17] Deleuze explodes the myth of interiority and in so doing undermines psychoanalysis in its very foundations—the notions of desire as negativity and the unconscious as a neometaphysical container of deep "inner" truths. He prefers to posit the unconscious in terms of displacement and production, and desire as affirmation. He stresses the importance of thinking "difference" not as the reactive pole of a binary opposition organized so as to affirm the power and primacy of the same. What Deleuze aims at is the affirmation of difference in terms of a multiplicity of possible differences; difference as the positivity of differences. In turn, this leads him to redefine the unconscious not as the deep container of yet-unknown sources, but rather as marking the structural noncoincidence of the subject with his/her consciousness. This noncoincidence is a radical disjunction that separates the thinking subject from the illusion of plenitude and self-transparence, the monolithic image of the self that rests on the phallo-logocentric system.

The rejection of the principle of adequation to and identification with a phallo-logocentric image of thought lies at the heart of the nomadic vision of subjectivity that Deleuze proposes as the new, postmetaphysical figuration of the subject. Deleuze argues and acts upon the idea that the activity of thinking cannot and must not be reduced to reactive (Deleuze says "sedentary") critique. Thinking can be critical if by critical we mean the active,

assertive process of inventing new images of thought—beyond the old icon where thinking and being joined hands together under the Sphinx-like smile of the sovereign phallus. Thinking for Deleuze is instead life lived at the highest possible power—thinking is about finding new images. Thinking is about change and transformation.

It is important to stress that the new subjectivity proposed by Deleuze is eminently political: his is the kind of poststructuralist thought that aims at reconnecting theory with daily practices of resistance. Foremost among Deleuze's concerns is the idea that the philosophy and the politics of difference must take into account the experiences of oppression, exclusion, and marginality. The emphasis on "becoming," against the static nature of being, is therefore also a way of reaching for the standpoint of the exploited and excluded.

The notion of rhizome is Deleuze's leading figuration: it points to a redefinition of the activity of philosophy as the quest for new images of thought, better suited to a nomadic, disjunctive self. One of these figurations is the notion of an idea as a line of intensity, marking a certain degree or variation in intensity. An idea is an active state of very high intensity, which opens up hitherto unsuspected possibilities of life and action. For Deleuze, ideas are events, lines that point human thought toward new horizons. An idea is that which carries the affirmative power of life to a higher degree. The force of this notion is that it finally puts a stop to the traditional search for ideas or lines that are "just" (in theory and politics alike). For if ideas are projectiles launched into time they can be neither "just" nor "false."

For Deleuze, thought is made of sense and value: it is the force, or level of intensity, that fixes the value of an idea, not its adequation to a preestablished normative model. Philosophy as critique of negative, reactive values is also the critique of the dogmatic image of thought; it expresses the force, the activity of the thinking process in terms of a typology of forces (Nietzsche) or an ethology of passions (Spinoza). In other words, Deleuze's rhizomatic style brings to the fore the affective foundations of the thinking process. It is as if beyond/behind the propositional content of an idea there lay another category—the affective force, level of intensity, desire, or affirmation—that conveys the idea and ultimately governs its truth-value. Thinking, in other words, is to a very large extent unconscious, in that it expresses the desire to know, and this desire is that which cannot be adequately expressed in language, simply because it is that which sustains language. Through this intensive theory of the thinking process, Deleuze points to the prephilosophical foundations of philosophy.

Deleuze's analysis of thinking (especially in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* and *Différence et répétition*) points in fact to a sort of structural aporia in philosophical discourse. Philosophy is both logophilic and logophobic, as Foucault has already astutely remarked.[18] Discourse—the production of ideas, knowledge, texts, and sciences—is something that philosophy relates to and rests upon, in order to codify it and systematize it; philosophy is therefore logophilic. Discourse being, however, a complex network of interrelated truth-effects, it far exceeds philosophy's power of codification. So philosophy has to "run after" all sorts of new discourses (women, postcolonial subjects, the audiovisual media and other new technologies, etc.) in order to incorporate them into its way of thinking; in this respect philosophy is logophobic.

The question then becomes: What can motivate today the choice of/for philosophy? How can one go on doing philosophy? Deleuze and Irigaray, in very different ways, point to what I see as the answer: They focus on the "desire for philosophy" as an epistemophilic drive, i.e., a will to know that is fundamentally affective. They build on the logophilic side of philosophy and remind us that philosophy used to signify the love of, the desire for, higher knowledge.

Thus, quoting Spinoza and Nietzsche, Deleuze banks on the affective substratum as a force capable of freeing philosophy from its hegemonic habits. Affectivity, in this scheme, is prediscursive: There is such a thing as a prephilosophical moment in the establishment of a philosophical stance, a moment in which one chooses for philosophy. This prephilosophical moment of desire not only is unthought, but remains nonthought at the very heart of philosophy, because it is that which sustains the very activity of philosophizing.

We are faced here with the problem of what is ontologically there but propositionally excluded by necessity in the philosophical utterance. There is the unspoken and the unspeakable desire for thought, the passion for thinking, the epistemophilic substratum on which philosophy later erects its discursive monuments.

Pursuing this insight in a Spinozist mode, Deleuze rejects the phantoms of negation, putting thought at the service of creation. From this perspective, we shall call philosophy all that expresses and enriches the positivity of the subject as an intensive, libidinal entity.

The Deleuzian approach calls for a new theoretical style that resists the elaboration of dogmatic ideas, untouchable sacred dogmas sanctified by a socially dominant notion of "scientificity" or of "political correctness." Deleuze's redefinition of ideas as nomadic forms of thought offers us a theoretical defense against all mental and theoretical codifications. Innovating

even on Foucault's radical notion of the text as a toolbox, Deleuze sees the philosophical text as the term in an intensive process of fundamentally extratextual practices. These practices have to do with displacing the subject through flows of intensity or forces.

Another extremely important implication of the new conceptual scheme proposed by Deleuze is the way in which it alters the terms of the conventional pact between the writer and his/her readers. If the philosophical text is the act of reading on the model of connection, the text is relinquished into the intensive elements that both sustain the connections and are generated by them. The writer/reader binary couple is split up accordingly, and a new impersonal mode is required as the appropriate way of doing philosophy.

This impersonal style is rather "postpersonal" in that it allows for a web of connections to be drawn, not only in terms of the author's "intentions" and the reader's "reception," but rather in a much wider, more complicated set of possible interconnections that blur established, that is to say hegemonic, distinctions of class, culture, race, sexual practice, and so on. The image of the rhizome pops up here as a figuration for the kind of political subjectivity Deleuze is promoting.

As interlocutors in a Deleuzian philosophical text, we are expected to be not just traditional intellectuals and academics, but also active, interested, and concerned participants in a project of research and experimentation for new ways of thinking about human subjectivity. As readers in an intensive mode, we are transformers of intellectual energy, processors of the "insights" Deleuze is giving us. These "in"-sights are not to be thought of as plunging us inward, toward a mythical "inner" reservoir of truth. On the contrary, they are better thought of as propelling us along the multiple directions of extratextual experiences. Thinking is living at a higher degree, at a faster pace, in a multidirectional manner.

This philosophical stance imposes not only the conventional academic requirements of passionless truth, but also the passionate engagement in the recognition of the theoretical and discursive implications of rethinking the subject. It is all a question of what kind of rhizomatic connections we can draw among ourselves, here and now, in the act of doing philosophy. This choice of a theoretical style that leaves ample room to the exploration of subjectivity calls for "passionate detachment" in theory-making.[19]

I want to argue that this redefinition of the image, the practice, and the textual structure of philosophy as an activity (not as an institution, on which Deleuze has many harsh things to say) rests on a change not only of propositional content, but also of speaking stance. It is my belief that the change thus advocated can be of use and inspiration to the aims of feminist theory.

The Paradoxes of Materialism

Feminism shares with other philosophies of modernity (one only has to think of the controversy between Habermas and Foucault on the nature, structure and historical span of "the modern") the dubious privilege of having an unresolved relationship toward both subjectivity and materialism.

The latter has suffered from a double cramp: that of being dialectically opposed to idealism and that of having been colonized by the tradition of historical materialism. As far as the feminist theoretical tradition is concerned, the central figure in this debate is Simone de Beauvoir.

Feminist readings of de Beauvoir in the nineties are framed by the debate that, since the seventies, has opposed the neomaterialists such as Christine Delphy[20] and Monique Wittig to the strategic essentialism of the sexual difference school, such as Hélène Cixous[21] and, especially, Luce Irigaray.

More than a debate, the confrontation between the two positions turned into a polemic, and it resulted in sterile polarizations and mutual excommunications. As the history of this period has been written[22] and the analyses are forthcoming,[23] I shall not insist on this point here. I just wish to stress both the roles that Deleuze's thought, concepts, and imagery were called upon to play in the framework of this polemic, and the innovative role his philosophy could still play in the feminist debate on an alternatively gendered subjectivity.

Previously, references to Deleuze have been rather rare in feminist theory;[24] more often than not, they have been voiced on a polemical note. For instance, in her defense of sexual difference against a hasty dismissal or deconstruction of the postmetaphysical subject, Irigaray[25] refers negatively to the Deleuzian diagram of the desiring machines. The notion of the body without organs is for Irigaray reminiscent of a condition of dispossession of the bodily self, a structurally splintered position that is traditionally associated with femininity. She points out that the emphasis on the machinic, the inorganic, as well as the notions of loss of self, dispersion, and fluidity are all too familiar to women: Is not the body without organs women's own historical condition?[26] Irigaray's critique of Deleuze is radical: She points out that the dispersal of sexuality into a generalized "becoming" results in undermining the feminist claims to a redefinition of the female subject.

Stressing that the root of the term materialism is *mater* and that the material is the site of origin of the subject, is the instance that expresses the specificity of the female subject, Irigaray reattaches materialism to its maternal roots and thus starts also the long climb toward the peaks of an alternative female symbolic.[27] Central to her projects is the quest for an alternative female genealogy,[28] to be accomplished by immersion into the maternal

imaginary. For Irigaray this takes the form of the exploration of images that represent the female experience of proximity to the mother's body,[29] and the sense of a female humanity and of a female divinity.[30]

Building on this insight, I have argued that one cannot deconstruct a subjectivity one has never been fully granted control over; one cannot diffuse a sexuality that has historically been defined as dark and mysterious. In order to announce the death of the subject, one must first have gained the right to speak as one. I have concluded that Deleuze gets caught in the contradiction of postulating a general "becoming-woman" that fails to take into account the historical and epistemological specificity of the female feminist standpoint. A theory of difference that fails to take into account sexual difference leaves me, as a feminist critic, in a state of skeptical perplexity.

Or, to put it differently, Deleuze's critique of dualism acts as if sexual differentiation or gender dichotomies did not have as the most immediate and pernicious consequence the positioning of the two sexes in an asymmetrical relationship to each other.

In my reading, Irigaray's version of materialism binds together both the notions of embodiment and of sexual difference, and the link between the two is made by the political will and determination to find a better, a more adequate, representation of female subjectivity. In this line of thought, great care is taken to disengage the question of the embodied subject from the hold of naturalistic assumptions and to propose instead a vision of materialism as embodied materiality. By emphasizing the embodied structure of female subjectivity, I mean to politicize the issue, and by setting the questions of political subjectivity in the framework of a critique of phallo-logocentrism, I aim at the empowerment of women. Embodiment provides a common ground on which to postulate the political project of feminism.

Clearly, for feminist corporeal materialism, the body is not a fixed essence, a natural given. In a postpsychoanalytic mode—which I choose to use with Nietzsche and, more specifically, with Deleuze—the "body" as theoretical *topos* is an attempt to overcome the classical mind-body dualism of Cartesian origins, in order to think anew about the structure of the thinking subject. The body is then an interface, a threshold, a field of intersecting material and symbolic forces. The body is a surface where multiple codes (race, sex, class, age, etc.) are inscribed; it is a linguistic construction that capitalizes on energies of a heterogeneous, discontinuous, and unconscious nature. The body, which, for de Beauvoir, was one's primary "situation" in reality, is now seen as a situated self, as an embodied positioning of the self.

If the reader finds this difficult to visualize, s/he can just think of the body art of Laurie Anderson—the contemporary performing artist who cables herself to a series of wonder-making computers and wears acoustic masks in

order to subtract herself from the gaze of the audience that would fix her to a feminized, i.e., objectified, position.[31] Think also of Barbara Kruger,[32] who takes photographs all the better to show the unrepresentable aspects of female subjectivity and sexuality, and of many other women artists.[33] A great number of contemporary feminist performers offer perfect examples of counterrepresentations or affirmations of denaturalized, deessentialized bodies, which they turn into fields of alternative signification.

To sum up this theory of sexual difference, I would emphasize these features: Firstly, the belief that "woman" is that which is excluded in the masculine system of representation, because she is in excess of it and as such she is unrepresentable. "Woman" thus marks the possibility of an-other system of representation.

Secondly, this belief turned into the textual strategy of *mimesis*. This means that the quest for a point of exit from phallo-logocentric definitions of "woman" requires a strategy of working through the images and representations that the (masculine) knowing subject has created of woman as other. Irigaray's mimesis is a way of retracing backward the multilayered levels of signification, or representations, of women. In other words, "woman" is the anchoring point from which, through strategically motivated repetitions, new definitions and representations can emerge. It is an active process of becoming.[34]

Thirdly, sexual difference requiring the opening out toward issues of transcendence and universality. It is precisely on this point that sexual difference has often been criticized: for its globalizing tendency that cancels out all other differences by submitting them to its overarching importance. This is a very powerful objection, which I regret not to be able to pursue here.[35]

The assertion of sexual difference challenges the centuries-old identifications of the thinking subject with the universal and of both of them with the masculine. It posits as radically other a female, sexed, thinking subject, who stands in an asymmetrical relationship to the masculine. The apparent repetition or reassertion of feminine positions is a discursive strategy that engenders difference. For if there is no symmetry between the sexes, women must speak their own embodied version of the feminine; they must think it, write it, and represent it in their own terms.

It is precisely on the basis of the asymmetry between the sexes that Irigaray, while remaining very close conceptually to Deleuze's structures of thought, and especially his emphasis on the positive role of the unconscious in the production of theoretical discourse, is nonetheless politically opposed to his proposal of "becoming" as a way of overcoming the sexual bipolarization. Where the two differ, in other words, is in the political priority that

must be granted to the elaboration of adequate systems of representation for an alternative female subject.

In my view, the paradox of Irigaray's position is that, while it is based on a notion of materiality that I find very deessentialized, it seems to move ineluctably toward issues of transcendence and incorporeal materiality. This tendency is explicit in her work on the "divine," where she argues that the female being can carry her femaleness all the way into the recognition of a common link among all women. In other words, the portion of being that a woman is, is sexed female; it is sensible matter, endowed with sex-specific forms of transcendence. By advocating a feminine form of transcendence through "radical immanence,"[36] Irigaray postulates a definition of the body not only as material, but also as the threshold to a generalist notion of female being, a new feminist humanity.

This materialism is not one, but rather involves the assertion of the importance of a multiplicity that can make sense, i.e., grant symbolic recognition to women's way of being. Like the first stone of a new civilization, Irigaray's "divine" aims at materializing for feminist practice the *a priori* conditions for achieving changes in our symbolic as well as material structures. No bodily materialism without transcendence; no female embodied subject without incorporeality. I think that the position of strategic essentialism invites the reader to dwell upon this paradox and not to seek hasty ways out of this vicious ontological circle.

Another, and quite opposite, example of feminist readings of Deleuze is the way in which Judith Butler[37] adapts Monique Wittig's[38] appeals to some of Deleuze's ideas, in her vehement critique of Irigaray's notion of "difference."[39] In her attack on the concept of difference in general and of sexual difference in particular as being biologically deterministic, Wittig calls upon Deleuze to defend her politicoepistemological hypothesis of a multiple, nonphallic sexuality. Speaking on behalf of the gay and lesbian movement, Wittig starts from the assumption that "the official discourse on sexuality is today only the discourse of psychoanalysis that builds on the *a priori* and idealist concept of sexual difference, a concept that historically participates in the general discourse of domination." She consequently argues that "for us there are, it seems, not one or two sexes but many [cf. Guattari and Deleuze], as many sexes as there are individuals. For though they have enclosed us in a sexual ghetto, we do not accord to sexuality the same importance as heterosexuals."[40]

From this perspective, Deleuze and Guattari's notion of "polysexuality" is taken as an apology not only for gay and lesbian politics, but also for the seemingly antipsychoanalytic hypothesis of "as many sexes as there are individuals."

It is important at this point to make a distinction between Butler's and Wittig's work: whereas the former is in fact firmly inscribed in the philosophical tradition, the latter is not a theoretician, but primarily a creative writer. Wittig's remarks on theory are not only scattered, but consciously polemical in their aim and style, so that one cannot speak of Wittig's system of thought at all. This does leave open for me a serious question about how Butler herself reconciles her poststructuralist outlook with her manifest sympathy for Wittig's neomaterialist approach. But I shall not pursue this point here.

It is also worth remembering that the aim of Wittig's provocative strategy is to empower women to act as authoritative speaking subjects. Here too, she opposes violently the practitioners of sexual difference—thus, contrary to Irigaray, who sees the subject-position as structurally masculine, Wittig has faith in the infinite potentials of language, in its plasticity. She therefore encourages women to use language to express their own meanings, without falling into the deconstructive complexities of Irigaray's *écriture feminine* or quests for an alternative symbolic. Contrary to Irigaray who sees the speaking position of the subject as structurally masculine (and then develops strategies for dealing with that), Wittig sees language as recyclable, malleable. She therefore encourages women to enter the subject-position, accepting therefore a position of philosophical presence: woman as the new subject of a renewed plenitude. Wittig is vehemently antipoststructuralist in rejecting the position of the split or open subject.

Wittig innovates on the classic sex/gender distinction[41] and rejects the emphasis that both Cixous and Irigaray place on what they carefully define as "female homosexual libidinal economy" and the specificity of feminine writing that goes with it. Wittig emphasizes the need to free female sexuality from its subjugation to the signifier "woman." In her view "woman" as the privileged other of the patriarchal imaginary is an idealized construction of the same order as the Phallus: it is a man-made notion, ideologically contaminated and untrustworthy. Wittig radicalizes de Beauvoir's point about the constructed nature of femininity. She proposes that we dismiss the signifier "woman" as epistemologically and politically inadequate and suggests that we replace it with the category of "lesbian." The lesbian is not a woman because a lesbian has subtracted herself from identities based on the phallus.

Butler emphasizes the fact that for Wittig "gender" is not a substantive reality, but rather an activity; she then proceeds to reinterpret Wittig's notion of "gender" as a performative utterance that constructs categories such as "sex," "women," "men," "nature" for the specifically political purpose of reproducing compulsory heterosexuality. Gender is the process by which women are marked off as "the female sex," men are conflated with the

universal, and both of them are subjugated to the institution (in Foucault's sense)[42] of compulsory heterosexuality. Insofar as the lesbian refuses this process, Wittig argues that she is subversive because she problematizes the whole scheme of sexuality. The strategy supported by Wittig is, according to Butler, to allow other kinds of gendered identities to proliferate: the lesbian is the first step toward exploding the monolithic structures of gender. Again, Butler's interpretation goes much further than Wittig's own texts.

Thus, in what I see as her most Deleuzian text, though it singularly lacks all reference to Deleuze's work, Wittig reiterates her rejection of anything specifically feminine, let alone *une écriture feminine.* She argues: "[W]oman cannot be associated with writing"; because "'woman' is an imaginary formation and not a concrete reality, she is the enemy's old brand-mark, which now some relish as a long-lost and hard-won attire."[43]

Dismissing as biologically deterministic and "naturalistic" all reference to feminine specificity, Wittig confronts the problem of the masculine appropriation of the universal, and the subsequent confinement of the feminine to the particular. The question is: How then can a feminist woman express notions of a general human value?

In attempting to answer this question, Wittig proposes the category of minority subject (*sujet minoritaire*); in order to gain access to the *minoritaire* position, one has to be a member of a minority, but that alone does not suffice. "A text written by a minority writer is operational only if it manages to pass off as universal the minority viewpoint."[44]

For instance, a writer like Djuna Barnes is literally and politically subversive in that, starting from her lesbian existence, she formulates views of general value for all, nonlesbians included. This kind of consciousness is what Wittig wants to defend, against the emphasis on the feminine proposed by the sexual difference theorists.

I find this argument extremely similar to Deleuze's defense of the *devenir minoritaire,* but also paradoxically opposed to his vision of the subject as a libidinal entity. Wittig, in the passage quoted at the beginning, supports the notion of polysexuality; here she stands for a notion of becoming as the deterritorialization of the subject. In both cases she, however, does not expand on her Deleuzian leanings and pushes her conclusions to a very different direction from Deleuze's epistemological nomadism. Butler's reading of Wittig therefore achieves the double aim of passing Wittig off for the philosopher she is not and introducing Deleuze in the feminist debate in a highly polemical mode.

Butler comments very critically on Wittig, whom she sees as using the language of poststructuralist theory, especially that of Deleuze, while still believing in the humanist philosophy of plenitude. For Butler, Wittig

continues to support the position that valorizes the speaking subject as autonomous and universal, whereas Deleuze is committed to displacing the speaking subject from the center of discursive power. For Butler, it is as if Wittig were quite happy to simply replace the old phallic subject and his annexed feminine with the lesbian as the next authoritative, sovereign subject.

Whether her account of Wittig is satisfactory or not, Butler's analysis has the merit of pointing out that Deleuze's post-Lacanian reading of the subject as a libidinal entity, in constant displacement in language, situates desire not only as a positive force, but also as the point of vanishing of the willful, conscious self. This differs radically from any prepsychoanalytic definition of sexuality as self-determination by the individual subject, and of desire as the ideological transcription and internalization of social codes.

In other words, Butler reminds us of the necessity not to neglect the central lesson of psychoanalysis: that subjects do *not* coincide with their consciousness—that the unconscious means the impossibility of coherence for the subject. Feminists tend to mistake volition for desire, or rather to work with radically opposed definitions of desire: on the one hand, desire as the death of the sovereign subject, on the other, desire as the willful affirmation of a politically conscious one.[45]

I think that, although she occasionally quotes Deleuze's defense of polysexuality and multiple sexualities, Wittig's line of argumentation is caught in a contradiction vis-à-vis the basic assumptions of the poststructuralist framework within which Deleuze works. What makes it contradictory in my eyes is the relationship to language and the unconscious. By being so simplistic about the *locus* of social power and so relentlessly dismissive of "women" as "female sex," Wittig ends up with a paradoxically *idealist* notion of both "women," or the female sex, and of sexed identities. The latter, for Wittig, is the direct result of social imprints that are reduced to mental constructs: Identity is an idea sustained for the purpose of social control.

I want to argue that this position highlights one of the paradoxes of feminist theory in the nineties: Namely, that it is grounded on the very concepts that it must deconstruct and deessentialize in all its aspects: gender and sexual difference.

I have outlined so far two different strategies of deconstruction of traditional femininity: On the one hand, we have the strategy of extreme sexualization through embodied female subjectivity: Irigaray's "transcendence via radical immanence." On the other hand we have the rejection of femininity in favor of a position "beyond gender." To these different positions there correspond different understandings of "materialism." For Irigaray it has to do with *mater*/matter and the sexed body, hence her emphasis on verticality

and transcendence. For Wittig it is a paradoxically idealist position on language and volitional changes.

I have accordingly highlighted two paradoxes: one in the quest for a new gendered universal (strategic essentialism)[46] and one in the move beyond gender, toward a third sex position (lesbian neomaterialism). These parallel paradoxes also defend and build upon quite different representations of female sexuality and more particularly of female homosexuality.[47] This is very different from the early eighties when the great feminist divide was between homo- and heterosexual theoretical frameworks. Now the debate seems to have shifted into the homosexual sphere: as Antoinette Fouque astutely observed in her comparative readings of the strategic essentialists and the lesbian materialists, on the one hand, there is female homosexuality as the foundational theory for a new vision of subjectivity (sexual difference) and, on the other, lesbianism as a radical antifoundationalism that results in the ultimate dismissal of the feminine (lesbian neomaterialism). In her witty commentary on Wittig, Fouque sums it up as follows: "Wittig is a misogyne," she says. "[S]he's phallic about women."[48] For Fouque, Wittig fails to see the implicit relationship that exists between women and the female homosexual libidinal economy. Wittig thinks that the choice of object is all that matters, whereas what counts is the structure of desire, and when it comes to that, argue Fouque, Cixous, and Irigaray, every woman is homosexual because her first and main object of desire is another woman—her mother.

I think these paradoxes in turn illuminate the ways in which each feminist position respectively appeals to Deleuze's thought: that Irigaray should criticize Deleuze's notion of multiplicity and the dispersion of sexed identities as interfering with the affirmation of a new female subjectivity while Wittig, on the contrary, should welcome it as a way out of the sexual polarizations of the gender system seems to make perfect sense. The point for me, however, is that this "adaptation" of Deleuze's work, in what I can only describe as a polemical mode, is not the most useful way of approaching his thought.

In the next section, I would like to outline another, and, for me, more creative, line of feminist intersection with the Deleuzian conceptual universe. I will argue that this new approach can also open up new perspectives for feminist theory and its many paradoxes.

Speaking Nomadically; or, Feminist Figurations

Irigaray and other strategic essentialists propose the figuration of the "woman divine" as marking forms of representation of a specific form of transcen-

dence, a female humanity with its own forms of discursive presence. Wittig, on the other hand, suggests that we eliminate "woman" as a category of thought altogether and instead base the feminist project upon a figuration of the "lesbian" as a third sex. In juxtaposition to both, Haraway recommends new figurations of the feminist subject in the impersonal mode, tuned in to the high-technology reality of the contemporary world.

In trying to work out a new style of thought opposed to phallo-logocentrism, most feminist theorists deliberately break with the academic convention of Aristotelian linearity. The set of interconnected relationships between women and scientific theoretical discourse is such that the discussion cannot have a beginning, a middle, and an end.

This unconventional style of thinking falls into what Haraway defines[49] as the new quest for feminist figurations, that is to say, ways of representing feminist forms of knowledge that are not caught in a mimetic relationship to dominant scientific discourse. The issue about figuration is no mere formal concern, rather it marks the shift in speaking stance that I outlined earlier, and not only in terms of its propositional content.[50] The rhizomatic construction implies a new connection between the lived experience and the activity of the critical intelligence.

The rhizomatic mode is crucial to feminism: It rests on a new interconnection between the lived experience (life) and the activity of the critical, theoretical mind, with its baggage of phallo-logocentric premises. In its post-de Beauvoir phase, feminist theory aimed at bridging the dualism that is one of the marks of the phallo-logocentric mode. Feminist theory has thus asserted the extreme proximity of the thinking process to existential reality, not in a vitalistic mode, but rather as an attempt to overcome centuries-old dichotomies.[51]

Feminism, insofar as it has drawn up the parameters for an-other speaking stance, has also redefined the relation between thought and life, splitting open the conventions of rational discourse. These have been formalized in the Pythagorean table of oppositions which Lloyd analyzes in her work in philosophy:[52] body/mind, passive/active, night/day, feminine/masculine, theory/practice, nature/culture, inside/outside, etc. What is at stake in the feminist project is the redefinition of what thinking, thought, and especially theory actually mean.

The centrality of the relationship thought/life in feminism brings it close to Deleuze's attack on the binary logic of the logocentric system. Deleuze proposes to overcome the structure of thought on which the dichotomous oppositions are based, rather than simply reverse the terms of the opposition. Applied to feminism, this gives a critique of the emancipatory model of women's liberation, whose aim is—perhaps too hastily—summed up as

wanting to integrate women as first-class citizens in the system of power that traditionally confined them to a secondary position. This model came under criticism by Irigaray[53] for its implicit conservatism: a mere reversal of the subordinate position leaving the general structure unchanged might have benefited some women in the short range, but in the long run it would not only have excluded large proportions of women, especially "minority women," but it would also have confirmed the basic structure of the present system. The quest for an active affirmation of differences has since emerged as the new political and theoretical focus of feminist theory and practice.

The task of giving a name, a shape, and a structure to the new feminist consciousness and, through that, to female subjectivity is precisely what the project of feminist figurations is all about. What is at stake is the quest for adequate representations of that which, by definition, cannot be expressed within the parameters of the phallo-logocentric discourse of which even the most radical of feminists is a part-time member. The idea of figurations therefore provides an answer not only to political, but also to both epistemological and aesthetic questions: How does one invent new structures of thought? Where does conceptual change start from? What are the conditions that can bring it about? Is the model of scientific rationality a suitable frame of reference in which to express the feminist subjectivity? Is the model of artistic creativity any better? Will mythos or logos prove to be a better ally in the big leap across the postmodern void?

I think that the term "transdisciplinary" is a rather adequate one in describing the new rhizomatic mode in feminism. It means going in between different discursive fields, passing through diverse spheres of intellectual discourse. The feminist theoretician today can only be "in transit," moving on, passing through, creating connections where things were previously disconnected or seemed unrelated, where there seemed to be "nothing to see." In transit, moving, displacing—this is the grain of hysteria without which there is no theorization at all.[54] In a feminist context, "transdisciplinary" also implies the effort to move on to the invention of new ways of relating, of building footbridges between notions. The epistemic nomadism I am advocating can only work, in fact, if it is properly situated, securely anchored in the "in-between" zones.

The significance of Haraway in this debate on female subjectivity is her radical redefinition of materialism.

Firmly implanted in the tradition of materialist praxis, but determined to adapt it to the postmodern condition, Haraway reminds us that rethinking the subject amounts to rethinking his/her bodily roots. The body stands for the radical materiality of the subject. I see Haraway as pursuing in a feminist way the Foucauldian and Deleuzian line about bodily materiality, though she

would rather speak the language of science and technology than that of postmetaphysical philosophy. She is an utterly nonnostalgic posthuman thinker: Her conceptual universe is the high-technology world of "informatics" and telecommunications.

In this respect, she is conceptually part of the same epistemological tradition as Bachelard and Canguilhem, and consequently Foucault and Deleuze, for whom the scientific ratio is not necessarily hostile to humanistic approaches and values. Moreover, in this line of thinking, the practice of science is not seen as narrowly rationalistic, but rather allows for a broadened definition of the term, to include the play of the unconscious, dreams, and the imagination in the production of scientific discourse.

Following Foucault,[55] Haraway draws our attention to the construction and manipulation of docile, knowable bodies in our present social system. She invites us to think of what new kinds of bodies are being constructed right now, i.e., what kind of gender system is being constructed under our very noses.

Haraway also challenges the androcentrism of the poststructuralists' corporeal materialism. Thus, while sharing many of Foucault's premises about the modern regime of truth as "bio-power," Haraway also challenges his redefinition of power. Supporting Jameson's idea that a postmodernist politics is made necessary by the historical collapse of the traditional Left, and that it represents the Left's chance to reinvent itself from within, Haraway notes that contemporary power no longer works by normalized heterogeneity, but rather by networking, communication redesigns, and multiple interconnections. She concludes that Foucault "names a form of power at its moment of implosion, (and that) the discourse of bio-politics gives way to technobabble."[56]

Two points are noteworthy here: Firstly, Haraway analyzes the contemporary scientific revolution in more radical terms than Foucault does, mostly because she bases it on first-hand knowledge about today's technology. Haraway's training in biology and sociology of science are very useful here. By comparison with her approach, Foucault's analysis of the disciplining of bodies appears already out-of-date, apart from being, of course, intrinsically androcentric.

Secondly, Haraway raises a point that Deleuze also noted in his analysis of Foucault, namely, that the Foucauldian diagrams of power describe what we have already ceased to be; like all cartography, they act *a posteriori,* and therefore fail to account for the situation here and now. In this respect, Haraway opposes to Foucault's bio-power a deconstructive genealogy of the embodied subjectivities of women. Whereas Foucault's analysis rests on a

nineteenth-century view of the production system, Haraway inscribes her analysis of the condition of women into an up-to-date analysis of the post-industrial system of production. Arguing that white capitalist patriarchy has turned into the "informatics of domination" (p. 162), Haraway argues that women have been cannibalized by the new technologies; they have disappeared from the field of visible social agents. The postindustrial system makes oppositional mass politics utterly redundant; a new politics must be invented, on the basis of a more adequate understanding of how the contemporary subject functions.

More than ever, therefore, the question then becomes: What counts as human in this posthuman world? How do we rethink the unity of the human subject, without reference to humanistic beliefs, without dualistic oppositions, linking instead body and mind in a new flux of self? What is the view of the self that is operational in the world of the "informatics of domination"?

Drawing her conclusions from the notion of identity as a site of differences, Haraway reminds us that feminists in the nineties must replace naive belief in global sisterhood or more strategic alliances based on common interests, with a new kind of politics, based on temporary and mobile coalitions and therefore on affinity. Arguing that "innocence and the corollary insistence on victimhood as the only ground for insight has done enough damage," Haraway calls for a kind of feminist politics that could embrace "partial, contradictory, permanently unclosed constructions of personal and collective selves" (p. 157).

Hence the importance of figurations in providing new images of thought, new forms of representation of our experience. The challenge is how to speak cogently of the technoscientific world, while maintaining a certain level of mythical wonder and admiration about it. Instead of giving in to negative assessment about the technological universe, Haraway argues that we simply need new forms of literacy in order to decode today's world. For Haraway it means the world is a semiotic and symbolic agent; not passive, not dualistically opposed to the mind, but a partner in a dialogic approach to understanding.

Figurations also entail a discursive ethics, that one cannot know properly, or even begin to understand, that toward which one has no affinity. Critical intelligence for Haraway is a form of sympathy. One should never criticize that which one is not complicitous with: Criticism must be conjugated in a nonreactive mode, a creative gesture, so as to avoid the Oedipal plot of phallo-logocentric theory.

It is in this framework that Haraway proposes a new figuration for femi-

nist subjectivity: the cyborg. As a hybrid, or body-machine, the cyborg is a connection-making entity; it is a figure of interrelationality, receptivity, and global communication that deliberately blurs categorical distinctions (human/machine, nature/culture, male/female, Oedipal/non-Oedipal). It is a way of thinking specificity without falling into relativism. The cyborg is Haraway's representation of a generic feminist humanity; it is her answer to the question of how feminists reconcile the radical historical specificity of women with the insistence on constructing new values that can benefit humanity as a whole by redefining it radically.

Moreover, the body in the cyborg model is neither physical nor mechanical—nor is it only textual. It is rather a counterparadigm for the interaction between the inner and the external reality. It is a modern reading not only of the body, not only of machines, but rather of what goes on between them. As a new powerful replacement of the mind/body debate, the cyborg is a postmetaphysical construct.

In my reading, the figuration of the cyborg reminds us that metaphysics is not an abstract construction—it is a political ontology. The classical dualism body/soul is not simply a gesture of separation and of hierarchical coding; it is also a theory about their interaction, about how they hang together. It is a proposition, however unsatisfactory, about how we should go about rethinking the unity of the human being. In this respect, Haraway is right in stating that "the cyborg is our ontology; it gives us our politics" (p. 150). What is at stake here is the definition and the political viability of a technological form of materialism as a paradigm for a rhizomatic subjectivity.

An important moment in Haraway's cybernetic imaginary is the notion of "situated knowledges." Answering implicitly the standard humanistic accusation that emphasis on multiplicity necessarily leads to relativism, Haraway argues for a multifaceted foundational theory and an antirelativistic acceptance of differences in a historically located semiotic and material subjectivity which seeks connections and articulations in a non-gender-centered and nonethnocentric perspective.

In her rejection of classical dualism, Haraway emphasizes a network of differences, especially the differences organic/inorganic and human/machine, in opposition to the primacy granted to the binary opposition of masculine to feminine in sexual difference theories. She proposes a sort of deessentialized, embodied genealogy as the strategy to undo the dualism. She calls for political accounts of constructed embodiments, like theories of gendered racial subjectivities, which have to be situated in certain social realities so as to support claims on action, knowledge, and belief.

I see the cyborg, as a feminist figuration, to be an illuminating example of the intersection between feminist theory and Deleuzian lines of thought, in

their common attempt to come to terms with the posthumanist world. Feminist figurations refer to the many, heterogeneous images feminists use to define the project of becoming-subject of women, a view of feminist subjectivity as multiplicity and process, as well as the kind of texts feminists produce. For Wittig who chooses the figuration of the "lesbian," echoed by Butler with her "parodic politics of the masquerade," many others, quoting Nancy Miller[57] prefer to become "women," i.e., the female feminist subjects of another story. If, according to Haraway, feminists can be seen as "cyborgs"[58] they can also be imaged as de Lauretis's "eccentric" subjects, or as "fellow-commuters" in an in-transit state,[59] or as "inappropriated others,"[60] or as "postcolonial"[61] subjects .

Figurations are not pretty metaphors: They are politically informed maps, which play a crucial role at this point in the cartography of feminist corporeal materialism in that they aim at redesigning female subjectivity. They are relational images; they are rhizomes. In this respect, the more figurations are disclosed in this phase of feminist practice, the better.

I think that these new figurations can be taken as an attempt to come to terms with what I have chosen to call the new nomadism of our historical condition. I have argued that the task of redefining female subjectivity requires as its preliminary method the working through of the stock of cumulated images, concepts, and representations of women and of female identity, such as they have been codified by the culture we are in. If "essence" means this stock of culturally coded definitions, requirements, and expectations about women and female identity—this repertoire of regulatory fictions that are tattooed on our skins, then it would be false to deny that such an essence not only exists, but also is powerfully operational. History is women's destiny. In other words, because of this history and because of the way in which phallo-logocentric language structures our speaking positions as subjects, before feminists relinquish the signifier "woman," we need to repossess it, to revisit its multifaceted complexities, because these complexities define the one identity we share—female feminists. This is the starting point, however limited, for the political project of the feminism of difference.

In other words, I am very resistant to a position of willful denial of something feminists know perfectly well: that identity is not just volition, that the unconscious structures one's sense of identity through a series of vital (even when they are lethal, they are vital) identifications, which affect one's situation in reality. Feminists must know better than to confuse, to merrily mix up, willful choice—political volition—with unconscious desire. Identity is not the same thing as subjectivity: One is also and primarily the subject of one's own unconscious.

To put it more plainly: Following Nietzsche, Deleuze, and Irigaray, I do not believe that changes and transformations—such as the new symbolic system of women—can be created by sheer volition. The way to transform psychic reality is not by willful self-naming: at best that is an extreme form of narcissism; at worst it is the melancholic face of solipsism. Rather, transformation can only be achieved through deessentialized embodiment or strategically reessentialized embodiment—by *working through* the multilayered structures of one's embodied self.

Like the gradual peeling off of old skins, earned by carefully working Freud's totemic meal, it is the metabolic consumption of the old that can engender the new. Difference is not the effect of willpower, but the result of many, of endless, repetitions. Until we have worked through the multiple layers of signification of "woman"—phallic as it may be—I am not willing to relinquish the signifier.

That is why I want to continue working through the very term—women as the female feminist subjects of sexual difference—that it needs to be deconstructed follows from an emphasis on the politics of desire. I think, with Deleuze, that there cannot be social change without the construction of new kinds of desiring subjects as molecular, nomadic, and multiple. I take it as the task of the feminist as critical intellectual here and now to resist the recoding of the subject in/as yet another sovereign, self-representational language. One must start by leaving open spaces of experimentation, of search, of transition. I think that politics begins with our desires, and our desires are that which evade us, in the very act of propelling us forth, leaving as the only indicator the traces of where we have already been, that is to say, of what we have already ceased to be. The cartography of the female embodied subject, just like Foucault's diagrams of power, is always already the trace of what no longer is the case. As such it needs to be started all over again, constantly. In this repetition of the cartographic gesture there lies the potential for opening up new angles of vision, new itineraries. Nomadism is therefore neither a rhetorical gesture nor a mere figure of speech, but a political and epistemological necessity for critical theory at the end of this century.

Notes

I wish to thank the participants of the graduate research seminar in women's studies in my department for their comments. Special thanks also to Teresa de Lauretis and Anneke Smelik.

1. See Rosi Braidotti, "The Politics of Ontological Difference," in Teresa Brennan, ed. *Between Feminism and Psychoanalysis* (London, Routledge, 1989).
2. This expression is used extensively by Teresa de Lauretis, for instance in her *Technologies of Gender* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986).
3. For a fuller elaboration of my understanding of sexual difference, see "The Politics of Ontological Difference."
4. Jane Flax, "Postmodernism and Gender Relations in Feminist Theory," *Signs* 12:4 (1987). Of the same author, see also *Thinking Fragments* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).
5. Teresa de Lauretis, ed., *Feminist Studies/Critical Studies* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986); *Technologies of Gender* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987).
6. See Julia Kristeva, "Women's Time," *Signs* 7:1 (1981), reprinted in Nannerl O. Keohane, Michelle Z. Rosaldo and Barbara C. Gelpi eds., *Feminist Theory: A Critique of Ideology* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1982).
7. Jean-François Lyotard, *Le postmodernisme expliqué aux enfants* (Paris: Galilée, 1985).
8. See Adrienne Rich, *Of Woman Born* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1976); *On Lies, Secrets and Silence* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1979); and *Blood, Bread and Poetry* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1985).
9. The term "symbolic" is complex; I am using it here in a post-Lacanian sense, as referring to the cumulated and multilayered structure of signification of language, where language encapsulates the fundamental structures of a given culture. The literature on Lacanian feminism is so vast that I shall not even attempt to discuss it here; for an excellent summary see Teresa Brennan's introduction to Teresa Brennan, ed., *Between Feminism and Psychoanalysis* (London: Routledge, 1989).
10. For a fuller analysis of this vision of the body, allow me to refer you to my article "Organs without Bodies," *Differences* 1:1 (1989). See also Elizabeth Grosz, "Notes Towards a Corporeal Feminism," *Australian Feminist Studies* 5 (1987).
11. Teresa de Lauretis, "Upping the Anti (sic) in Feminist Theory," in *Conflicts in Feminism*, Marianne Hirsch and Evelyn Fox Keller, eds. (New York: Routledge, 1990), p. 266.
12. Teresa de Lauretis, "Eccentric Subjects: Feminist Theory and Historical Consciousness," *Feminist Studies*, vol. 16, no. 1 (1990).
13. bell hooks, "Postmodern Blackness," in *Yearning* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 1990).
14. I refer here to the concept elaborated by Gilles Deleuze in collaboration with Félix Guattari; see *Rhizome* (Paris: Minuit, 1976).
15. Rosi Braidotti, *Patterns of Dissonance* (Cambridge: Polity Press/New York: Routledge, 1991), chapters 3, 4, and 5.

16. On this point, see Judith Butler, *Subjects of Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), especially chapter 4.
17. See Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *L'Anti Oedipe* (Paris: Minuit, 1980).
18. Michel Foucault, *L'Ordre du discours* (Paris: Gallimard, 1977).
19. This expression, originally coined by Laura Mulvey in film criticism, has been taken up and developed by Donna Haraway in "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partical Perspective," and in "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century," both in *Simians, Cyborgs and Women* (London: Free Association Press, 1991).
20. See Christine Delphy, "Pour un matérialisme féministe," *L'Arc* 61 (1975) and see *Close to Home* (London: Hutchinson, 1984).
21. See Hélène Cixous, "Le rire de la Meduse," *L'Arc* 61 (1975); "Le sexe ou la tête," *Les Cahiers du grif* 5 (1977); *Entre l'écriture*, (Paris: des femmes, 1986); and *Le livre de Promethea* (Paris: Gallimard, 1987).
22. See Claire Duchen, *Feminism in France* (London: Routledge, and Kegan Paul, 1986).
23. See Rosi Braidotti, "Essentialism," forthcoming in Elizabeth Wright, ed., *Dictionary of Feminism and Psychoanalysis* (London: Routledge).
24. See Rosi Braidotti, "Féminisme et philosophie: la critique du pouvoir et la pensée féministe contemporaine," doctoral dissertation, May 1981, Pantheon-Sorbonne University, Paris; "Femmes et philosophie: questions à suivre," in *La revue d'en Face* 13 (1984); "Modelli di dissonanza: donne e/in filosofia," in Patrizia Magli, ed., *Le Donne e i segni* (Urbino: Il Lavoro editoriale, 1985); and *Patterns of Dissonance* (Cambridge: Polity, 1991); Alice Jardine, *Gynesis* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985); Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble* (New York: Routledge, 1990); Karin Emerton, "Les femmes et la philosophie: la mise en discours de la différence sexuelle dans la philosophie contemporaine," unpublished doctoral dissertation, November 1986, Pantheon-Sorbonne University, Paris, and "From Conducting Bodies to Natural Science," catalogue of Marilyn Fairskye, *Natural Science* (Sydney: Bench Press, 1989).
25. Luce Irigaray, *Speculum: de l'autre femme* (Paris: Minuit, 1974); *Ce sexe qui n'en est pas un* (Paris: Minuit, 1977); *Amante Marine* (Paris: Minuit, 1980); *L'ethique de la différence sexuelle* (Paris: Minuit, 1984); *Sexe et parenté* (Paris: Minuit, 1988); *Le temps de la différence* (Paris: Minuit, 1989); and *Je, tu, nous* (Paris: Minuit, 1990).
26. *Ce sexe qui n'en est pas un*, p. 140.
27. See on this point the magisterial study by Margaret Whitford, *Luce Irigaray: Philosophy in the Feminine* (London: Routledge, 1991).
28. See *Le temps de la différence.*
29. See *Luce Irigaray.*
30. For a study of the aesthetics of sexual difference, see Laura Guadagnin and Valentina Pasquon, eds., *Parola, Mater-Materia* (Venezia: Arsenale Editrice, 1989).
31. Laurie Anderson's contribution to performance art has been widely recognized; see, as an example, Andreas Huyssen, *After the Great Divide* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986). For a more feminist analysis of her work, see Susan McClary, *Feminine Endinas: Music, Gender and Sexuality* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 1991).
32. Barbara Kruger, *We Won't Play Nature to Your Culture* (London: ICA, 1983).
33. For instance, Mary Kelly, *Post-Partum Document* (New York: Routledge, 1984) and Jana Sterbak, *States of Being/Corps à Corps*, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, 1991.

34. In the article "The Politics of Ontological Difference," I have summed up the process of mimesis as strategic essentialism as the temporary strategy that defines as "woman" the stock of cumulated knowledge about the female, sexed subject—whose traits, qualities, and representations affect each and every empirical woman. For each woman is the direct empirical referent of all that has been symbolized as and theorized about femininity, the female subject, and the feminine.
35. This criticism has been particularly vehement on the part of black feminists and the so-called postcolonial critics.
36. I am grateful to Anne Claire Mulder for this formulation, which is central to her theological research on the notion of incarnation in the work of Irigaray.
37. *Gender Trouble*, p. 167.
38. See Monique Wittig, *Le Corps lesbien* (Paris: Minuit, 1973); "La Pensée straight," *Questions Féministes* 7 (1980); and "Paradigm," in George Starobian and Elaine Marks, eds., *Homosexualities and French Literature* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979).
39. In her work as a creative writer, however, and especially with her novel *Le Corps lesbiens*, Wittig has contributed tremendously to the radical redefinition of female sexuality and women's desire, but she has done so in a manner quite opposed to sexual difference theorists.
40. Both quotations are from "Paradigm," in G. Stambolian and E. Marks (eds.), *Homosexualities and French Literature*, p. 119.
41. See on this point my brief account *Theories of Gender* (Utrecht: University of Utrecht, September 1991).
42. See Michel Foucault, *Surveiller et punir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1977).
43. Monique Wittig, "Postface" in Djuna Barnes, *La passion* (Paris: Flammarion, 1982), p. 111. My translation follows; the exact quotation is:

    > "La femme" ne peut pas être associée avec écriture, parce que "la femme" est une formation imaginaire et pas une realité concrète, elle est cette vieille marque au fer rouge de l'ennemi maintenant brandie comme un oripeau retrouvé et conquis de haute lutte.

44. "Postface" in *La passion*, p.116. My translation; the exact quotation is:

    > Un texte écrit par un écrivain minoritaire n'est efficace que s'il réussit à rendre universel le point de vue minoritaire.

45. The debate about lesbian desire in feminist theory was introduced also by Adrienne Rich, whose idea of the "lesbian continuum" differs radically from Wittig's definition of the lesbian as nonwoman.
46. In a previous study, I have outlined the theoretical structure of this new gendered universalism. "From She-Self to She Other," forthcoming in Gisela Bock and Susan James, eds., *Beyond Equality and Difference* (London: Routledge, 1992).
47. This point will be developed in my forthcoming study, *Organs Without Bodies* (London: Routledge).
48. Antoinette Fouque, "Notre pays, notre terre de naissance, c'est le corps maternel," *Des femmes en mouvement/Midi Pyrennées* no. 1 (1982).
49. In "'Gender' for a Marxist Dictionary: the Sexual Politics of a Word," in *Simians, Cyborgs and Women.*

50. See Donna Haraway, "The Promises of Monsters," paper delivered at the Women's Studies department of the University of Utrecht, October 1990.
51. The notion of "experience" has been the object of intense debates in feminist theory; see, as examples, Teresa de Lauretis, *Alice Doesn't* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984); and Sandra Harding, *The Science Question in Feminism* (London: Open University Press, 1986) and *Feminism and Methodology* (London: Open University Press, 1987).
52. Genevieve. Lloyd, *The Man of Reason* (London: Methuen, 1985).
53. Luce Irigaray, "Egales à qui?" *Critique*, no. 489 (1987); English translation in "Equal to whom?" *Differences* 1:2 (1989).
54. As Monique David-Menard argues in *L'Hysterique entre Freud et Lacan: Corps et Langage en Psychanalyse* (Paris: Édition Universitaires, 1983).
55. *Surveiller et punir*.
56. "A Cyborg Manifesto," p. 245, footnote.
57. See Nancy K. Miller, "Subject to Change," in Teresa de Lauretis, ed., *Feminist Studies/Critical Studies* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986).
58. My reading of cyborgs as rhizomatic figurations of thought does not mean to suggest any structural comparison between Haraway and Deleuze. In some respects, nothing could be further removed from Haraway's scheme of thought than references, let alone close attention to the unconscious or the politics of subjective desire.
59. Maurizia Boscaglia, "Unaccompanied Ladies: Feminist, Italian and in the Academy," *Differences* 2:3 (1991).
60. Trinh T. Minh-ha, *Woman, Native, Other* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989).
61. See Chandra Mohanty, "Under Western Eye: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourse," *Boundary* 2,3 (1984) and Gayatri Spivak, *In Other Worlds* (New York: Routledge, 1989).

10

A Thousand Tiny Sexes: Feminism and Rhizomatics

Elizabeth Grosz

DELEUZE AND GUATTARI'S work is rarely discussed in the texts of feminist theory, even in those explicitly addressed to what is commonly called "French theory" or French postmodernism.[1] This omission is even more striking, given the ready availability of English translations of most of their major (solo and collaborative) works. Could it be that their work has little to offer feminist theory? Or that feminists, even those working on "French theory," have, for whatever reasons, simply not read them? Or is it that their work is difficult—difficult to read, to enter and to feel at ease in, to use? This paper undertakes a preliminary exploration of the theoretical terrain, and some of the basic concepts, in Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus*[2] with the aim of seeing their possible value for feminist concerns; their potential for contesting and reorienting feminist commitments; and their utility, or otherwise, for feminist methodologies.

1. Feminist Suspicions

Those feminists who have explicitly addressed Deleuze and Guattari's work, in the main, have tended to be rather critical, or, at the very least, suspicious of the apparently masculine interests, orientations, and metaphors in their writings; worried about the models and images of machines, assemblages, planes, forces, energies, and connections advocated; suspicious regarding their use of manifestly misogynist writers like Henry Miller and D. H. Lawrence; critical of an *apparently* phallic drive to plug things, make connections, link with things. If I may be permitted to quote myself from an earlier paper, this may help to capture some of the common feminist responses I have heard with regard to their work:

> They exhibit a certain blindness to their own positions as masculine (not because they are men, but because they are blind to their own processes of production, their own positions as representatives of particular values and interests that are incapable of being universalized or erected into a neutral theoretical method). They have paid lip service to feminist interests in their advocacy of the processes of becoming-marginal or becoming-woman as part of their challenge to totalizing procedure. But they exhibit a certain blindness to feminine subjectivity, a feminist point of view and the role of women in their characterizations of the world . . . They fail to notice that the process of becoming-marginal or becoming-woman means nothing as a strategy if one is already marginal or a woman . . . What they ignore is the question of sexual difference, sexual specificity and autonomy.[3]

Expressed here are a series of reservations about the relevance of their work to questions of sexual difference: There is the claim that their work does not acknowledge its investments in masculine perspectives; the claim that they describe as "neutral" a position that is manifestly not neutral with respect to the specificity of female experience; and a refusal to accept that their use of the metaphor of woman, or becoming-woman, has very real effects, not in the valorization of femininity, but, on the contrary, in its neutralization or neuterization. One of the few feminist theorists who has published material on Deleuze and Guattari, Alice Jardine, makes a similar series of charges against them in her text *Gynesis*, where she claims:

> [T]o the extent that women must "become woman" *first* . . . might that not mean that she must also be the first to disappear? Is it not possible that the process of "becoming woman" is but a new variation of an old allegory for the process of women becoming obsolete? There would remain only her simulacrum: a female figure caught in a whirling sea of male configurations. A silent, mutable, head-less, desireless spatial surface necessary only for *his* metamorphosis? (Jardine 1985, p. 217).

The suspicion that "becoming-woman," "desiring machines," and other similar concepts are merely excuses for male forms of appropriation of whatever is radical and threatening about women's movements is also hinted at, though less directly and without specifically referring to Deleuze and Guattari by name, in Irigaray's writing. She claims that for women to accept Deleuzian perspectives regarding notions like desire, machinic functions, assemblages, and so on is to once again subsume women under the neutralized masculinity of the phallocratic:

> [D]oesn't the "desiring machine" still partly take the place of woman or the feminine? Isn't it a sort of metaphor for her that men can use? Especially in terms of their relation to the techno-cratic?

> Or again: [C]an this "psychosis" be "women's"? If so, isn't it a psychosis that prevents them from acceding to sexual pleasure? At least to their pleasure? That is, to a pleasure different from an abstract—neutral?—pleasure of sexualized matter. That pleasure which perhaps constitutes a discovery for men, a supplement to enjoyment, in a fantasmatic "becoming-woman," but which has long been familiar to women. For them isn't the [Body without Organs] a historical condition? And don't we run the risk once more of taking back from woman those as yet unterritorialized spaces where her desire might come into being? Since women have long been assigned to the task of preserving "body-matter" and the "organless," doesn't the [Body without Organs] come to occupy the place of their own schism? Of the evacuation of women's desire in women's body? . . . To turn the [Body without Organs] into a "cause" of sexual pleasure, isn't it necessary to have had a relation to language and to sex—to the organs—that women have never had?[4]

Here, Irigaray voices a number of reservations about the Deleuzian project, which could be briefly listed in the following points:

1. The metaphor of becoming-woman is a male appropriation and recuperation of the positions and struggles of women. As such, it risks depoliticizing, possibly even aestheticizing, struggles and political challenges crucial to the survival and self-definition of women;

2. Such metaphors serve to neutralize men's search for their own dissolution and reorganization, making the struggles around the question of "becoming" a broadly human, or even more broadly, a universal, rather than a specifically masculine, enterprise, and thus participate in the kind of desexualization or despecification characteristic of phallocentric thought;

3. While they may be understood as masculine appropriations of femininity, metaphors of becoming-woman also, paradoxically, prevent women from exploring and interrogating their own specific, and nongeneralizable, forms of becoming, desiring-production, and being;

4. Like all phallocentric systems of thought, the Deleuzian project may, once again, be accused of simply using women as the ground, object, or excuse for his own involvements; of using woman to obscure an examination of his own investments in women's subjugation. Woman, once again, becomes the object or the prop of man's speculations, self-reflections, and intellectual commitments;

5. To invoke the notion of "becoming-woman" in place of a concept of "being woman," Deleuze and Guattari participate in the subordination, or possibly even the obliteration, of women's struggles for autonomy, identity, and self-determination, an erasure of a certain, very concrete and real set of political struggles, which, if it were directed to, say, the struggles of other "minority" groups (women of course are not a minority, statistically

speaking), would provoke horror and outrage. For example, for white, middle-class men to invoke the metaphor of becoming-black, or becoming-Hispanic, would provoke scathing condemnation and great suspicion;

6. Deleuze and Guattari are invested in a romantic elevation of models of psychosis, schizophrenia, and madness that, on the one hand, ignore the very real pain and torment of individuals, and, on the other hand, raise pathology to an unlivable, unviable ideal for others. Moreover, in making becoming-woman the privileged site of all becomings, Deleuze and Guattari confirm a long historical association between femininity, women, and madness that ignores the sexually specific forms that madness takes (as Irigaray's own earliest researches have demonstrated); and

7. In evoking metaphors of machinic functioning, Deleuze and Guattari, like other masculinist philosophers, utilize models and metaphors that have been made possible only at the expense of women's exclusion and denigration: technocracies, while not inherently masculinist, are so de facto insofar as they are historically predicated on women's exclusion.

Admittedly Irigaray, Jardine, and I, in my earlier text, were referring, not to *A Thousand Plateaus,* but to Deleuze and Guattari's earlier works, most notably, *Anti-Oedipus*[5]—in itself a very complex and highly specifically directed text, with a different orientation and different perspectives from those developed in their later texts. But many of the concerns expressed in the preceding quotations may, with equal relevance, be directed toward *A Thousand Plateaus.* It will be the task of this paper to explore whether in fact such reservations and suspicions are warranted regarding what Deleuze and Guattari call their "rhizomatics," and whether indeed rhizomatics may provide a powerful ally and theoretical resource for feminist challenges to the domination of philosophical paradigms, methods, and presumptions that have governed the history of Western thought and have perpetuated, rationalized, and legitimated the erasure of women and women's contributions from cultural, sexual, and theoretical life. In other words, even if their work is deemed patriarchal or phallocentric (no text—not even "feminist" texts—can in a sense be immune to this charge, insofar as the very categories, concepts, and methodologies available today are those spawned by this history), it may still serve as a powerful tool or weapon in feminist challenges to phallocentric thought. Insofar as feminist theory and Deleuzian rhizomatics share a common target—the reversal of Platonism[6]—a reversal that problematizes the opposition, so integral to Western thought, between the ideal and the real, the original and the copy, the conceptual and the material, and, ultimately, between man and woman, it may in fact turn out that a (provisional, guarded) alliance may be of great strategic value.

In this paper, I would like to temporarily suspend critical feminist judgment in order to "enter into" the project(s) articulated in Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus*. I would like to explore how this text might possibly be used by and for feminist theoretical projects, which involves some commitment to their overarching framework, basic presuppositions, and central concepts. It will be necessary to outline a number of their central concepts and images that may be of relevance to feminists, especially those concerned with bodies, sexualities, pleasures, and desire—the Body without Organs, the desiring machine, becoming-woman; and those of more general methodological relevance, such as the notions of rhizomatics, cartography, intensities, speed, planes.

2. Feminist Conjunctions

There are a number of prima facie reasons why, in spite of their apparently peripheral or oblique relations to feminist theory, nevertheless Deleuze and Guattari's writings may prove fruitful for various forms of feminist research. I would like to briefly indicate what these congruities, points of overlap, and common interests may be, even if only schematically. This provisional and schematic overview, a first attempt to explore and navigate paths through the nomadic grounds they explore, is preliminary to a deeper investigation into their work.

In the first place, like a number of their contemporaries, Deleuze and Guattari challenge and displace the centrality and pervasiveness of the structure of binary logic that has exerted a domination in Western philosophy since the time of Plato. Not only do they seek out alternatives with which to contest or bypass the metaphysical bases of Western philosophy (which Derrida terms "logocentrism": the necessary presumption of givenness or presence); they seek to position traditional metaphysical identities and theoretical models in a context that renders them merely effects or surface phenomena within a broader or differently conceived ontology or metaphysics. Systems of thought based on the centrality of the subject and the coherence of signification can be put to work in such a way that they are no longer privileged or causal terms, but effects or consequences of processes of sedimentation, the congealing or coagulation of processes, interrelations, or "machines" of disparate components, functioning in provisional alignment with each other to form a working ensemble. Given that it is impossible to ignore binarized or dichotomous thought, and yet, given that such theoretical paradigms and methodologies are deeply implicated in regimes of

oppression and social subordination—of which the oppression of women is the most stark—any set of procedures, including rhizomatics, which seeks to problematize and render them anachronistic may well be worth closer feminist inspection. As they claim: "We employ a dualism of models only in order to arrive at a process that challenges all models. Each time, mental correctives are necessary to undo the dualisms we had no wish to construct but through which we pass" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 20).

For this reason, if for no other, their use of rhizomatics, cartography, schizoanalysis, etc., like deconstruction or grammatology, are at least of indirect relevance to feminists. Even if their procedures and methods do not actively affirm or support feminist struggles around women's autonomy and self-determination, they may nevertheless help clear the ground of metaphysical concepts so that women may be able to devise their own knowledges and accounts of themselves and the world.

In addition, and also aligned with feminist challenges to prevailing forms of masculinism in philosophy, is their interest in the question of difference, a difference capable of being understood outside the dominance or regime of the One, the self-same, the imaginary play of mirrors and doubles, the structure of binary pairs in which what is different can be understood only as a variation or negation of identity. Deleuze claims to conceptualize difference in terms beyond the four "illusions" of representation: identity, opposition, analogy, and resemblance. In conceptualizing a difference in and of itself, a difference that is not subordinated to identity or the same, Deleuze and Guattari invoke two forms of energy and alignment: the processes of becoming and the notion of multiplicity, a becoming beyond the logic, constraints, and confines of being, and a multiplicity beyond the merely doubling or multicentering of proliferating subjects:

> It is only when the multiple is effectively treated as a substantive, "multiplicity," that it ceases to have any relation to the One as subject or object, natural or spiritual reality, image and world . . . A Multiplicity has neither subject nor object, only determinations, magnitudes and dimensions that cannot increase in number without the multiplicity changing in nature (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 8).

A multiplicity is not a pluralized notion of identity (identity multiplied by n locations), but is rather an ever-changing, nontotalizable collectivity, an assemblage defined, not by its abiding identity or principle of sameness over time, but through its capacity to undergo permutations and transformations, that is, its dimensionality: "Multiplicities are defined by the outside: by the abstract line, the line of flight or deterritorialization according to which they