Art History after **Deleuze** and **Guattari**

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Leuven University Press

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ISBN: 978 94 6270 115 1
eISBN: 978 94 6166 242 2
D / 2017/ 1869 / 43
NUR: 654-651

Layout: Friedemann Vervoort
Cover design: Anton Lecock
Cover illustration: "Portrait d'une Jeune Fille Américaine dans l'État de Nudité" drawing by Francis Picabia.

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Introduction: Art History After Deleuze and Guattari

Sjoerd van Tuinen and Stephen Zepke

The Event: Art, History, Philosophy

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari have written extensively about art and art history, but they are no art historians. Whereas the very identity and idea of art history, as opposed to natural history, implies human subjectivity as its unchanging basis of meaning and composition, they flatly deny any interiority to history. For Deleuze and Guattari art works are expressions of immanent and abstract forces that animate all aspects of our world, and indeed what is not ours, the cosmos. Each 'work' expresses or acts force according to its own conditions, conditions that can, through the processes of expression, themselves change. While these conditions include the political realm and other areas of life largely determined by human consciousness, these aspects do not, in Deleuze and Guattari, tend to play a decisive role. Forces do not obey 'ideas'. Instead, they emerge through the materials that actualise them, through the abstract movements, machinic relationships and often unconscious and inorganic motives of 'matter-force'. In explaining the emergence of the 'time-image' in cinema after WWII Deleuze famously dedicates a mere paragraph to its historical conditions, while spending the rest of the book explaining how it expresses a fundamental shift in the nature of 'thought' and the functioning of the brain that has little to do with history and far more to do with a transhistorical 'will to art'. Clearly then, expression is creative, and art 'thinks' precisely in the way it is able to invent new solutions – which means new experiences, new sensations – to problems both new and old. In this sense art is 'alive,' but it is so in a way that both connects it to the natural world (Deleuze and Guattari claim birds are the first artists), and distinguishes it as a separate path of development that generally draws on its own means (every painter, Deleuze will claim, recapitulates the history of painting for him- or herself).

This model that both disperses the 'work' of art into the boundless energy of 'life,' while simultaneously making it the focal point for a singular mode of development is typical of the way Deleuze and Guattari approach other disciplines. Art history is thereby deterritorialised, disconnected from its usual methods and representational assumptions (both as an iconography and as 'history'), before being reterritorialised on a selection of its aspects (its stylistic formalism and focus on 'the new'), now transformed and energised by passing through Deleuze and Guattari's vitalist sieve. Consequently, the way Deleuze and Guattari treat art history is no different from the way they treat art, or indeed any object at all; they seek to find the potentials within it that will allow it to mutate into something else, and in this metamorphosis (an 'event') express in singular terms the more abstract rhythms that compose the universe. In this way they prove themselves worthy heirs of Wilhelm Worringer, in whose work scholarship doesn't simply describe art, but rather acquires an expressionist quality itself (Donahue 1995, 3).

Despite their 'philosophical' interest in art, Deleuze and Guattari continue to define philosophy in traditional terms as a logic of concepts. But instead of referring to historical states of affairs, concepts speak the event, just as the lines, colours, sounds or moving images of works of art express events in their own way. Thus *The Logic of Sense* (1969) and *The Logic of Sensation* (1981) converge in a logic of events, providing concepts for processes of genesis occurring in their respective realms of emergence. Such a logic is not a set of linguistic instruments that can be applied to works of art. Instead, a logic of sensation uses art as the medium for the creation of new concepts. These are concepts specific to an artistic discipline, or even artist, but they could only be made by philosophy; concepts that express lines and colors, but also materials, techniques and relations of production. Perhaps this is why Deleuze and Guattari have been so popular and influential amongst artists. They are able to conceptualise what appears in the materials of paint, or more than this, they are able to conceptualise in art those aspects of its emergence that philosophy shares, although in an entirely different medium. It is precisely this aspect of transversality (as they call it) that makes it possible for philosophy to conceptualise a sensation (or art to create a sensation of a concept), but makes it nearly impossible for art to create a concept, or philosophy to create a sensation (with the notable exceptions of Nietzsche and Mallarmé).[1] The logic of sensation is not art as a conceptual or interdisciplinary research-based practice, however, but precisely the opposite: it is a rather old-fashioned plea for medium specificity.

In any case, most art historians certainly have no complaints about this, inasmuch as they are themselves clear about the distinction between their discourse and the objects of which they speak. Unlike Deleuze and Guattari however, art history as a discipline generally sees them as being connected through the operation of rep-

resentation, a quasi-scientific relation in which art history maps the co-ordinates of art within what is assumed to be a common plane of reference. The axis of time for example, on which art works can be arranged chronologically. Or that of place, within which art works find their location or paths of movement. Or more complexly, that of content, by which the lines and colours on the canvas can be understood in terms of their meaning, itself determined by various socio-historical factors providing a work's political, religious, biographical, cultural, and even philosophical reference points.

If the concept immediately expresses the event, by contrast, this means that Deleuze and Guattari are not offering a chronological account of the history of art. Even if they suggest connections and influences between artists, they are instead developing a philosophy of art and of the aesthetic that is embodied in art works, which develop it for themselves, *and in their own, irreducible way*. This philosophical understanding of art applies ontological criteria to it, and rejects those works, or parts of works that do not follow these criteria. With respect to Francis Bacon's work for example, Deleuze argues that its essence is found neither in Piet Mondriaan's geometrical abstraction, which remains an abstract and ultimately ideal code, nor in Jackson Pollock's abstract expressionism, whose materials remain too chaotic to produce anything beyond the 'sensation' of their emergence, but in Bacon's 'Figures'. The reason for this is that Bacon's 'Figures' begin from the chaotic distortion and final 'catastrophe' of the ubiquitous visual clichés determining our perception, and use this catastrophe as the starting point (or 'event') for composing new sensations (2003, 96). That this understanding of Bacon's work is 'philosophical' should be in no doubt once Deleuze makes it clear that the organism itself is a 'cliché,'[2] and that Bacon's own 'Figures' are what he calls 'Bodies without Organs' (2003, 44-5). On the other hand, Bacon does not magically appear as if out of nothing, and indeed his Figures and their chaotic genesis draw upon many historical precedents that Bacon seems to reassemble into his own machine. If Deleuze and Guattari could be said to 'read' art history from the perspective of the event, this is not to entirely abandon history, and especially not the history of art, but it is to use it selectively to explain the emergence of what is non-historical (and perhaps in this, thoroughly philosophical), which is the event.

Perhaps this relationship can be explained by saying that an event has its own formal characteristics, which can be described and inventoried as a system of signs, and doing so in the realm of art requires connecting art's formal qualities with the conceptual features of an event. In this respect, Deleuze and Guattari have reinvigorated both ontological approaches to art and the formal analysis of art works, and so made a significant contribution to the disciplines of art history and cinema studies. Moving in the other direction, Deleuze and Guattari also utilize concepts they find

in art history in a wider philosophical context (for example Alois Riegl's 'historical grammar,' or Heinrich Wöllflin's formal 'tensors'). This back-and-forth between art history and philosophy raises wider methodological questions concerning the differences and relations between ontology and aesthetics, between ontology and history, between philosophy (conceptual logic), art (sensation), art history (referential propositions), between 'what artists say' and what art historians say, and between an ontology of expression and more formal methods of analysis. These questions are important not only in the realm of Deleuze-studies, but in that of art history as well.

Bergsonism: History and Becoming

Having said all this, and despite Deleuze and Guattari's insistence on the force of creation, the artists they discuss and the connections they find between them can appear canonical. Linking the loose brushwork of the Venetian Renaissance to Turner and then to Cézanne and Bacon is hardly news, but the fact that Deleuze and Guattari do it via an incendiary ontological force fundamentally changes the criteria of these 'historical' connections.[3] Similarly, Deleuze's account of cinema barely deviates from the canonical auteurs he so clearly venerates, but this is not evidence of the conservatism of his taste but of the way he ventriloquises the history of art to say something new, to express an ontological perspective that it had not explicitly declared, but that he has it clearly state. The point here is that Deleuze and Guattari seek to connect their analysis of an 'historical' artwork to its ahistorical breakthrough, or event, that not only marks the moment of its creation, but the way this moment repeats (albeit differently) all those events that preceded it, a difference once more repeated in their philosophical concept. As Deleuze says in conversation with Toni Negri, 'history isn't experimental, it's just the set of more or less negative conditions that make it possible to experiment with something beyond history' (1995, 170).

Following Bergson's criticism of Kant, Deleuze strictly distinguishes between the virtual becoming of art and the actual history of art. While the latter appears as an analytical and linear succession of distinct artistic styles and clearly identified images, the former is a contingent and variable assemblage of 'diagrams,' a co-existence of creative potentials or 'abstract machines' capable of turning each historical formation inside out through a repetition of its internal differences. While art history describes and analyses images, Deleuze is Bergsonian in considering these as being simultaneously objects that participate in an open and changing whole (duration) that they not only express, but also actively construct. In this sense art, art history, philosophy, and indeed all activity produces 'analog' image-objects synthesising (ie., expressing/constructing) non-human and inorganic forces, rather than simply pro-

ducing images through the hands of 'man' (an idea of Henri Focillon that Deleuze criticises (2003, 154)), or as conditioned by his necessary cognitive a prioris. Clearly this cuts to the very heart of the post-Kantian development of the relationship between aesthetics and concepts within art historical and artistic movements, and in a wider sense it marks a fundamental conflict over what constitutes 'thought'. If art follows consciousness (or indeed discursive mechanisms of the unconscious) in passing through the structure of representation (and obviously this can be understood in various ways) on its way from perception to thought, then perception or the aesthetic is always overdetermined by conceptual conditions of possibility that enforce upon it certain transcendental co-ordinates, the most important being space and time and subject and object. In the face of this representational image of thought, philosophy must follow the defining move of modern art: 'The theory of thought is like painting,' Deleuze writes at the end of *Difference and Repetition*, 'it needs that revolution which took art from representation to abstraction: this is the aim of a theory of thought without images' (2001, 276).

Recently Bergson's influence in early twentieth century art has received much attention (Antliff 1993; Demille & Mullarkey 2015). However, this interest is usually historical in its focus and assumptions. In breaking with its speculative origins and establishing itself as a positive science, art history has traditionally valorized its 'original manuscripts' above all else. Even if, today, it has replaced its textual orientation on originals with a focus on materials and techniques, art history continues to insist that artifacts are the connection (representation) between creativity and its historical conditions. In reducing the past to its recordings, it either pursues the impossible dream of giving an exhaustive representation of a historical event (the *Mona Lisa*, the *Lives of the Artists*, or even of *The Story of Art* as such), or it limits itself to describing that event's original context; the biography of the artist, the historical socio-economic circumstances, etc. Either way, the past is interpreted in the image of its present, and the creative event has evaporated.

For this reason, Bergsonian philosophers have warned of the historicist fallacy in which the production is derived from its product (resonating with Marx's critique of fetishism (see Egenhofer 2010)), and the possible is projected onto the past. Charles Péguy, whose theory of the event influenced Deleuze greatly, argued that history conceived as a science risks delivering the *mystique* of the event to 'the historical optical illusion which consists in constantly transferring the present into the past, the ulterior to the anterior' (Péguy 2001, 69). Even in the case of so-called 'primary sources,' Péguy argues, these are nothing more than 'the first copy of the first edition for the recording of history' (Péguy quoted in Roe 2014, 107).[4] In reality, every 'first time' is part of a series. Every event has future and past reverberations that extend well beyond the moment that is said to be actual. Thus if art history

is analytical and decomposes the event, then philosophy and art take the past as a part of synthetic duration continuing to move on without them. The past is never fully done with, but rather forms a durational continuity with the present that unfolds into the future at all its coexisting levels. This is not the classical art historical notion that history develops cyclically – birth, growth, degeneration – or that it even develops chronologically through cause and effect, but is rather a theory of certain privileged 'events' that exceed all temporal conditioning (i.e. 'history') by inserting into it an aleatory impulse. For Deleuze and Guattari this aleatory impulse is primary and aesthetic. Feeling comes before its understanding, and is quite capable of thinking without it. This would be the basis of Deleuze and Guattari's 'sublime' aesthetics. The sensation exceeds understanding because its emergence does not pass through the concept, it's 'intuition' (to use Kant's term) remaining connected, even if only by the thinnest of threads, to an infinite and virtual cosmos. Art is sublime because it gives us sensation beyond any conceptual limits, and so, as in Kant, it opens up the transcendental realm of problematic Ideas, which are not moral on Deleuze's account, but instead define faculties inasmuch as 'each faculty is unhinged' (1994, 141).

One such realm would be art, or painting, and the aim of painting, Bacon says, is to paint 'what happens,' to paint the event. This is why, with respect to Bacon, Deleuze never writes directly about the psychological 'content' of his paintings. Nor do we read anything about Bacon's life, about his long nights at the Colony Room, his lovers or his friendships with Balthus, Lucian Freud and Frank Auerbach. History is the residue, what emerges in the wake of the event. In carefully 'listening' to Bacon, and in extensively drawing on what he says, Deleuze is not giving historical 'support' to his reading, but seeking the sedimented expressions of a creative process that exceeds it, and is the true object of a 'creative' practice now encompassing art and philosophy.

Deleuze wrote his study of Bacon for a series ('La Vue, le Texte') presenting exchanges between art and philosophy. But his philosophical identification with Bacon's painting practice went further than that. When, in 1981, Bacon received a copy of Deleuze's *The Logic of Sensation*, he reacted: 'It's as if this guy were watching over my shoulder while I was painting.' (Dosse 2007, 528) Without ever having explained his choice of Bacon's work, Deleuze used it as a material of philosophical expression, just as his 'conceptual portraits' of Nietzsche, Kant, Bergson, Spinoza, Leibniz and Foucault are also both a depiction and a simultaneous deformation. In the case of Francis Bacon, as with the others, Deleuze's ventriloquizing method relies on a close reading of the texts, in this case not only the paintings but also on Bacon's interviews with David Sylvester. In a well-known passage Deleuze emphasizes the point: 'We do not listen closely enough to what painters have to say.' (2003, 99)

While the meaning of this phrase remains open, and was perhaps an ironic retort to the 'open' postmodern text of the time, and the death of its Barthesian author, we have already seen that it cannot be limited to a call for staying true to original sources. Obviously listening carefully enough to artists doesn't mean hearing everything they say, sensitive listening is in fact a process of selection, of 'getting it right (even if they didn't exactly say it like that)'.[5] Deleuze was perfectly capable of not listening very carefully to what Bacon said, and certainly invented things he then attributed to Bacon.[6] More to the point then, is that a vitalist understanding of 'expression' implies a necessary process of de- and re-territorialisation that expresses the immanent rhythms of 'life'. Invention was never restricted by 'truth,' or perhaps better, truth is of necessity 'invented,' or as Deleuze says in the Cinema books 'fabulated'. This would be the meaning of Deleuze's Nietzschean claim that 'Every Painter Recapitulates the History of Painting in His or Her Own Way....' (2003, 122f). This history of painting then, would be a history of the untimely. We must listen carefully to artists, but not to the literal, or representational meaning of their words, but to their rhythms and cadences, their tones and overtones, their abstract and material 'styles' so that these might inhabit us, overtake us, animate an ever-growing 'Body without Organs' with their unique speeds and slownesses.

From Mannerism to Expressionism ...

The 'major' mode of art history has by and large followed a neo-Kantian path, as it was laid down by Ernst Cassirer, and enshrined in art history by his student Erwin Panofsky and his colleague Ernst Gombrich. Like Bergson, by contrast, Deleuze and Guattari are post-Kantian rather than neo-Kantian. Largely ignorant of, and probably not very interested in the epistemological underpinnings of *Kunstwissenschaft*, they are much more interested in the ways in which the understanding and the imagination can be dislocated in favour of a transcendental empiricism oriented towards the ideas of reason, a reading already begun in Kant's life-time by Salomon Maimon.[7] As a result, and unsurprisingly, Deleuze and Guattari are heavily influenced by the school of 'Expressionist' art historians that are most often opposed to art history's neo-Kantian trajectory. It was probably through his colleague in Lyon, Henri Maldiney, that Deleuze discovered the work of Aloïs Riegl (1858-1905), Heinrich Wölfflin (1864-1945) and Wilhelm Worringer (1881-1965). While these art historians were all significantly influenced by philosophy, Deleuze and Guattari are perhaps more interested in how they pursue their philosophical speculations through rigorous formal analyses of arts and crafts. This is because for these figures the one implies the other. Riegl, for example, found ontological implications in the depiction of the natural world on the Vaphaio cups, or the shift to group portrai-

ture in Dutch painting. His most philosophical concepts such as the 'will to art,' or the categories of the 'haptic' and the 'optic' have little meaning outside of the empirical examples that 'express' them in culturally and indeed historically specific terms. Similarly, the differential *Principles of Art History* (linear/painterly, plane/recession, closed/open, multiplicity/unity, clear/unclear) developed by Wölfflin significantly influenced Deleuze and Guattari's development of a non-representational and non-structuralist taxonomy of signs. Worringer, finally, showed that classical figuration is not the representation of an exterior content, but the emphatic correspondence between two forms: the forms of representation in art and the forms acting as the conditions of possibility of perception. In this sense Classical art is not representative qua objects and symbols, but qua form, whereas modern art reveals an abstract, even Gothic sensibility.

In the light of Deleuze and Guattari's preference for the older art historians, Georges Didi-Huberman's work, particularly that on the art historian Aby Warburg is important, as it acts as a kind of corrective to the dominant neo-Kantian trajectory of art history. In many ways, Warburg acts as a kind of switching point where the Expressionist line of art history is abandoned in favour of its neo-Kantian 'correction,' a shift embodied by Gombrich's book on Warburg (1970). Warburg's work drew heavily on Nietzsche and shared much with his fellow German Expressionist art historians. Didi-Huberman's work is important in showing Deleuze and Guattari's unacknowledged and perhaps even unintentional debt to Warburg, and hence their continuation of a 'minor' ontological, Nietzschean line of art history up to the present. A resistant line perhaps, certainly a non-representational line, a more open and flexible line that refuses to defend the discipline but instead constantly blurs its boundaries and seduces it out of its own bed.

Perhaps the best example of this 'resistant line' is Deleuze's construction of the central 'concept' of the Baroque, the fold taken to infinity, in *The Fold*. The fold constitutes the 'operative function' (1993, 3) of baroque art, music, literature and architecture, and returns in the Leibnizian theory of monads as the primary forces that animate the universe. Is it then an art historical concept? Yes and no. Yes, inasmuch as it allows us to analyse baroque and mannerist art in new ways, but no because in doing so it rejects their 'historical' framework. The infinite fold is the event that happens to materials and forms, but it is also the point at which one discipline passes into another and the different media extend into one another. It is, in other words, a philosophical concept that can be used in the context of art history, but is not restricted to it. On the one hand, the concept of the fold offers no more than the description of the historical situation of the baroque (the infinite folded total work of art of Bernini). On the other hand, it also reveals its age-transcending potential (each material and technology contains implicit foldings that can be developed).

Put differently, the fold is the typically baroque 'condition of the new,' (1993, 79) a mode or manner in which philosophy and art, thought and life interfere: philosophy systematizes sensation, art feeds new modes of thought.

The modern artist finds a precursor in the untimely becomings produced by the mannerist craftsman. One of Deleuze and Guattari's favorite examples is Tintoretto, the 'little dyer' who materialized like no other the human in relation to non-human forces and whose authenticity Jean-Paul Sartre therefore liked to oppose to the grand seigneurial Titian. Of course it makes little sense to say that the art of the 19th and 20th century is the same as that of the 16th and 17th century, even if new technologies can always be reduced to old codes or bring new ones with them (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 181-2). The Venetian import of oil paint comes shortly after the adoption of linear perspective in Central Italy, and while Venetian painting utilizes this perspective, it also completely changes the way paintings are constructed. This leads to a radical transformation of painterly technique and of what constituted aesthetic 'good taste'. The history of codes, icons, techniques and styles recount the various materials of art, but cannot explain it. They offer only the sum of negative conditions that block the production of the new as much as they make it possible (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 92). The creative act presupposes an event that confronts the a priori stylistic elements with something that is not yet given in experience. On the one hand, mannerism and baroque remained bound by the old forces of figuration and narration. On the other, they allow new forces to render visible becomings that are all the more 'untimely'.

> From the moment there is genius, there is something that belongs to no school, no period, something that achieves a breakthrough – art as a *process* without goal, but that attains completion as such. [...] It is here that art accedes to its authentic modernity, which simply consists in liberating what was present in art from its beginnings, but was hidden underneath aims and objects, even if aesthetic, and underneath recodings or axiomatics: the pure process that fulfills itself, and that never ceases to reach fulfillment as it proceeds – art as "experimentation". (Deleuze and Guattari 2003, 370-1, 132)

... and from Modernism to the Contemporary

Modern art is anti-classical by definition (ie. anti-representational), but at the same time every age, regardless of how classical it is, already contains its own revolutionary potential, or to use a more 'modern' vocabulary, its own avant-garde. Indeed, it is in the sense of this transhistorical modernity that Deleuze will declare, 'there is no other problem than that of the insertion of art into everyday life' (1994, 293).

When Deleuze and Guattari speak of art then, they are referring to both its historical examples (artists, movements, art works, etc.), and to an 'aesthetic paradigm' that is epitomised perhaps in what we call 'art,' but which can also be seen at work where creation and emergence escape their historical determinants to role the dice again. This can be a work of art, or it can be the 'work' of art within the social or political realm. As a result, Deleuze and Guattari write;

> In no way do we believe in a fine-arts system; we believe in very diverse problems whose solutions are found in heterogeneous arts. To us, Art is a false concept, a solely nominal concept; this does not, however, preclude the possibility of a simultaneous usage of the various arts within a determinable multiplicity.[8] (1987, 300)

There can be no question of a linear sequence of styles and images of artistic thought. Instead, history consists of a multi-linear ensemble of complex formations, in which each historical age possesses the same formal possibilities, albeit ordered according to a differently stratified geography. In *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze and Guattari explore the geology or natural history of creative processes (1987, 67). The continuous and endless variation of these processes constitutes the inorganic life that traverses and subjects matter, those processes that have been consolidated in relatively stable strata, to its constant intrusions. Hence Deleuze and Guattari speak of a 'breakthrough': a material, inorganic life overspilling the formal molds, traditional stylistic distinctions, the discipline-bound media, artistic intentions and classical models, and dragging them along. In the modern aesthetic paradigm there is no longer any difference between nature and art.

This is Deleuze's starting point when he situates Bacon or cinema in relation to pre-historical, Egyptian, Byzantine, Gothic, mannerist, Baroque and modernist strata, but also in relation to the codes of the church or the photographic visual consciousness that begins to emerge in the 19th century. They are historical layers that necessarily stick to Bacon's paintings without being able to explain them. As Riegl already emphasized, the latter result from a 'struggle' or 'competition' (Riegl 2004, 52). It follows that there is not one history of painting, or of cinema. There is a history, but it is turned inside out with every creative act/repetition, such that only retrospectively we can say that it is a pictorial or cinematic act. Worse still, it is only thanks to this exteriority to the 'pre-pictorial' that painting is more than a representation and capable of working directly on life. The power of painting, according to Deleuze, is precisely the non-pictorial becoming it effectuates. This is why we must define the epochs of the history of art 'materially and genetically rather than formally' (Deleuze 2006, 181). Beyond traditional modern oppositions

such as those of illusionism and media history, figuration and abstraction, or representation and the self-reflective questioning of representation, lies a multiplication of historical perspectives on, and assemblages of, art, e.g. abstract painting, figural painting, diagrammatic painting.

As we have seen, however, Deleuze will call this 'vitalist aesthetics' 'modern'. He draws on Harold Rosenberg's ahistorical theory of influence in *Difference and Repetition*, and refers to the modernist art theorists Clement Greenberg and Leo Steinberg, along with Michael Fried. Indeed, in *Francis Bacon* Deleuze will claim that his differences from Greenberg and Fried are 'a quarrel over words, an ambiguity of words' (2003, 107). One of these words is doubtless 'opticality,' which Deleuze and Guattari reject, while embracing the American critics' emphasis on non-representational abstraction and the shallow, but nevertheless material depth their work created (1994, 194). Additionally, Deleuze and Guattari were also drawn to the modernist insistence on painting as a practice of immanent critique, a critical (precisely in Kant's sense) practice that sought its own a priori conditions, even if those conditions were not colour and two dimensionality as they were for Greenberg, but the ontological process of experimentation, or becoming, itself. In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze draws on some 'fine pages' (1994, 91) of Harold Rosenberg concerning the repetition of historical 'events,' and was also possibly influenced by his work on 'action painting'. While in *Cinema 2* and *What Is Philosophy?* Leo Steinberg's concept of 'flat bed painting' is used to criticise the emerging new technologies, and Conceptual art, respectively. This criticism was fundamentally political, and suggested that the shift in compositional principles as a result of the 'screen' (whether the electronic screen in *Cinema 2*, or the screen-prints of Rauschenberg in *What Is Philosophy?*) led to a homoginisation of material and experience in the ubiquitous display of information. In this Deleuze and Guattari seem to be following Benjamin Buchloh's famous argument made in his essay 'The Aesthetics of Administration' (1999) that Conceptual art's mimicry of contemporary mass-media was in fact a political capitulation to it, and not a form of critical resistance. While a politicised art history is clearly possible (ie. T.J. Clark), and arguably fundamental to feminist art history or 'new art history,' it generally tends to follow the political commitments of those artists discussed (the anarchist Pissaro (Clark) or the communist Constructivists), rather than develop an aesthetics *as political strategy*. Certainly the militant Guattari insisted that the aesthetic paradigm was first of all political.

Taking Deleuze and Guattari's almost complete silence over Critical Theory[9] together with their frequent dismissal of photography, their aforementioned rejection of representation, their denial that Conceptual art is in fact 'art,' and their suspicion of new media, this adds up to a conundrum in relation to contemporary artistic practices, which rests heavily on all of these strategies. In this sense, Deleuze and

Guattari seem to be suggesting that art after the end of the 60s, in today's terms 'postconceptual art,' in fact moved away from 'art,' or at least from their own specifically aesthetic understanding of it. This can perhaps be most clearly seen in Nicolas Bourriaud's book *Relational Aesthetics*, which for a time spanning the turn of the 21st century was seemingly the handbook for every contemporary artist, and which heavily draws on Deleuze and Guattari's work but with the important proviso that to do so necessarily means ignoring their rejection of Conceptual art (1998, 100-1). The fact that Bourriaud was a member of Guattari's seminar, and that Guattari had published an early version of his text in the journal *Chimeras* perhaps makes this even more striking. Nevertheless, Guattari's reading of Duchamp, for example, opens up a new, materialist genealogy of Conceptual art that offers, perhaps, a 'minor' theory of contemporary practice that continues to resist its 'post-conceptual' trajectory. (2013, 209; 1995, 14) Similarly, his affirmation that 'Conceptual art is just the most deterritorialised form of sensation,' his insistence on the necessary autonomy of art, and his interest in the avant-garde are further examples of how his work offers new and provocative insights on the central debates of modern and contemporary practices.

Notes

1. For Deleuze and Guattari art and philosophy are materially and even essentially distinct (concepts, they claim, have 'an intuition specific to them' (1994, 7)), but from within this difference they can register each other in their own terms. Consequently there are not only alliances but also branchings and substitutions [that] means that the concept as such can be concept of the affect, just as the affect can be affect of the concept. The plane of composition of art and the plane of immanence of philosophy can slip into each other to the degree that parts of one may be occupied by entities of the other. (1994, 66) The 'hybrid geniuses' who produce works that can operate as both philosophy and art (Deleuze and Guattari mention Nietzsche and Mallarme in this regard) nevertheless 'do not produce a synthesis of art and philosophy' (1994, 67).
2. In *Cinema 2* Deleuze writes: 'A cliché is a sensory-motor image of the thing.' (1989, 20) In this sense it is perhaps more accurate to say that the organism (i.e., the sensory-motor mechanism as defined by Bergson) *produces* clichés qua images, and only 'if our sensory-motor schemata jam or break can a different type of image appear' (1989, 20). In *Cinema 2* this is a time-image, but in *Francis Bacon* 'beyond the organism [...] lies [...] the body without organs' (2003, 44).
3. It is important to point out that Deleuze and Guattari were not the first to spot this connection, which Ruskin, Elie Faure and indeed countless post-Nietzscheans had also seen.
4. Craig Lundy's forthcoming overview of Péguy's influence on Deleuze has been very inspirational for this introduction and all references to Péguy are taken from his essay.
5. Examples of this expressionist 'hermeneutics' are Deleuze's third seminar on Kant where he says regarding Kant's sublime; 'This is not what Kant says, but it is what he was thinking,' (1978, n.p.) or his remark that the history of philosophy 'rather than repeating what a philosopher says, has to say what he must have taken for granted, what he didn't say but is nonetheless present in what he did say' (1995, 136).
6. Deleuze writes that Bacon says *photography* reduces sensation to a single level, as this is something Bacon actually says about abstract art (2003, 58-9). As a result, Deleuze's claim that 'Bacon has a

radical hostility towards the photograph' (2003, 92) is not what Bacon says at all, but Deleuze's 'critical method' sweeps aside this inconvenience.

7. Deleuzean scholarship is divided on how to interpret his post-Kantian aesthetics. On one side there is interest in Kant's 'Aesthetic Ideas' as a way in which representation might include their virtual 'drift' (see Kerslake 2009; Shaviro 2009), while on the other the sublime destruction of the representational understanding and the imagination's 'empirical' sensation of transcendental Ideas are seen as Deleuze's most important Kantian inheritances (see Zepke 2017).
8. Instead of essentializing the artistic disciplines, Deleuze and Guattari will define them by their critical 'problem' and 'clinical' mode of existence. 'The "problem" within which painting is inscribed is that of the *face-landscape*. That of music is entirely different: it is the problem of the *refrain*.' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 300-1) Thus if art has no ideal essence, it does have distinct historical modalities of existence. While the clinical essence of music is the 'schizophrenic' development of the 'natural' refrain, painting maintains a 'hysterical' relation to the 'face-landscape system' (Deleuze 2003, 47-55).
9. Herbert Marcuse and Erich Fromm are mentioned in *Anti-Oedipus* in passing, Adorno and Bloch receive some ambiguous words in a footnote to *What Is Philosophy?*, and Walter Benjamin's theory of allegory is briefly discussed in *The Fold*, and his thesis on Art and mechanical reproduction is mentioned in *Cinema 2*.

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Remake/Remodel: Strategies of Reading Art Historians

Vlad Ionescu

Tout commentaire d'une œuvre est mauvais ou inutile,
car tout ce qui n'est par direct est nul.
Emil Cioran, *Syllogismes de l'amertume* (1952)

Applications

Generically, the phrase 'art history after Deleuze' can mean three things. First, the phrase points to a methodology that consists of *applying* philosophical concepts to other fields within the humanities, like art history. This presupposes a well-known hierarchical procedure: the philosopher 'thinks' concepts that the art historian subsequently applies to other primary sources. The procedure generates a type of research that addresses, for instance, the 'minor,' 'rhizomes' and the 'percept' in a type of cinema, installation art, contemporary music, etc. This implies a transference of competences because 'to apply' means here that the individual artwork is the representation of a concept that precedes it. The minor, the affect and the percept are notions that Deleuze invented in relation to singular artistic assemblages. Just as there is no all-encompassing model for composing music, there are no pertinent 'applications' of the singularities from which these notions emerged without risking turning them into generalities. Hence, applying concepts that Deleuze invented on the basis of singularities can turn the intensity of a repetition into the conformity of a law.

After all, an efficient way of dismantling a philosophical system is to transfer it all over the humanities according to the model: concept x in medium y, for instance, deconstruction in literature, music, cinema, photography, etc. In order to achieve this, let there be dictionaries, readers, encyclopedic entries, congresses and 'illustrations' of these concepts. In this case, the initial confrontation between thinking and exterior force, the initial encounter through which problems are detected and concepts are invented, is tempered. Instead of generating new concepts, we recognize them on the horizon of humanities.

Second, and on a more positive note, 'art history after Deleuze' is a productive intellectual endeavor when artworks are approached as opportunities to look at the world in a specific way: as an intensive field of tensions. Art history after Deleuze is an inquiry into how *constellations of sensation* modify our perception of the world (as opposed to a field that merely applies the concepts that philosophy has prepared). Art constructs the world just as much as science and its history should be the story of its arrangements, questions and solutions. The only pertinent contribution that philosophers can make to art history is, as in other domains, to question some of its clichés. Take for instance the first concept introduced in the *Logic of Sensation* (1981), namely, the 'figural'. Deleuze borrows it from Lyotard's *Discourse, Figure* (1971) where it designates an inherent conflict between the visual forms constituting an image and what can be said about them. The concept designates a confrontation between the *variable* sensitive body (that sees and moves without a pre-established structure) and an *invariable* language (whose meaning realises a deep linguistic structure). For Lyotard, an image is a field of tensions between forms that can be read (paraphrased, described and interpreted) and forces that disrupt this consistent act of reading (and that point to a desiring body). Hence, other than the claim to a *conceptual* iconological meaning behind an artwork, the concept of the figural sees meaning as equally modified by *visual* constituents that resist any conceptual stability.

Third, conceiving artworks as constellations of sensations moving throughout history questions another art historical cliché, namely the central position of the artist as a creative genius. With Deleuze, there is no history of artistic subjective geniuses that create a distinct object called art because this object called art is not a human privilege: the lava flowing down on mountains, the shape of the waves and the plumage of the birds can be as touching as Francis Bacon's colors. Sensations refer to aesthetic instantiations that outlive the human and occur outside the realm of human artifacts. With Deleuze, the questions of sense and artistic intentionality become a question of sensitivity where iconology is subordinated to aesthetics.

Instead of testing the applicability of Deleuzian concepts to art history, the alternative that we will test here is to detect the specificity of Deleuze's position towards art historiography, i.e. to the epistemology that any art history presupposes. With this goal in mind, two points have to be clarified: first, what is Deleuze's relation to the *writing* of art history? Is there a history of art and what type of temporality does it abide to? Second, how do art theoretical concepts emerge and what do they account for: the meaning of artworks or a conception of art works as other than generators of meaning? Deleuze was open about the sources that inspired his philosophy, hence, from a methodological perspective we follow two paths: first, we need to detect the strategies that he employed in his reading of the art historians he relied on.

As we shall see, Deleuze focuses on central figures of formalism: on the one hand, the founding fathers (Aloïs Riegl, Wilhelm Worringer and Heinrich Wölfflin) and, on the other hand, the later art critics (Clement Greenberg, Michael Fried, Leo Steinberg and Harold Rosenberg). Second, Deleuze's idiosyncratic appropriation of these modern art historians justifies the transformations that he implemented in the conception of the visual arts. The goal is thus double: we test Deleuze's relation to art history and we try to envisage a Deleuzian manner of writing art history. The question is whether this *maniera deleuziana* can still be called *historical*?

The Time of Visual Arts

When discussing Deleuze's philosophy in relation to art history two topics need to be addressed: first, the *temporality* presupposed in this type of writing and, second, the type of *interpretation* employed. These two topics constitute the epistemological foundation of all history writing. No modern scientific approach analyses an object from all perspective just like no history addresses it from all perspectives. In this sense, a credible scientific approach is essentially reductive: it presents an object from one or various perspectives, distinctively or in relation to each other. Writing history presupposes the detection of an object – art, science, religion, etc. – whose interpretation depends on the way the object is structured in time. Temporality determines the perspective from which the object is approached for the simple reason that there is no proper science of singular objects. Every science is the result of a particular subordination of singular objects to a type of organization. On the one hand, artworks can be conceived from a *genetic* perspective and treated as a series caught in a process of transformation. On the other hand, a singular artwork can be conceived as the realization of a *structure*.

Concretely, the Baroque can be viewed as a transformative process starting with Michelangelo's mannerism that itself belongs to a broader Western tendency to move from the representation of enclosed forms (antiquity) to the gradual dissolution of their well-delineated outline (mannerism up to impressionism). Following the same model, we can also focus on the lives of artists (Filippo Baldinucci, author of *The Life of Bernini*) or on the shifts in the cultural sensibility of an age (Jacob Burckhardt, author of the *Cicerone*). But the Baroque can also be conceived as type of sensibility that is actualized throughout the 17th century and that is realized in different singular artworks. In this sense, Gian Lorenzo Bernini's *Ecstasy of Saint Teresa* (1651) would be the realization of a sensibility that historians will later call Baroque.

Naturally, there are variations between these two generic models, but where does Gilles Deleuze's contribution fit into this debate about the time of art history? In *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation* (1981) he relies on Aloïs Riegl who thought that visual arts follow a historical evolution that has its own 'grammar,' that is to say, its own inherent logic. And this inherent logic consists in a series of answers to one central problem of visual presentation: the relation between an *outline* and the *background* from which it emerges.[1] In the Egyptian relief, the outline of a presented object is *haptic*, meaning that it reduces the object to its material essence and that it represses its integration in deep space. This relation between background and outline is the symptom of all visual presentation because even in the Egyptian relief the density of objects is visible when bodies are presented as overlapping volumes. The slightest shadow due to the overlapping of figures is the index of spatial relations.[2] The significance of Riegl's historical grammar is that it combines these two approaches, the historical explanation (or the diachronic model) and the structural explanation (or the synchronic model).

Art becomes *optic* (or *painterly*) when objects loose their material consistency and are perceived as purely visual appearances extending in depth. Classicism in visual arts presents figures as optic and homogeneous forms, coherent and stable organisms where the parts are proportional to the whole. In contrast, the Figures of Francis Bacon disturb this organic stability and homogeneity. Deleuze sees in them forces that dislocate the organic body and maintain it in a continuous transformation (2002, 49-50). Bacon is here associated with a Christian dissolution of the material clarity of objects in visual arts (Deleuze 2002, 116). According to Riegl, Christianity conceives visual forms just like it conceives its historical role, as a process unfolding in time. Instead of the rigid and eternal Egyptian forms, Christianity gradually accepts the presentation of visual forms in accidental positions.[3]

On this point, Deleuze follows Riegl literally, and we need to examine his implicit acceptance of Riegl's *analogical* interpretation of visual forms. After all, Riegl argued that the *Kunstwollen* – the way in which arts present objects visually – runs parallel to their worldview: Antiquity idealizes physical beauty because the antique worldview is based on the right of the physically stronger. The disproportionate bodies of the early Christian art are not a stylistic regression; on the contrary, they emulate the upcoming worldview that accepts imperfections and concentrates on spiritual beauty (Riegl 1966, 36).[4] Hence, Riegl justified the *meaning* of forms' relation to culture on the basis of their homologation. The ethical and the visual regime are formally correlated in order to generate a stable and meaningful entity: the worldview (or the religious, political and ethical conceptions of a culture) and the *Kunstwollen* (or the corresponding aesthetic sensibility) constitute a continuity of sense. The relation between these two entities is already a problem in Riegl's

thought because he never explained how their homologation works.[5] Yet how is it possible that Deleuze – the philosopher of immanent relations between intensities that resist all stability – accepts such an analogical interpretation of visual art? Is this type of analogical thinking a tension in Deleuze's understanding of Riegl or just another 'free use' of art theoretical notions? (Deleuze 1980, 493)

Just like in Riegl's *Historical Grammar*, the logic of art history involves an evolution from the haptic to the optic mode of presentation. However, whereas Riegl emphasized the *continuity* of a forward-moving temporal process, Deleuze concentrates on two possible modes that disturb this organic presentation: either the subordination of the haptic outline to the optic space or vice versa, as in the implementation of a tactile and violent outline, such as the volutes of late Gothic architecture that disseminate infinitely without any organic continuity. Deleuze reinterprets the diachronic unfolding of art in time as the oscillation between two types of intensities, the haptic and the optic. What interests Deleuze is not the historical *continuity* of these intensities, which can be presented as the canonical history of styles, from antiquity to modernity. On the contrary, Deleuze emphasizes their potentiality to disturb the homogeneity of the organic body. Why? This is an intuition that repeatedly returns in many other post-structuralist thinkers: the organic body is a sign of regular structure that abides to an unchangeable set of rules. Painting is a reacting against forces that subordinate the body to a stable and irregular form. Why? Because this stability blocks the transformative potential of life in all its forms, subsequently turning the body into a machine. Painting is one possible response to this affirmative transformative power of life, a privileged response that various modern philosophers addressed, from Merleau-Ponty, to Lyotard and Derrida. Why painting? Hypothetically because painting presents the world while combining technical means with singular experiences. Painting includes *variable sensations* that artists multiply and that vary from viewer to viewer, thus resisting the reduction of the world to *invariable* structures, like the perspectival presentation. Only sculpture would arguably include a more intimate and variable involvement of the sensitive body that temporarily resists and improvises with the rigid structures of perception and behavior that govern human life.

Riegl, on the other hand, had a perspectivist attitude regarding these two possibilities of form: they represent either the periods of *Organismus,* the tendency of visual forms to insert the movement of life in rigid structures of matter, or *Harmonismus*, periods when visual forms are stabilized and standardized. (Riegl 1966, 87-88) While *Organismus* represents the baroque because it is a force that moves visual forms from within, *Harmonismus* emerges in antiquity where symmetry and proportion regulate visual forms. Despite Riegl's perspectivism, for Deleuze, the time of art remains the time of *discontinuities* that disturb the stabil-

ity of forms. Expressed in the language of Riegl, Deleuze is interested in *Organismus* as a destabilizing tendency of visual forms. Whereas Form denotes the organic wholeness of the body, the Figure employs the haptic and the optic as strategies of deformation.

The Object of Art

Having established Deleuze's conception of art historical time, the first task at hand is to determine the object of his analysis. Does he understand the artwork as an image that symbolizes a 'worldview'? What is the precise nature of the object that appears to consciousness and how does it affect it? Here, Deleuze implements a strategy that is consistent with his general approach to the arts: the goal is not to interpret the visual arts as a practice that mirrors a pre-existing culture but to determine the potentiality of visual arts to modify the view one has of the world. Active transformation instead of a stable representation – multiplication of senses instead of iconological meaning: this is core of the Deleuzian strategy regarding the regime of arts.

In this sense, the *Logic of Sensation* is neither an art historical monograph nor an essay in art criticism. Like most philosophers, Deleuze is interested in the artist Francis Bacon as an opportunity to test how the visual functions as a domain.[6] The hypothesis here is that the migration of sensations explains the way visual arts *function* (as opposed to explaining them as the outcome of the artist's intentionality). In fact, the *Logic of Sensation* is a book on painting *despite* the fact that the oeuvre is signed 'Francis Bacon'. Intuitively, one would think that art is a human product; hence its meaning lies in the description of the corresponding creative act. However, Deleuze looks at art *despite* the fact that it is a human artifact and with the premise that the most powerful fact about art is the fact that it outlasts any human agency. Hence, the pertinent object when it comes to the study of art is not human agency but the forces – the sensations, percepts and affects – that migrate though this assemblage called 'art'. Deleuze, like the early Lyotard, is interested in the transition (of forces) rather than in the intentionality of specific agents. Whereas a monograph would place the artist at the centre of the oeuvre, the *Logic of Sensation* explains painting – just like Riegl does in his *Historical Grammar* – in terms of the interaction between a few morphological polarities: plane and color, surface and line.

As in Riegl's macro-historical overview, the personal aspect of artistic creation is subordinated to the anonymity of the process. Even though humans make artifacts, this does not *necessarily* mean that art historical discourse has to emphasize this all-too-human subjective creativity. Art is not the privilege of mankind – as we know

from stick insects and other animals that emulate their environment[7] or birds that design their nests – so an art historical model can be imagined as a diagram of sensations that transcend cultures and epochs.

What do we see then, if we look at the visual arts through the eyes of Gilles Deleuze? The answer is: *sensations* that have an *immediate* impact on the nervous system. The Figure is a sensible form that acts directly (Deleuze 2002, 39); the sensation is 'immediately' felt on the flesh [*en pleine chair*] (Deleuze 2002, 48) and gives the affects of 'nervous waves or vital emotion'; the color-force is an 'immediate exercise of force' (Deleuze 2002, 141). The implication lies in this excessive presence: what we see is not the 'image-object,' i.e. an immaterial appearance distinct from the material medium (the canvas) that points to the referent of the image, the 'image-subject'.[8] On the contrary, we see the impact of duration on matter, the temporal modulation of the body (in the case of Francis Bacon). Hence, the immediacy of the impact on the nervous system and the brain substitutes for the aesthetic tradition that conceives the experience of art as an act where consciousness mediates sensation. Instead of a symbolism of meaning, Deleuze sees in painting a spontaneous affirmation of life; instead of consciousness, there is the brain, and instead of the organic body (the *Leib* for Husserl) there is the metamorphosis of the meat. Life, meat and sensation: we have to return to these notions; for now, suffice to observe that they all designate *anonymity* (as opposed to *individuality*).

Reduced to this formalism, modern art theory seems to have evolved from Konrad Fiedle's serene *pure visuality* [*reine Sichtbarkeit*] to Deleuze's hysterical *pure Figure*.[9] Some would argue that purity is dangerous but let us limit our inquiry to a concrete question: how can – virtually if not explicitly – Deleuze's thought contribute to the writing on art? The answer is: the artwork is neither a specific artifact nor a type of consciousness but a field of intensities that resist the stabilization of meaning. Detecting a stable iconological meaning – in the sense of Panofsky but not of Warburg – would imply that the Figures (in Francis Bacon) are related to other Figures and so are brought into a greater narrative that explains them.[10] Yet it is precisely this iconological stability that Deleuze avoids because iconological meaning would elevate the painterly forces into an organic whole.

For Deleuze, explaining an artwork in terms of a coded relation to the culture where it emerged restrains the potential of its intensity.[11] The implication is that art history should not *interpret* artworks but *combine* their visual potential with other domains, architecture, music or nature. Meaning is no longer the effect of homologating forms to a culture (as it was for Riegl) but the infiltration and multiplication of sensations into other domains: painting should not be viewed from a distance but hypothetically open up larger debates about the world.[12] Other than in an art historical model that explains artifacts in terms of their relation to their own

'art world,' there is no self-referentiality in Deleuze's thought about art, precisely because sensations have to dissipate and constitute broader correlations. After all, Olivier Messiaen himself stated that birds are virtuoso artists (Deleuze 1980, 389).

Hence, *Logic of Sensation* can open up a debate on the historiography of art. On the one hand, there is the self-referential position where artworks are interpreted as representing the environment from where they emerged. On the other hand, there is the intensive model where various artifacts generate an *atlas* of sensations that spread cross-historically and cross-culturally. Instead of the hermeneutic interpretation that coagulates meaning, the alternative is a dynamic memory that associates and multiplies visual forces. In this sense, *anachronistic associations* would constitute the methodology of such a project that looks at art as a migration of intensities. Even though art historians would relate this project to Aby Warburg's *Mnemosyne* or the recent work of Georges Didi-Huberman, the latter would temper Deleuze's cultivation of hysterical presence. Sensations without sense can constitute the felicitous instant of the aesthetic experience, yet the issue of sense and interpretation emerges in any relevant field of human culture.

Hence, the contribution of Deleuze to art history is quite distinct: first, that art is essentially a constellation of sensations and second, that this constellation is a force that can overcome its *historical delimitation*. Otherwise said, an artifact can have a historical value but not necessarily an artistic value.[13] It can still represent the culture that created it but it has an artistic value precisely when its intensity breaks with its environment and affects other ages, cultures and people. With Deleuze art is a question of *geography* as opposed to a question of *genealogy* because the object of art is an anonymous force that has the potential to migrate through the world, like the colorism of the Roman imperial age that leaps across time into impressionism, or the intensity of the gothic line that anticipates expressionism.[14]

Instead of a story of art (Gombrich), Deleuze conceives of art as a process of 'weaving' sensations that disturbs any enclosure of life in rigid forms. Before Deleuze, it was the architectural theorist Sigfried Giedion – student of Heinrich Wölfflin – who argued for an art historical model conceived on the model of biology: besides knowing political and sociological events, architects are interested in how 'the life of a culture took shape. This means explaining what one might call anonymous history [...]. History teaching is ever tied to the fragment. But these fragments have to be chosen in such a way that new constellations will arise in the mind of the students.' (Giedion 1947, 104)

Transpositions

The first strategy of Deleuze in appropriating the art history of Aloïs Riegl in the *Logic of Sensation* concerns the temporality and the object of art. The object of art is conceived as a field of forces that has the potential to overcome its historical limits. Understanding Deleuze on this point can be formalised as such: on the one hand, the explanation of artworks as a continuous series of objects that represent a culture *delimits* their intensity. On the other hand, artworks should be considered as intensities *released* throughout historical time, as displacements and conjunctions. For Deleuze, art is not a question of interpretation but of assembling sensations, just like reading aphorisms permits one to follow no strict order (Deleuze 1996, 114). Hence, the contribution of Deleuze to art history at this level can be simplified as the contrast between the *composure* of form and the *perturbation* of intensities.

The second strategy that involves art history is the appropriation of art theoretical notions by Deleuze and (this time) Guattari. In *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980) they confront the reader with a different approach: whereas in the *Logic of Sensation* art history is thought through philosophy, in *A Thousand Plateaus* philosophy is thought through art history. As he puts it in the *Abécédaire*, Deleuze's goal was to exit philosophy by means of philosophy. This does not mean that philosophy should relay its concepts into other domains (visual arts, cinema, music) but to analyze new modes of thinking specific to other domains. *A Thousand Plateaus* initiates a systematic *transposition* of art historical concepts.

Let us look into the appropriation of *haptic space* from chapter 14, 'The Smooth and the Striated'. These two notions refer to two types of orientations in the contemporary world where the 'striated' represents a highly coded movement from one point to another (as on a grid or a map) and the 'smooth' denotes a strategy of spontaneous drifting with the goal of temporarily escaping the striated organization of space. Think of the organization of the city as a grid consisting of streets that condition your movement from one point to another. Think of the boulevards (like the Parisian city planning of Baron Haussmann) that were meant to efficiently control any rebellion. Even today, think of the migrants floating towards Europe on improvised boats: their experience of the sea is that of a smooth space, with few pre-established directions and possibilities to control the waves, a space that they feel with their bodies quite directly; on the other hand, their experience of continental Europe is that of a striated space, a space of regulations (political) but also pre-determined check points, borders, highways and train stations.

However, this chapter rests on a transposition of the notion of the haptic in another cultural context and with another meaning. This strategy is significant because it signals a central *modus operandi* of Deleuzian thought, namely that relevant thinking is always tested against a complex environment. The fact that an

art theoretical notion like the *haptic* can account for other domains is a sign of its pertinence. Again, instead of 'applying' concepts from other domains, thinking is a dynamic process of appropriations and transformations, from philosophy to art history and vice versa, an activity of remaking and remodeling.

The *haptic* is borrowed from Wilhelm Worringer who – following Aloïs Riegl – employed it in *Abstraction and Empathy* (1907) to designate the linear outline of Egyptian relief and the highly geometric gothic ribbed vaults that unfold in countless directions. The intuition is simple: the design of the Greek corinthian volutes emulates organic life and presupposes the empathic – positive and euphoric – relation of man to the surrounding world; this is opposed to the design of the so-called primitive arts that subordinate all organic movement to crystalline structures as a result of man's dysphonic and threatened sense of the world.[15] Under the abstract regime of visual arts, the world is felt as a hostile empty space that produces anxiety, hence an intensive affective life. In order to transform this anxiety into tranquillity, organic life is reduced to repeating regular forms on an absolute plane (since space is the cause of anxiety). While the organic ornament is an 'expression of beauty' [*Ausdrucksschönheit*], the abstract ornament is an 'expression of power' [*Ausdrucksmacht*] (Worringer 1920, 35).

The language of forces that typifies Worringer's psychology of art re-emerges in the distinction between the smooth and the striated. The smooth space is haptic in the sense that the body is caught in a *continuous* movement and it is close to the plane on which it moves. The striated space is optic in the sense that the body moves according to *discontinuities* that vision detects in space. Whereas the haptic designates a continuous gliding movement on an undifferentiated plane that the eye sees as if touching it with the fingertips, the optic designates an orientation in a differentiated space that is organized according to regular intervals, like a map (Deleuze and Guattari 1980, 616). The notion of the haptic transposes the intensity contained in Worringer's abstract line, a line that characterizes the smooth spaces of rhythmical transitions.

However, the notion modifies the sense of the abstract line that, for Worringer, provided the solution to the anxiety of the primitive man when faced with the intimidating depth of space and the erratic sensations of nature. In other words, for Worringer, the abstract line is not just a hysterical infinite eruption of forces but also a way to implement points of rest in a chaotic world and so to transform the chaos into a meaningful construction. Whereas in Deleuze and Guattari the haptic is a strategy of erratic transformations – quite similar to the drifts [*dérives*] of Guy Debord – for Worringer the haptic line was the symptom of a disquieted mind in search of rest.

This function of abstraction is undermined in the culture of intensities that Deleuze and Guattari borrow from Worringer's analysis of the gothic with its rhetoric of powerful sensations [*Empfindungskraft*], intoxication [*Rausch*] and 'sublime hysteria' [*erhabene Hysterie*], 'unnatural convulsive tension' [*unnatürlichen Krampfartigen Anspannung*], all in 'its powerful frenzy of sensation' [*in ihre Mächtigen Empfindungsrausch*] (Worringer 1920, 112, 77). Yet this aesthetics of intensities is nothing new in fin-de-siècle modernism, appearing even before Worringer's psychology of art in architectural design.

Henry Van de Velde's essay *La ligne est une force* (1902) already conceives the line as an expenditure of force comparable to other natural forces. He writes: 'The line is a force whose activities are identical to those of all other elementary natural forces [...]. The line borrows its force from the one who drew it.'[16] Worringer could have written this about the Gothic architects, or Deleuze about haptic space. However, for Van de Velde the haptic force of the line generates – like Worringer's abstract line – a design that brings about aesthetic pleasure. In other words, for the architect intensities are neither immediate nor just pure presence but always caught in an architectural conception that tends towards tectonic structures.

'... a quarrel over words, ambiguity of words'

Besides these fundamental figures of formalist art history, Deleuze (and Guattari) returns to contemporary art historians/critics: Michael Fried, Clement Greenberg, Harold Rosenberg and Leo Steinberg. References to their work can be found throughout *Logic of Sensation* and *Thousand Plateaus*. Why does Deleuze return to these authors known for their essentially formalist analyses of abstract painting? At least one reason can be detected: the model of image analysis that Deleuze employs relies on their conceptual vocabulary. Repetition as a transformative force that generates difference is illustrated by referring to Rosenberg's *The Tradition of the New* (1959): historical agents identify themselves with past heroes and in this imaginary identification they do not just repeat their actions but play a role, creating new effect and affirming differences (Deleuze 1981, 123).

This intensive and performative element returns in another essay by Rosenberg where he tried to place the United States as the centre of visual arts after 1945. Here the canvas becomes an *area* that stages an action rather than a *space* that reproduces an object, not a picture but an event (Rosenberg 1952, 22). However, this intensity of what he called 'action painting' (and that Robert Coates first called 'abstract painting') is related to the emotional life of the artist, the painting mapping out his 'emotional and intellectual energy' (Rosenberg 1952, 23).

The chromatic modulations associated with the haptic values of painting are referred to Michael Fried's work on Kenneth Noland, Jules Olitski and Frank Stella (Fried 1998). Both Deleuze and Fried are concerned here with a conception of color in terms of forces that transfigure the picture plane. Colors can structure but also exercise a force on the figure and Deleuze conceives the picture plane as a *transition* between field and figure: the field can emerge from a color or be clearly delineated. Almost like the circulation of blood in an organism, chromatic variations are presented as expansions and contractions.

Deleuze emulates Clement Greenberg's notion of 'strict opticality' that was meant to describe the work of Jackson Pollock, Morris Louis, Barnett Newman and Kenneth Noland (Greenberg 1961). He describes this ambiguity between optical and haptic values as an 'ambiguity of words' that we might as well clarify (Deleuze 2002, 99). For Greenberg, the abstract image is not an organized (perspectival) illusion of the external space but an optical space without a strict syntax or 'central emphasis' that tells the eyes how to read it. In this sense, the abstract image is an external object amongst other objects (Greenberg 1961, 136). Pollock constitutes the 'model,' in *A Thousand Plateau* for deterritorialization, the movement that retains no shape and that transits into reterritorialization, thus holding together the plane. This movement received analogous formulations, if not free associations: it is a 'line without origin' commencing outside the canvas, without coordinates, like the gothic line, a reference to Fried's comments on Pollock (Deleuze 1980, 366).

For Fried, the *optical* is opposed to *haptic* in the original sense of Riegl, i.e. as a line that organizes the picture into perspectival depth and clearly outlined (touchable) shapes of figures. The figures in an abstract picture – like Pollock's cut-out – is not the sign of an existing human being (that can be verified by touch) but an visual apparition. (Fried 1998, 227-8) In this sense, Fried's denomination of the abstract expressionist images as optical conforms to Husserl's conception of the image-object: it is a ghost, a purely optical apparition, distinct from the material of the image and from the image-subject (that is not present and so cannot be felt as existing in the flesh). As for Riegl, the *haptic* is a sign of presence, verification, tactile sensations as opposed to the *optical* as a sign of absence, a strictly *visual* relation between field and figure distinct from the materiality of the picture, lying 'within our won eyes, as strange as it may sound' (Fried 1998, 229).

The conception of the image as a transitive flux of forces is at the core of Steinberg's account of the 'flatbed picture plane' that resists the reduction of the image to a *readable space:* the viewer does not see a space that signals a referent but a crystallized movement. Abstract painting questions the verticality of the human body as the normative position in order to identify a referent. The image is no longer the 'analogue of a visual experience of nature but of operational processes' (Steinberg

1975, 82). Deleuze's understanding of color as force is hardly distinguishable from Steinberg's description of abstract expressionism as a 'receptor surface' for dispersed information (Steinberg 1975, 84).[17]

The conceptual apparatus of the American formalists thus conforms to some central Deleuzian intuitions. Formalist art historians, from Riegl to Greenberg, provide the ideal conceptual framework for this approach. Even more, and this is another consequence of relying on these figures, is the *anonymity* and *neutrality* of these notions. For Greenberg, the flatness was a 'condition' of painting and not a value (in De Duve 2010, 126), and for Riegl too, the reduction of the image to 'outline and color on the plane and in space' was not a normative judgment (Riegl 1927, 6, 229, 392). For Greenberg, the image is an object circulating amongst other objects and for Riegl, it is the way an age *wants* to shape itself visually. Yet Deleuze transforms this descriptive formalist analysis in a vision of art as *performativity* and *transition*. This is an important point for an art history that situates itself after Deleuze: sensations are not things but *processes* and artworks are not artifacts but *moments* belonging to a large-scale, trans-individual performance.

What to do with this idiosyncratic account of art? In the end, does it not equate artistic creations with natural processes, the drippings of Pollock continuing into bird songs? A hypothetical answer is that this impersonal and transitive conception of painting *has* an ideological power: this culture of transformative repetitions and perpetual transitive processes resist the stability that systems of power implement on language or the body. This is the *figure of thought* that returns in Lyotard's figural matrix and in Foucault and Deleuze's analysis of a painter like Gérard Fromanger.[18] In all these cases, the apolitical formalist toolbox becomes a political weapon that turns painting into a cultural force.

Formalism and Time

While substituting the iconological explanation of paintings for their description as arrangements of intensities, Deleuze and Guattari reinvigorated formalism in art history. After all, the entire conceptual scheme of the *Logic of Sensation* emulates typologies of form like the *contour* in relation to the *figure*, notions that echo Heinrich Wölfflin's the *linear* vs. the *painterly*. However, throughout all the works where visual art are evoked, from *The Fold* to *The Logic of Sensation*, Deleuze develops one central intuition: visual forms modulate spatial and temporal relations. In other words, whereas Riegl and Worringer presented the history of art as the evolution from the absolute plane to deep space, Deleuze conceives of visual forms as a *continuous temporal modulation*. In case this is not obvious enough, what happens to the living body throughout life is analogical to what happens to forms in visual arts:

nothing becomes more *beautiful* or, to put it differently, beauty is no longer the problem. The historical evolution (in art) runs as follows: in Egyptian linear art visual forms are essential atemporal entities. The problem of mannerism and of the baroque – the theme of the *Fold* – concerns the modulation of visual forms under the force of time. With Michelangelo, the *linear* stability of the high renaissance turns into a *painterly* dissolution, which we already knew from Wölfflin and Riegl. However, this transformation signals the fact that time realizes form.

The significance of Deleuze for art history rests on this transposition of formalism's approach to the relation between form and time. The movement that is involved in the modulations of forms signals the quality of time, its appearance as duration.[19] Yet the almost programmatic presentation of the conflict between the (renaissance) *composure* vs. the (mannerist) *perturbation* of forms is significant because it explains visual forms as presentations of the *quality* of time, namely its gradations of intensity in terms of slowness and quickness.[20] In this sense, what the semiotician Claude Zilberberg argues about Wölfflin applies to Deleuze as well: the linearity of the renaissance is opposed to the painterly baroque as the *achieved* movement is opposed to the *actively occurring* movement. The difference between the renaissance and the baroque is a difference of *extension* (closed vs. open space), *duration* (achieved vs. occurring movement) and *tempo,* or the qualitative gradation of the duration (the renaissance is slower than the lively movement of the baroque, Zilberberg 1992). Even though renaissance painting – like the famous Botticelli *Venus* – does present movement, the *tempo* of the presentation is relatively slow in relation to the baroque.

Despite the rhetoric of the 'body without organs,' the minimal figurative support is, for Deleuze, an opportunity to express contrasting *qualities* of time, namely its *gradation of intensity* as this is realized in visual forms. Deleuze presents the 'body without organs' as a state of instability of the aesthetic body that constantly shifts the sensitive specificity of each organ: it is an intensive deformation of all organic wholeness. Yet, all rhetoric aside, what does this image mean for a semiotics of visual arts besides the fact that visual forms modulate duration in terms of velocity? The *stability* of the achieved movement (the classical body with organs, the *David* of Michelangelo) contrasts with the *dynamism* of the occurring movement (Bernini's *Apollo and Daphne*).

Hence, the constant throughout all of Deleuze's thought on art is his preoccupation with how visual forms are the effect of *time* modifying *matter* so that their potential continues to be infinitely deployed. There are various definitions of this tendency: the 'fact' that consists of several forms in one, the serpentine movement of the organism (Deleuze 2002, 122) or the *chronochromatism* of the body in Francis Bacon's painting, the energetic modulation of color that subordinates it to the

painterly touch. Bacon paints here time itself as the agency that modifies the stability of organisms. This is related to the '*monochromatism* of the flat field.' (Deleuze 2002, 50)[21] The distinction itself – just like the optic vs. haptic, the close vs. the distant view – crystallizes one central idea: *painting concerns sensations and sensations multiply the rhythm of life*; hence it is kept in a dynamic modulation. Just like the *fold* is the symptom of the baroque, i.e. of an infinite vertical movement, chronochromatism signals an immanent whirl that destabilizes all determinant forms – read – it considers *visual forms* from the perspective of *duration*. Visual forms modulate the *quality* of a temporal fluctuation (not just time as the juxtaposition of past, present and the future).

Little research has been dedicated to the rather short meditation on color from *Logic of Sensation.* After all, the conception of form as the modulation of matter is intimately related to chromatic transformations. Why not refer to the radically different conception *within* the baroque between the treatment of the architectural interior when comparing Francesco Borromini and Gian Lorenzo Bernini? After all, Borromini conceives the interior as a *monochrome fold* (*San Carlo alle Quatro Fontane*) and Bernini as a complex scenography where *coloristic modulations* of matter combine with light and shadow effects (*Sant' Andrea al Quirinale*).

It seems that Deleuze continues the modern reception of the baroque, like Georg Simmel's *Rembrandt* (1917). For Simmel, Rembrandt approaches the image according to the potentiality of time to concentrate past, present and future: 'a force concentrated in a single, inner point, as it were, transforming itself into movement' (Simmel 2005, 40). Like Riegl and Wölfflin, Simmel also contrasts the renaissance and baroque as two different aspectualisations: the first adapting forms to the stable self-sufficiency of being and the latter adapting forms to becoming in an instant that resumes life itself, yet not as a juxtaposition of moments but as a spontaneous affirmation. The Bergsonian background of this approach is patently obvious but the significant point is not *that* the renaissance is explained in contrast to the baroque and it is *not* even the phenomenological distinction that justifies the contrast, i.e. being vs. becoming.

Since Riegl and Wöfflin via Simmel and Van de Velde up to Deleuze, it is not the *history* of art that is significant but the historian's *position* towards the past that is important. In their relation to the historical past, they all cultivate a sense of vitalism and movement, an aesthetic sensibility for the observation of life as expansion and affirmation. Yet behind their sophisticated intuitions there is a concrete intellectual concern with the reduction of culture to rigid structures and to a banal historicism. Nietzsche and Burckhardt saw this as a problem of modernity, a symptom of the transformation of culture into civilization, i.e. of a spontaneous affirmation, like the Greek or Roman culture, into a vast knowledge of separate entities.

The point of an art history *after* Deleuze is the constant uneasiness, even in Paris in 1981, that the calcification of the aesthetic body remains a threat.[22] 'How to integrate art in life?' is the question that Deleuze and Riegl ask as an alternative to limiting art to being a separate domain of life. If we take art classes on Sundays, collect flight miles while visiting a biennale here, a triennale there and approach visual art through the narratives that demarcate their meaning, then the *understanding* of art subordinates its *potential* to remerge in new arrangements. This makes sense in a *Deleuzian* frame of mind: if force substitutes meaning and the impact of force depends on its *variable* expansion ('hysterical,' 'involuntary,' 'vibrating,' etc.), then indeed, the approach of art according to its *invariable* meaning moderates its potential as force. For Deleuze – as for Lyotard – when *reading* the visual surface of a painting, its intensive effect on the aesthetic body of the viewer is curbed. Allegedly, the more you know about what you see, the less it will affect you.

Deleuze's culture of forces meets Riegl's formalism here, a paradigm that was a reaction to the suffocating historicism of Riegl's time, as he literally argues at the beginning of his *Historical Grammar.* Historicism too, knew everything about the artistic past and remodeled it but it did not create anything new. In the aftermath of Nietzsche, Riegl and Deleuze are quite aware that in the domain of culture knowledge tames instinct. Art historical research can remain self-referential in art historical research but then looses touch with the broader dialogue that visual arts should have with culture. Looking into art as a dynamic movement of forms as an alternative that can inspire the aesthetic body of the viewer. Hypothetically, a Deleuzian art history would have to detect and multiply this movement.

Thinking – Life – Art

What could Deleuze's contribution to art history be? One could imagine a history of art as a *variable of rhythms* that visual forms receive in time. Yet this is precisely what Riegl achieved before him: a trans-historical and trans-medial panoramic view of art history that provides a *relational* conception of art. For Riegl, to interpret art means to correlate cultural forces to the relation between 'line and colour, on the plane or in space.'[23] In *Historical Grammar,* the specialized study of separate epochs is subordinated to the study of 'developmental laws' that connect Phidias' Parthenon statues and antique vases. Instead of reading artifacts, Riegl and Deleuze trace diagrams that represent the metamorphosis of forms.

Yet whereas Riegl still thought of art as realizing the aesthetic sensibility of an age that he conceived as a homogeneous whole, for Deleuze art is no longer the personage of a story that moves toward an opportunity to assemble and propagate intensities. If the question of meaning is subordinated to the question of force, then

a project for a Deleuzian art *history* – like any *story* – would have to imagine a way of relating to these erratic forces. The cultivation of force without meaning is prolific for the creative act but how to write a story that is pure force?

Instead of thinking art in terms of stories that mediate the sense of the world, art is thought as the outcome of presentational problems. Every age has its *Kunstwollen,* it own expressive means that can be separately studied, but viewed from afar art is a variation on formative laws (in the language of Riegl) and of rhythms and intensities (in the language of Deleuze). The question is whether this type of history has ever taken place *after* Deleuze, or whether Deleuze's thought of art is grafted upon a way of thinking about art that had long preceded him? Whereas a Deleuzian *story* of art remains to be written, the function of Deleuze's thoughts on art continues the modernist aesthetics that places the experiment at the centre of artistic creation. The migration of sensations that was argued in *Thousand Plateaus* and the infinite transformation of the body without organs in *Logic of Sensation* also respond to the modern administration of the aesthetic body that is no longer open to sensations but to the sensation*al*, that no longer feels but is entertained.

An art history after Deleuze contrasts this coagulation of forms to their potential to regenerate new forms, expanding in other areas of life: architecture and urbanism, migrations of culture, social interaction or dance. Formulated rather abruptly, an art history after Deleuze that does not even mention his name or any of his concepts is desirable. After all, speaking of an art history *after* Deleuze implies a modification of history's relation to art as an inherently *human* phenomenon, responding to the human need for meaning and direction in the world. This was a premise for his heroes of art history: Riegl, Wölfflin and Worringer. Yet if art constitutes a field of intensities that outlive the human, if the goal of art is to proliferate the movement of life and to expand the possibilities of the aesthetic body, then an art history *after* Deleuze is no longer history as we have known it. A Deleuzian art history is an experiment with intensities deriving from various domains – visual arts and geology, music and nature – that surpasses the congestion of life in rigid structures.

Notes

1. See chapter 14, *Every Painter Recapitulates the History of Painting in His or Her Own Way*. Throughout the book, Deleuze refers repeatedly to Riegl's *Historical Grammar.* Gottfried Boehm's theory of 'iconic difference' between a supporting ground and an emanating form continues this intuition that is quite fundamental in Riegl.
2. See the chapter 'Form and Surface' in Riegl's *Historical Grammar*, Riegl 1966.
3. Riegl argues that monotheism confronts the visual arts with a tension: a spiritually perfect being (God) would have to be presented in a materially imperfect substance (the body). Christianity reconciles this tension because it admits the embodiment of God and sees nature as part of His creation. Hence, whereas antiquity implemented a *physical* idealization of nature (where the body is central), Christianity realizes a *spiritual* idealization of nature (Riegl 1966, 33-7).

4. As Riegl formulates it, for Early Christian art ugly nature is the 'vehicle of spiritual beauty' [*Trägerin Geistiger Schönheit*] (1966, 38). The crucifix symbolizes this ideological and visual change because spiritual beauty overwhelms us through the sacrifice of our own body. The new art proclaims the transitory nature as worthy of presentation, even though this is not yet done for its own sake, that is, without ideological interests that regulate this visual regime (Riegl 1966, 39).
5. In *Late Roman Art Industry* (1901), Riegl argues that one 'decides' or 'determines' the other and, at another point, that they 'run parallel to one another' (1927, 401, 405).
6. See Ionescu 2011.
7. The motif of the phasmida (or stick insects) and of butterflies is the subject of Georges Didi-Huberman's essays collected in the two volumes, *Essais sur l'apparition*: *Phasmes* (1998) and *Phalènes* (2013).
8. Husserl discussed the phenomenology of image-consciousness in *Phantasie, Bildbewusstsein, Erinnerung: Zur Phänomenologie der anschaulichen Vergegenwärtigung (1898-1925)*, published in 1980. This topic is also central to the early work of Jean-Paul Sartre, *L'imaginaire. Psychologie phénomenologique de l'imagination* (1940) and *L'imagination* (1969). Especially in *L'imaginaire* Sartre – like Husserl – argued that the imagining consciousness presupposes a bracketing of the real and that the perception of the artwork (painting, photography or music) exists outside its materiality (Sartre 1940, 367). There is a distinction between a perceived and an imagined piece of paper: the two might be related by an identical essence [*identité d'essence*] but not by an existential identity [*identité d'existence*] because in the imagining consciousness the paper does not exist in the flesh but only 'as image' [*en image*] (Sartre 1963, 2-3).
9. Every art historian knows that no one needs to read Deleuze for a critique of mimetic representation. Already in the 19th century, Konrad Fiedler rejected the mimetic conception of art and proposed the visual appearance (in its purity) as the pertinent object of research. Just like the later Ernst Cassirer and Nelson Goodman, Fielder argued that art does not imitate but makes possible or mediates the understanding of the world as a visual configuration. See especially his *Über Beurteilung von Werken von bildenden Kunst* (1876), *Bemerkungen über Wesen und Geschichte der Baukunst* (1878) and *Über den Ursprung der künstlerische Tätigkeit* (1887).
10. See on this topic Rancière 1999, who argues that the isolation of Figures for Deleuze is justified as a programmatic resistance of their explanation in terms of a broader history.
11. Both in the *Logic of Sensation* and in *A Thousand Plateaus*, the code stands for calculable regularity and is opposed to the analogue variation. In chapter 13, Francis Bacon maintains the traces of Cézanne's 'analogical language' and distinguishes them from the conventionality of code. Visual arts can also function on the basis of codes, e.g. in Kandinsky's painting where verticality stands for activity and horizontality for inertia.
12. Mireille Buydens *Sahara, L'Esthetique de Gilles Deleuze* depicts this fusional aspect of Deleuze's thought on art.
13. Riegl's essay entitled *The Modern Cult of Monuments* is a systematic overview of the different values of artifacts in their relation to history. See Riegl, 1996.
14. In his *Wiener Genesis* (1895), Franz Wickofff associated impressionism with the art of the Roman imperial period and Japanese art, both periods depicting the temporary coloristic appearance of objects (See Wickhoff 1900, 18, 55-56). The conception of the gothic line in terms of a force and its relation to expressionism appears throughout the work of Wilhelm Worringer, who besides Aloïs Riegl is the main art historical source for Gilles Deleuze. Needless to say, Worringer's *Abstraction and Empathy* (1907) is derivative of Aloïs Riegl, especially in its conception of visual arts in terms of intensity.
15. Worriger's *Abstraction and Empathy* is introduced as a psychology of art and indeed the entire book, along with *Form in Gothic* (1920), is a cornucopia of emotional states that continue Deleuze's intuition that sensations, affects and percepts are autonomous entities that surpass any individ-

ual human being. Confronted with the intensity of abstraction, human organic vitality is taken aback before this 'senseless rage of expression' [*sinnlosen Ausdruckswucht*]. In *Form in Gothic*, the linear style deploys an 'extreme vitality' [*äusserster Lebendigkeit*] (Worringer 1920, 4), and the abstract line has an independent life of its own, a psychic force caught in a 'supersensible movement' [*übersinnlichen Bewegtkeit*] (Worringer 1920, 35).

16. The original reads: 'La ligne est une force dont les activités sont pareilles à celles de toutes les forces élémentaires naturelles [...]. La ligne emprunte sa force à l'énergie de celui qui l'a tracé.' (Van de Velde 1978, 63) Van de Velde relies on Theodor Lipps' theory of empathy as the exteriorization of subjective feeling in the experience of movements of an object, like looking at an acrobat and feeling my own vitality in his/her movements. More importantly, Van de Velde's comparison of the Roman and of the Greek line also prefigure Worringer.
17. It is worth remembering that Steinberg associated this transitive conception of abstract expressionist picture as a receptacle of scattered information to Marcel Duchamp's *Large Glass* (1915-23) and *Tu m'* (1918).
18. Regarding anonymity and transitivity of pictorial forces, in the conference *Painting and Desire* Lyotard describes figures as deep-level arrangements that has nothing personal and that 'takes hold of the collectivities of people who paint and also the collectivities of people who will look at painting' (Lyotard 2012, 57). In their book on Fromanger, Foucault and Deleuze point out that pop artists employ reproductions as a strategy to transform and disseminate images into an 'endless circulation' (Foucault, Deleuze 1999, 91).
19. Both Spuybroek (2011) and van Tuinen (2017) have emphasized the movement of life that disturbs the organic body in mannerism and the gothic. While van Tuinen (2014) debates the distinction between mannerism and the baroque, Spuybroek returns to the gothic as a tendency of visual forms to continue the dynamics of life.
20. Claude Zilberberg's interpretation of Wölfflin's polarities correlates the expansion of space to the quality of the duration. See Zilberberg (1992).
21. Deleuze's distinction between the stable monochronism of the field and the dynamic chronochromatism of the figure develops Riegl's distinction from *Historical Grammar* between the *polychronism* of antique and Egyptian art and modern *colorism*. In polychronism, distinct colors cover distinct areas and are viewed from nearby as separate parts. In colorism, multiple colors are combined in a whole that fuses the separate parts (Riegl 1966, 297). The terminology of polychrome is a central point of research in the middle of the 19th century when the architect Jacques Ignace Hittorff argues that antique temples were actually colored.
22. Consider here Riegl's essays such as 'Kunstgeschichte und Universalgeschichte' (1893) where he evokes the indifference of his medical doctor to his job as an art historian, a useless rendering in words of what should be experienced with intensity. Alternatively, the doctor was interested in his courses on the baroque where he compared visual symptoms that belong to different ages, like Rembrandt's portraits and those from the Roman iron age. Also, 'Über Renaissance der Kunst' (1895) where he contrasts the spontaneous grasp of Antiquity in the 15th century to the rigid historicism of his time, including the detrimental influence of this type of art history on the invention of new artistic forms. For Riegl's Nietzschean background see Reynolds-Cordileone (2014).
23. This definition of the artistic purpose is repeated in *Late Roman Art Industry* (1901) (Riegl 1927, 6, 229, 392).

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Egon Schiele: Vitalist Deleuzian

Elisabeth von Samsonow

Deleuze and Riegl

Gilles Deleuze's recourse to the art-theoretical approach of Alois Riegl and his notions of *Kunstwollen* or 'will to art,' the endless plane, and the optic/haptic binary has often been mentioned. As Jaś Elsner emphasized, Deleuze's heavy philosophical reconfiguration or even revitalization of Riegl's and Worringer's conceptual structure is contemporary with a broader post-structural and deconstructionist attraction to Riegl's ideas, to the disadvantage of the leading figures of the 1950s and 1960s: Erwin Panofsky, Ernst Gombrich, and Edgar Wind (Elsner 2010). In my discussion, I will focus on Deleuze's insistence on a 'Northern Line,' a concept which Riegl introduced and Wilhelm Worringer elaborated, while also "smuggling" in *artistic* material based on my research on Egon Schiele, also an avid reader of Riegl and Worringer. I have dealt extensively with the books in Schiele's estate, not least with his art books, which I attempted to categorize using the theories of Felix Thürlemann. (Thürlemann 2013) Thürlemann's construction of a hyperimage from image constellations, which encompass not only historical forms of artwork installation but also image collections of artists and art historians from the perspective of a contemporary electronic display, seemed a fruitful concept with regard to my assessment of these books in connection with Schiele's oeuvre. If we follow Thürlemann's theory that the invention of planographic printing around 1910 provided an exponentially increasing amount of visual material for art-theoretical interpretation, we must ask what the 'hyperimaginary' framework for Riegl's and Worringer's theories and for Schiele's artistic practice might have looked like. An incisive moment was undoubtedly the discovery of the Altamira cave paintings and, in the Austrian context, the find of the so-called Venus of Willendorf (1908) and other artifacts that were met with great interest by the international public. In a certain sense, the surfacing of these prehistoric artifacts and their public success imploded the previous concept of art history. Prehistory and protohistory is something like

a lever with which Neo-Classical art historiography and its extensions could – one might say: *had to* – be unhinged. It brought an element to the fore that required an investigation of its legitimate descendants.

The archeological books in Schiele's estate penned by the then-renowned but now forgotten prehistorian Moritz Hoernes are particularly striking. It was not difficult to find evidence that Schiele was repeatedly inspired by the drawings in these books. My reading of Schiele's exploration of the primitivism of these prehistoric works led to a further pronunciation of the difference that set apart the Austrian primitivism of the Austro-Hungarian Empire from the exoticizing colonial German concept. The inner differentiation of this pseudo-autochthonous artistic primitivism may be essentially supported by the specific orientation of the so-called Vienna School of Art History, represented by Riegl, by the Basel-based professor Heinrich Wölfflin (under whom Worringer studied), and finally by Worringer himself. In my opinion, certain forms of abstraction and certain combinations of abstract and organic elements in the works of artists around 1910 can be better appreciated in the context of the art-theoretical debate at the time. The extremely formalized language of prehistoric artifacts and petroglyphs had quite an impact on art history and made an enormous impression on new artists. Art history rearranges its distinctive phases and characteristics at times in fairly odd ways. Wilhelm Worringer would go so far as to see the expressions of 'early man' as saturated with the Gothic spirit. For him the 'Gothic' was to be regarded as an effect and extension of prehistoric art. And the present and its avant-gardist attempts were thus to be understood on the basis of their direct contact with artistic prehistory. 'Primitive man,' he concluded, sought 'cubic compactness.' (Worringer 1927, 19)

Worringer published his famous dissertation *Abstraction and Empathy* in 1908 at Piper Verlag in Munich. Fueled by the book's enormous success, another book, entitled *Form in Gothic*, was published shortly thereafter (1911). Around 1910, Schiele was trying to connect with the Munich scene, particularly with the Blaue Reiter group and Kandinsky. The avant-gardist Goltz gallery hosted him in 1912 and 1913. Schiele's estate includes several books published by Piper Verlag around that time. It looks almost as if Piper Verlag was sort of a go-to publisher for young Egon Schiele. Whatever the case may be, Schiele was familiar with the debate about the "Gothic spirit"; he may also have known about the dichotomies of Classical/primitive, Gothic/Romantic, and crystalline/organic. Worringer borrowed several key terms from Riegl and was therefore his commentator and propagator in a certain sense. Riegl's philosophy, which was undoubtedly discussed outside of expert circles as well, culminates in Worringer's text. Schiele's specific methods of image composition, which in his early phase still owed a great deal to the great Gustav Klimt but changed significantly from 1911 on, draw sharper contrast when read

in the context of the art philosophy and art theory of their time. Nevertheless, my project is not exclusively about demonstrating Schiele's process of transferring art-philosophical ideas onto his work or proving that, as a reader, Schiele was infected by Riegl's ideas – which may indeed have been the case. Rather, I want to use Deleuze as a mediator to sketch the expression, the gesture which unites Schiele as an artist and Riegl as a theoretician in the same age. Reprising Deleuze and his appropriation and translation of Riegl make the convergence of artistic and art theoretical activities around 1910 visible as a signature. As his contemporary Richard Hamann wrote about *Abstraction and Empathy*, the author Worringer was significantly more influenced by Expressionism than by Gothic art, in which he detected essential traits of Expressionism. Hamann scoffed: 'The works of Expressionists and Cubists look like Worringer describes Gothic buildings, and people will come to accept this book, written by a knowledgeable, impressionable, and perhaps overly verbose man, as a manifesto of Expressionism, as an artistic product, and not as an academic feat.' (Hamann 1915, 360-1) The great extent to which the conceptualization of the "present" and the constellation around 1900 provided the prerequisites for art-historical and art-psychological interpretations is only made clear when examining the conceptual reconfiguration of Riegl's and Worringer's central terminology undertaken by Deleuze as well as its transfer into a philosophical process logic, which is to structure the 'universal history of contingency' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977, 224). By looking at Deleuze's re-energizing of Riegl's and Worringer's central terminology, we come to understand the revolutionary pathos of Expressionism as an 'absolute fault line.'

This may also be an opportunity to gradually lift the veil over the Gothic obsession that both dominated Schiele's time and provided productive interpretations for Deleuze, for instance of Jackson Pollock (cue: 'Northern Line'). Where Schiele is concerned, he must be re-inscribed in a new attempt at this art-theoretical debate from which he had been alienated in the decades in which the Viennese School or Worringer were not setting the tone. In accordance with the interests of the times the art writer Arthur Roessler, Schiele's early and most important mentor, wrote a book about Gothic art and in one of the first reviews published about the works of early Schiele recommended it to art-loving audiences as a 'Gothic Revivalist.' Roessler writes in his paper 'Egon Schiele'[1] (Roessler 1911):

> For months he was busy drawing and painting proletarian children. He was fascinated by the desolation of the dirty sorrows which the essentially innocent were exposed to. He marveled at the strange transformations of their skin, through whose flaccid vessels trickles thin, watery blood and expired juices; he marveled at the light-shunning green eyes behind red inflamed lids, the scrof-

> ulous bones of their hands, their slimy mouths – and the soul in these bad vessels. Gothic Revivalist that he is, he saw and painted them. [...] The art of the Gothics did not emerge from some great happiness, but from great solemnity. All this can also be said about Schiele's art (Roessler 1911, 116).

Schiele and Riegl: The Plane

Riegl had tried to liberate artistic creation from the accusation that art illustrated the technically feasible. He incorporated it in a radical manner into a 'mechanism' that was to permit a kind of depth diagnosis of a work of art. In doing so, he focused more on principles and less on formal characteristics, which attributed a decidedly philosophical quality to his theory of the interplay of haptic and optic elements as well as the parallels and juxtapositions of crystalline abstraction and the organic. The transpersonal structure of this process, which guides the 'will to art' according to Riegl, facilitated its reinterpretation as a 'machine' by Deleuze and Guattari. The most important machines that surfaced in both thinkers were the 'abstract machine' and the 'animal machine.'

That Riegl developed a large and important part of his theory within the framework of 'Late Roman art industry' veiled that Riegl wrote this text at a time when the categories with which to interpret cultural and artistic production had already come under severe pressure. Along with the artifacts of prehistory and protohistory, photography and film had caused a revolution. They had introduced a spectral effect into the world of illustrations and manifestations that forced art history to change its perspective yet again. It is only in this light that Riegl's decision to isolate the optic and to set it against the haptic seems to make sense to me. Riegl's parameters, then, primarily define the fault line that would be drawn by twentieth-century media theory debates. So it is for good reason that Marshall McLuhan, in probing virtual space, also focused on the relief, the artistic technique that had taken on such an important, synthesizing role for Riegl. First and foremost, the binomial which Riegl brought into play defined the media revolution of the late nineteenth century. McLuhan recognized the key enablers of the eternal surface, which had been central to Riegl's thinking, in the skill of the Roman *caelatores*, the artists who focused on the shallow undercuts of the low-relief. For McLuhan, the low-relief is 'charged,' in much the same way the Nordic line would become for Worringer, which is to say that both are 'occupied' by the things that they had evacuated: body and space. (McLuhan 1968, 89) This "virtual" zone, this zone of the seemingly absent, mediates between the optic and the haptic. The virtualization introduces a heavily hallucinatory effect which determines the treatment of the surface – and initiates its eternalization. McLuhan was much less interested in high- and mid-relief images than

in the hypnotic pull which 'lettering' surfaces are able to produce. The direction of the optical is that of transcendence, that of the haptic is that of immanence, but in Riegl's interpretation both categories exhibit the tendency to reject and segregate as well as to reintegrate each other.

Worringer picked up directly where Riegl left off, whom he quoted at length in his texts. One might say that Worringer pursued the canonization of Riegl. He heavily elaborated on the category of the crystalline – the drive towards abstraction. One might also assume that Wölfflin, Riegl, and Worringer dominated the debates of art aficionados at the time, especially producers of art. The strategies of dividing the painterly plane among the two dynamic organizing and disorganizing forces became so widespread that one begins to ask which came first: art, which moves between these poles, or theory, which interprets it correspondingly and seems to be trapped in the same syndrome. In any case, Riegl's approach made it possible to interpret formal decisions, provided they accumulated, based on the superordinate forces active within the artwork itself, which explains the pathos of the 'struggle' as a frequently used theme in art writing. The artist, whose individuality has remained so underexposed in Riegl's big picture, is put before the challenge of taking on the given forces.

The preference of the plane, which as if by coincidence repeats the Paragone debate of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, can directly be used as an argument for painting, at once imposing the burden of responsibility for the effort of integrating all spatialized codes. 'Planar art,' for which Rudolf Leopold praised Schiele, had undergone its relevant education in Art Nouveau in order to reach its Expressionist zenith in its pact with the 'Northern Line.' (Leopold 1998, 10) Provided that watercolor techniques have been applied to the drawing, the plane is most frequently formed as a local color. Where the drawing is concerned, its 'meandering' consists in inclusion and exclusion, that is to say, in interweaving as well as separating body and surroundings by way of a vibrating graph. It is worth one's while to study the line-framed blank spaces in between bodies or body parts in Schiele's drawings. And it is well worth one's while to examine Schiele's vibrating lines at close range. For Leopold, the serpentine lines which Schiele traced by casually moving his hand along a line stubbornly drawn across the page, was like an identifying mark that separated him from other artists.

Klimt and Schiele

After 1900, the two lines of abstraction and empathy seemed not only to drift apart into different art forms, but also to narrowly coexist, as if in contrast to each other. The young Franz Marc painted his animals in prismatically refracted surroundings

Figure 1: Gustav Klimt, *Expectation* (female dancer, 1908). Production drawing for a mosaic frieze in the dining hall of Palais Stocket, Brussels: part 2. © MAK/Georg Mayer – Österreichisches Museum für Angewandte Kunst/ Gegenwartskunst.

that represent nature. The artist's regulative hand, guided by the abstracting, ornamenting eye, folded the world into a plane as if it were the top-most layer of the infinite fold. Klimt went even further, abandoning his extreme naturalism, which he had demonstrated as the master of carnation in photographically precise, 'breathing' women's portraits, in favor of a geometrically ornamental formalization of his subjects' surroundings, which also encroaches on their garments. The "abstract" machine is put in place and ensures that the image arranges itself as a suspenseful frame for the organic miniature, which is formed primarily via the face, the organic cipher of the portrayed subject.

Until about 1909, Schiele's combination of abstract and organic image elements had been consistent with Klimt's work, but subsequently, an independent 'crystalline world' emerged – with Schiele's landscapes. Kimberly A. Smith has written an instrumental study about Schiele's landscapes, in which she distinguishes herself from the rapidly increasing droves of scholars by critically contrasting her own interpretation with Schiele's nationalistic and conservative tendencies and his allegedly 'Gothic art.' (Smith 2004) Smith's argument elaborates on the odd neglect of Schiele's landscapes and cityscapes in the reception of his work, which she has correctly diagnosed, and attempts to fill this gap. Both Schiele aficionados and Schiele scholars appear to be much more interested in his figural representation and to ignore his landscapes and cityscapes. Conversely, Helena Pereña Sáez brings up a point in her equally important study (1911) that has gone virtually unnoticed in Schiele studies: that Schiele's library included mineralogy books, most of which had belonged to his father, but some of which he had acquired himself. In her contribution to this anthology, Ursula Storch points out that the drawers of the famous vitrine from Schiele's studio, which is now in the ownership of the Wien Museum, contained a collection of minerals that can be attributed to Schiele. (Storch 2016) This does not necessarily mean that Schiele primarily collected *crystals* or that the mineral can generally be equated with the crystalline. In Schiele's interest in minerals, however, one may locate a real antithesis to his interest in the human body, whereas both preoccupations are synchronized. His affinity for prehistory can be understood in two ways: on the one hand, as an exploration of the earliest artifacts and, on the other, as mineralogy or geo-history. The bridge between the organic and the inorganic or crystalline is established in Schiele's work by several sheets that do not adapt the human figure to a crystalline environment so much as treat the figure itself as a 'crystal.' What may be programmatic in this regard is a sheet of water color from a private Viennese owner, dated from 1910, which shows a male figure leaning right, his leg jutting forward and pointing towards a mountain range in the distance, his sleeves ending in triangles, as if the suit were empty. The "suit," the drape of fabric, is brought into direct contact with the mountains' folds. Of course, a reclining

figure who is actually a mountain range does not have a face. Casually painting over the spot where the face should be has rendered it a kind of setting sun or a trance hat, the kind of headgear worn by the faceless Venus of Willendorf.

Worringer explained that 'the instinct for the "thing in itself" [was] most powerful in primitive man,'[2] (Worringer 1997, 18) incidentally an argument that has a long history – a history that includes remarks by Leibniz in his mineralogy and crystallography, but also Henri Bergson's interpretation of geometry in *Creative Evolution* from 1907, in which he discusses the reciprocal projection of spirituality and materiality. (Bergson 1944, 212; cf. Cohen 2012) In the Speculative Realism movement, Quentin Meillassoux took up this theory more or less unchanged. He brough into play the 'fossil' as a 'thing in itself,' which is to say as originally organic material that has been part of the entire history of minerology. For Meillassoux, the fossil is the symbol of a world without humans or before humans – an index for an extra-human, extra-mental reality, which exists before and after humans. (Meillassoux 2008) This antithesis, which at the same time is to serve as protection of 'reality,' was not relevant for Schiele. He moderated the transitions in the becoming-mineral of the body-less suit, in the becoming-city of the mountains, in the being-mountain of the human frame, in the becoming-city of the body.

Figure 2: Egon Schiele, *Drawing* (1910), Kallir D 595. Photo credit: Elisabeth von Samsonow.

Figure 3: Egon Schiele (1911), *Dead City III*. © Leopold Museum (private foundation).

Klimt for his part incidentally "re-mineralized" the designs for Stoclet Palace – that is to say, he had them constructed with numerous semiprecious stones in elaborate tessellated patterns. Schiele's landscapes and cityscapes siphon the crystalline from those works that show the human figure. At least the geometrical and crystalline décor, which characterize Klimt's style – if indeed it is mere décor and ornamentation – disappears completely from Schiele's drawings. The large-scale oil paintings between 1910 and 1913 display Delaunay-like structures of rooms and backgrounds and thus approximate Franz Marc's concept of space. Schiele's city images are the

Figure 4: Otto Rudolf Schatz: engraving of a city. From Arthur Rössler, 1947 [1904], *Die Stimmung der Gotik*. Vienna: Wiener Volksbuchverlag, 22. Photo credit: Elisabeth von Samsonow.

most heavily "crystalline," the agglomeration of houses is construed as a veritable crystal blossom on its base. This is how *Dead City I* and *II* were created, dead not because of their allusion to *Bruges-la-Morte*, but in part because of their mineral nature, as cities are inorganic, geological material rejigged. 'Riegl speaks of the crystalline beauty,' Worringer writes, 'which constitutes the first and most eternal law of form in inanimate matter, and comes closest to absolute beauty (material individuality).' (Worringer 1997, 19) Schiele's cityscapes and landscapes cannot be seen without relation to the figural images and drawings.

> To call for aid upon the laws of the inorganic in order to raise the organic into a timeless sphere, to eternalize it, is a law of all art [...]. This embellishment of the organic with the inorganic may take place in a variety of ways. The one that lies closest to hand is forcibly to press the forms into tectonic values, to enclose them as it were in a tectonic regularity, within which their authentic life is suppressed. [...] In forcible accommodation to regular cubic forms, in the tectonic constraint of the figures, organic values were outwardly transposed into the world of the organic. (Worringer 1997, 87-8)

Schiele continually left this twofold reference open, a move with which he ultimately suggested himself as the master of the 'Northern Line,' which separates and unites the spheres and interweaves them in such a way that the seam makes the dividing line visible.

In his afterword to the German edition of Worringer's *Abstraction and Empathy*, Stefan Weber wrote of an 'action that ran parallel to the sculptural abstraction taking shape at the time.' (Weber 1996) The art scene seems to have noticed a certain positively connoted "feralization [*Verwilderung*]" that attached itself to a graphological line perceived in the context of cultural diagnosis, to a 'charged' line, a line that had gone haywire. Thus, the crystallization reaches its limit, tilts back into the barbaric and rough, into the 'Gothic.' The line which is able to cancel out this contradiction more or less within itself – that is the Northern Line.

'Gothic' art, the art of the North, expresses itself via the line, which becomes a productive and generative signature of existence. It is in this context that Schiele is interesting as a *graphic artist and painter*.

The 'Northern Line'

The 'Northern Line' is Deleuze's most popular concept in the field of fine arts. Only recently, Deborah Hauptmann and Andrej Radman (2013) elaborated on this concept in a detailed essay about contemporary 'Northern' architecture, which now has been so extensively revised that the intention of the original authors – Riegl and Worringer – are hardly recognizable anymore. Having advanced, in a liberal upgrade, to philosophical operator of a virtualizing movement on the molecular level, this term now stands for an abstract, vitalist factor that is at once abstraction and the cancellation thereof, because it not only guided thought to its limits, but also outstripped it in a gesture of overcomplexity. In this operation all those features have completely faded from the terminology that carried folkish and usually racist tones and therefore conjured up the critique of recent art history and cultural sciences.

Deleuze and Guattari explicitly announced the translation they undertook of Riegl: 'But for the moment we should set aside the criteria proposed by Riegl (then by Wilhelm Worringer, and more recently by Henri Maldiney), and take some risks ourselves, making free use of these notions.' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 493) Under such conditions, it was also possible to revise and expand the concept of the 'Northern Line.' In *A Thousand Plateaus* one therefore reads:

> Art as an abstract machine. Once again, it will doubtless be our inclination to voice in advance the same objections: for Worringer, the abstract line seems to make its first appearance in the crystalline or geometrical imperial Egyptian form, the most rectilinear of forms possible. It is only afterward that it assumes a particular avatar, constituting the 'Gothic or Northern Line' understood very broadly. For us, on the other hand, the abstract line is fundamentally 'Gothic,' or rather, nomadic, not rectilinear. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 496)

Deleuze and Guattari assumed the abstract line to be the beginning of art, which is not at all placed in resistance to chaotic and menacing nature, but meanders through the myriad possible points and directions. This rectilinearity, understood in this way, is not an opposition, but a decision and selection. In this way, the following holds: 'Abstract is not the direct opposite of figurative.' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 689) The 'Northern Line' emerges 'in free action and swirling; it is inorganic, yet alive, and all the more alive for being inorganic.' It 'unleashes the power of repetition as a machinic force.' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 298) In a footnote to the text, Deleuze and Guattari therefore concede to Jackson Pollock that his lineaments exhibited features of the Northern Line. With regard to Kandinsky, the authors note in the same footnote that his 'abstraction' was realized by 'lines of march or transit that seem to recall Mongolian nomadic motifs.' At this point it becomes clear how liberally Deleuze and Guattari used Worringer's original text and how their productive development of terminology is supported by the fact that Worringer himself did not define the 'crystalline' and the 'Northern Line' explicitly enough. One is therefore dealing with a floating terminological network that may be projected to the respective position at which a given art form is aimed in an ideal manner. The nationalist syndrome, on which Riegl or Worringer might still have kept an eye from different perspectives, had become entirely obsolete in Deleuze and Guattari. The 'Northern Line' had become an expressive vitalist generator; an art fetish.

Schiele the Gothic: The General Framework

The idea of the 'Gothic' as a 'Germanic' and 'Nordic' quality had already been brewing for a while, until it surfaced in art-historical and art-psychological texts around 1910. In the course of reinventing that which ought to be non-Romanic, non-Greek, and thus German or Dutch, the 'Gothic' was placed in position, and, in the case of Karl Scheffler and Alois Riegl, placed *against* the Greek and Romanic. (Scheffler 1922)[3] Scheffler's definition of the Gothic unites the following features: stemming from the populace, not devised in the minds of experts, conveying suffering[4], and crossing borders. In contrast to Worringer, who in his texts had always been interested in the forward-looking character of Expressionism, Scheffler a few years later detected the Gothic in Impressionism, of all periods:

> As yet, Impressionism is the last historically recognizable form of the Gothic spirit. Impressionism is Gothic because it too is the product of an agitated perception of the world, because a will takes shape in it, because form rises from a struggle, because it carries people's emotional unrest into the manifestations, and because it is the artistic transliteration of a suffering state. (Scheffler 1922, 108)

Under the title *Die Stimmung der Gotik* (The Mood of the Gothic), Arthur Roessler in his praise of Gothic art abided by the standards set by Scheffler, Riegl and Worringer, particularly the antithesis between Gothic and Greek art. The fact that he worked on three editions of his book between 1904 and 1947 demonstrates how important this subject was to him. One might say that Roessler himself was a "Gothic writer" after the Second World War. In order to emphasize the antagonistic principles governing Gothic art, Roessler wrote his text as a dialog between the two friends Fortuin and Bruno, who could not be more different. Fortujin goes all out to acquaint his slightly too empirically-minded and incredulous friend with Gothic art. Roessler mentioned only one artist by name whom he considered 'Gothic' in the new sense, Georg Minne, describing the sculpture of a 'praying boy, a pillar-like, slender, lean young male figure, torso bowed in deep devotion and wrapped as it were in a cloak of shadows and frankincense.' (Roessler 1947, 13) Schiele also expressed his enthusiasm for Minne on several occasions, whose works he, like Roessler, had seen in exhibitions at the Secession. Roessler's text contains a passage about artistic portrayals of cities,[5] about the Gothic's love of books,[6] about pain and ugliness as a means of expression in 'Gothic' art,[7] the 'eternal' of the Gothic in the 'art of the Germans,'[7] the superior recognition of the senses by the Gothic artist,[9] the superiority of the colorful stained glass window (Roessler 1947, 41) – all elements that define

Egon Schiele's art in a programmatic way. What is revealed here is the historical signature of an obsession that both Roessler and Schiele, each in his own way, had fallen for, whereas Roessler's significance for the young Schiele perhaps suggests that Roessler "indoctrinated" Schiele as much as the young artist's ego would allow it in the first place. Both seemed to have come to an agreement that the 'Gothic' was a special form of revolutionary vitality, intensity, and body-in-the-world. The concept of the 'German' may seem supranational in this context, a cultural cipher, but, much like the 'Gothic,' it is also moved up against the dominant culture as an alternative. In conclusion, one might say that Roessler started circulating an aesthetic-political construct on the basis of Scheffler, Riegl, and Worringer that propagates the 'Gothic' as a revolutionary 'German' element by its own graces. Kimberly A. Smith was not really wrong in assuming that such indoctrinating phantasms promoted the rise of the 'German doctrine' in the long run, a doctrine which sets itself apart from the Greek and Romanic 'spirit.'

Schiele attempted to take a position in this context that did the new spirit justice. This does not mean that he became an orthodox 'Gothic Revivalist' in Roessler's sense. Nevertheless, a series of elements that are difficult to interpret by art-historical means, which can be found especially in Schiele's cityscapes and in his programmatic oil paintings between 1910 and 1912, become easier to understand against the background of Schiele's identification with the Gothic. What is also interesting are the attempts by the artist to compel the two great forces described by Riegl, the organic and the crystalline, into one – or rather: to synthesize them. In this regard, the water color drawing from 1911 is compelling, which may show the same model as Klimt's cardboard for the Stoclet Frieze. If one were to put the artists' two works, which were created within a year of each other, side by side, Schiele's drawing would appear like a revitalization, a re-galvanization of Klimt's rather stiff composition. The black hair of the ostensibly female figure is there; the triangles are there. But the triangles are no longer ornaments, incrustations, 'crystalline perspectives,' but a choreographic note. The body is disintegrated into fractal triangulations but not forced into them. The overlap of 'empathy' into abstraction becomes visible. In my reading, the overlap of empathy brings with it an identification with the model in a way that the artist entered a becoming-model, a *devenir-femme*, which grasped him as much as it grasped the model as a person. The 'female' figure on the page shows female and male traits – Schiele's own – in equal measure.

Figure 5: Egon Schiele: drawing with water color, 1911. Photo credit: Elisabeth von Samsonow.

Conclusion

Roessler emphasized that 'the Gothic age is still alive today,' but not just that. He wrote: '(...) Gothic art has preserved the ability of adapting to different living conditions; it is therefore also able to adapt to modern life (...).' (Roessler 1947, 86) This sounds very much like a confirmation of the 'Gothic syndrome' as a trans-temporal abstract principle which in presentation manifests like the 'power' of percep-

tion or life at large. With Riegl's concept of the effects of large, impersonal power constellations in the arts, key art theoretical terms around 1900 could be updated such that they could return at the end of the century as energetic signatures of an aesthetic interpretation of the world. Not only the reconstruction of the Vienna School of Art History, but also the Viennese case of Schiele/Roessler sheds light on the way in which Deleuze and Guattari productively expanded and translated their readings. That such an analysis provides an opportunity to reveal that the continuity between the two historical poles of Riegl and Deleuze/Guattari refers to the subversive presence of a remote culture of all things – that is to say the presence of the Gothic as a culture of the North – deserves more critical commentary than what one reads from Deleuze/Guattari scholars today. After all, it is more than surprising that a phantasmagoria with nationalistic tendencies around 1900, which ought to have proved its use for art theory and also for art solicitation in Schiele, is able to achieve the same thing for the arts one hundred years later.

Notes

1. Rudolf Leopold would later adopt this characterization of Schiele without further comment: 'And if Kokoschka in his paintings soon developed a spectacular, almost baroque manner, Schiele was in essence at once a Gothic artist, a dreamer and a realist.' (Leopold 1998, 7)
2. 'Only after the human spirit has passed, in thousands of years of its evolution, along the whole course of rationalistic cognition, does the feeling for the 'thing in itself' re-awaken in it as the final resignation of knowledge.' (Worrringer 1997, 18)
3. Scheffler wrote: 'This thought is Germanic, of Franconian origin in the narrower sense.' (Scheffler 1922, 94)
4. 'All prehistoric forms of art – even those of today's primitive peoples can in a certain sense be called prehistoric – have this Gothic characteristic of suffering.' (Scheffler 1922, 65)
5. What is particularly important for an understanding of Schiele's cityscapes is what Roessler terms 'prismatic perspectives' (Roessler 1947, 25); he lists as the protagonist's favorite cities Dinkelsbühl, Bruges, Hildesheim, Siena, Lübeck, Venice, Nuremberg, Toledo, Rothenburg, Ragusa, Burghausen, and Münster. About them he writes: 'Cities in a motley mix of crouched, miserable little buildings in poverty that has turned disgusting behind crumbling cathedrals under dark, massive, bulky clouds.' (Roessler 1947, 23)
6. 'The way he (a wooden bishop's statue – author's note) holds the heavy book, so amicably and festively, seems to us truly quaint [...]. And how fitting that he is the Gothic artist. [...] For the Gothics as it were erected the first libraries; at least they were the first bibliophiles.' (Roessler 1947, 57)
7. 'Not only the divine and heroic figures from Ancient Greece and the Renaissance are works of art, not only the representations of 'beautiful' people are works of art, but also those that toiled on this earth, those that suffered inexpressible hardship; and what renders them beautiful in the artistic sense is when they express the tremendous movement of a human being's fate. In the arts, ugliness is a means of expression that is equal to beauty.' (Roessler 1947, 31) 'Gothic bodies are vilified as being nasty. Yes, in the Greek sense, they are.' (Roessler 1947, 66)
8. 'Why do you close your mind to the realization that not only the works of the medieval masters, but also the best German works of all time have since been Gothic?' (Roessler 1947, 52)
9. 'gravitate towards the opinion that the true nature of the senses has never been better recognized than in their time.' (Roessler 1947, 69)

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The Logic of Sensation **and** Logique de la sensation **as Models for Experimental Writing on Images**

James Elkins

What follows is an informal meditation on Deleuze's book. I am mainly concerned with what might count as experimental, or otherwise innovative, writing on visual art. The habits of art history, visual studies, visual theory, and aesthetics bother me because even at their most engaging – I am thinking of recent work by Sianne Ngai, W.J.T. Mitchell, Alexander Nemerov, and others in and out of disciplinary art history – they employ images as examples of argument and even as dispensable illustrations. Despite a tremendous rhetoric about the emancipation of the image, its capacity to theorize, its power, its deep interactions with the text, contemporary art scholars in all the fields I have mentioned continue to write as if images did not, in fact, need to contribute anything except exemplification or validation of claims made in the text – a text in which they are often engulfed ('wrapped' in the current page layout jargon). It seems to me Deleuze's books – in the plural, because the French and English are significantly different in this regard – display a very unusual and possibly fruitful way to rethink the ways images and texts can be presented.

Notes on the Books' Material Configuration

The first of the two volumes of the original 1981 edition of Deleuze's book (published by Éditions de la Difference) is text, and the second is illustrations (note the Roman numeral I on the cover; vol. 2 is titled 'II – Peintures').

Tom Conley's Afterword to the English translation is exemplary in its attention to this fact, but even Conley, who is arguably the scholar most likely to take formatting and illustrations seriously, doesn't draw many conclusions from the layout. He notes that call-outs (references to the images in the second volume) are placed in the margins, 'somewhat like title-summaries in *manchettes* in early-modern printed books, in which the text itself can be seen at once as a "legend" underwriting the

images or even as a component unit of a greater "fable" built upon the composite character of words and pictures' (2005, 131).

Here is a page from an early modern Bible, for example (Fig 2), with cross-references in the margins. (There would be much more recent examples, including the original French edition of Barthes's *Camera Lucida.*) Part of Conley's gloss on the '*manchettes*' (marginal call-outs) is plausible: the use of marginal numbers does create the effect that the text is a "legend" (caption), but for me the practice means more that the text, considered as a whole, and the images, in their separate book, are equally important, that both are continuous, and that one is not interrupted by the other. The call-outs also remind a reader that the text does not often need to specify exact images, and in fact Deleuze doesn't always specify exactly what image he means: a figure number is anchored well enough if it is in the vicinity of its sentence. In the English edition, the call-outs only refer to the small-print list of plates at the end of the book, and not to illustrations; but they are in the text, in square brackets, which places them precisely in relation to the grammar of the text. In that way the logic of a given sentence, and its singular referent, are closely bound. In Deleuze's usage, it is the vagueness about that relation that's striking. Why, a reader may ask, does it not matter exactly when images are being referred to, or exactly how many images might be meant, or when a reader might choose to look at the images?

Il appartient donc à la sensation de passer par différents niveaux, sous l'action de forces. Mais il arrive aussi que deux sensations se confrontent, chacune ayant un niveau ou une zone, et faisant communiquer leurs niveaux respectifs. Nous ne sommes plus dans le domaine de la simple vibration, mais dans celui de la résonance. Alors il y a deux Figures accouplées. Ou plutôt c'est l'accouplement des sensations qui est déterminant : on dira qu'il y a une seule et même *matière of fact* pour deux Figures, ou même une seule Figure accouplée pour deux corps. Nous avons vu dès le début que, selon Bacon, le peintre ne pouvait pas renoncer à mettre sur le tableau plusieurs figures à la fois, bien qu'il y ait danger de réintroduire une « histoire » ou de retomber dans une peinture narrative. La question concerne donc la possibilité qu'il y ait entre les Figures simultanées des relations non *illustratives* et non narratives, pas même logiques, qu'on appellerait précisément « matters of fact ». C'est bien le cas ici, où l'accouplement des sensations à niveaux différents fait la Figure accouplée (et non l'inverse). Ce qui est peint, c'est la sensation. Beauté de ces Figures isolées. Elles ne
36 sont pas confondues, mais restent indiscernables par l'extrême précision des lignes qui acquièrent une sorte d'autonomie par rapport aux corps : comme dans un diagramme dont les lignes n'isolaient que des sensations[1]. Il y a une Figure commune des deux corps, ou un « fait » commun des deux Figures, sans la moindre histoire à
41, 2, raconter. Et Bacon n'a pas cessé de peindre des Figures accouplées, aussi bien dans la
14, 17 période « malerisch » que dans les œuvres de clarté : corps écrasés, mais dans la même Figure, sous une même force d'accouplement. Loin de contredire au principe d'isolation, il semble que la Figure accouplée fasse des Figures isolées de simples cas particuliers. Car même dans le cas d'un seul corps ou d'une sensation simple, les niveaux différents par lesquels cette sensation passe nécessairement constituent déjà des accouplements de sensation. La vibration se fait déjà résonance. Par exemple,
30 l'homme sous le parapluie de 1946 est une Figure simple, d'après le passage des sensations de haut en bas (la viande au-dessus du parapluie) et de bas en haut (la tête happée par le parapluie). Mais c'est aussi une Figure accouplée, d'après l'écroisée des sensations dans la tête et dans la viande, dont témoigne l'horrible sourire tombant. A

1-E. H., 70-72 : « Je voudrais faire une image qui coagulerait cette sensation de deux personnes s'embrassant sur le fit à quelque forme d'acte sexuel... et si vous regardez les formes, elles sont extrêmement non figuratives, en un sens ».

Figure 1: Page 45 from Logique de la Sensation vol. 1. Éditions de la Difference, 1981.


The creation. Chap. 1. of the world.

THE
FIRST BOOKE
OF MOSES,
called GENESIS.

CHAP. I.

Figure 2: Page from the King James Bible, 1611.

Conley notes that once an illustration has been called out, its number may not be given again, implying either that the reader has gotten to know the image in question, or that readers aren't expected to turn back and forth as they would in a conventional art history text. Conley suggests the two volumes be read in 'juxtaposition,' perhaps in the same disordered way that the chapters of the text can be read. (Deleuze says the chapters are arranged in order of ascending difficulty, but that statement immediately, and permanently, places in question the value and meaning of 'complexity,' inviting readers to read in other orders.)

Later in the introduction, Conley guesses that Deleuze might have owned eleven paintings that were added, without explanation, to the third edition of the French text; at least Deleuze probably had reproductions on his walls or floor when he was working on the book, because 'the unlinked and paratactic quality' of his observations suggest he is 'telling the reader to break frequently with the line of his reasoning by looking in detail at an ample quantity of pictures' (2005, 132). Conley also takes note of the fact that the back covers of both volumes of the original edition have photos Bacon took of himself, which makes the covers look like contact sheets, and brings the artist's body and life back into the reading – but Conley's reading stops with those observations, and he moves on to other topics (2005, 142).

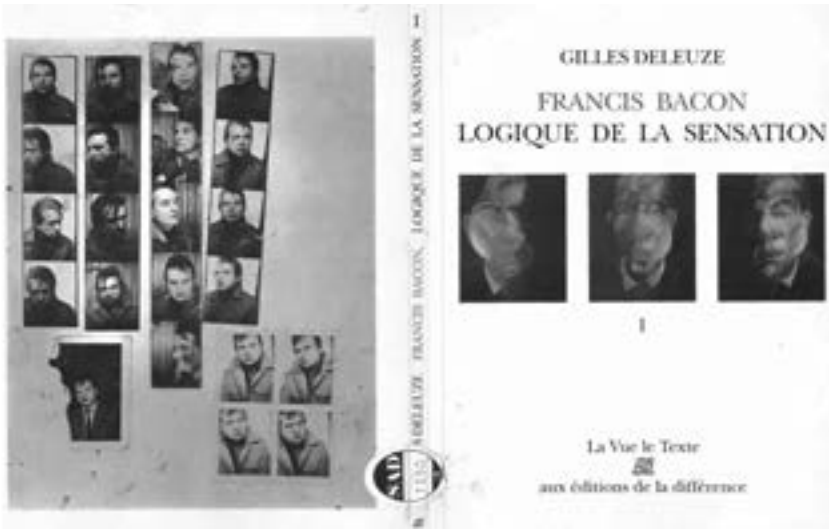

Figure 3: Front and back covers of Logique de la Sensation vol. 1. Éditions de la Difference, 1981.

The fundamental physical fact of the two volumes means that Deleuze's text exists alongside the paintings as a proximate but potentially detachable narrative. That property is made literal in the single-volume English translation, which is completely unillustrated and has only a list of the paintings, in a very tiny font (especially minuscule in the paperback – as if the editors felt a fiduciary responsibility to list the paintings they weren't reproducing).

It is also pertinent to the phenomenology of reading that in the original French edition, some triptychs are foldouts, producing a suddenly more immersive experience. My experience reading in the original is that I seldom have an image and text side by side, because it's too awkward. I turn from one to the other, looking or reading sequentially in either volume, then returning to the other. To see images and text in strict parallel, as in a more conventional book, it is necessary to evaporate the physical books into digital images. I imagine many people read in this way when they study the English translation, with a computer screen nearby to check references. Needless to say that sort of reading won't be what Deleuze might have imagined.

I am not aware of any documents or further information about Deleuze's involvement in the design of the book, but as it was printed, the Editions de la Difference text is a material exemplification of a theme that Deleuze develops throughout the book: the possibility of writing in such a way that the images are not reduced to illustrations, decorations, examples, or mnemonics as art history typically does.[1]

The Logic of Writing in Logic of Sensation

Two things become clear, I think, early on in a reading of either the French or English versions of *Logic of Sensation*: the text has an unusual form, and that form is somehow related to the paintings, to the 'logic of sensation' that the text is exploring, or to both. It also becomes evident that the author will remain silent on that point, and that he is possibly working on these issues as he writes.

Some parallels are clearer than others. The idea of writing in a series of differentially disconnected chapters has to appear as a parallel to the book's subject matter, which is a lifetime of differentially disconnected canvases. The idea of writing about the logic of sensation in a series of differentially disconnected chapters also seems appropriate, even if its logic is harder to deduce. (Why write in the form of the object that is being explored? Since Deleuze isn't writing under the pressure of radical claims about the relationship between written form and content, such as the ideas in Adorno's 'Essay as Form,' it is not clear why his writing persistently explores the possibilities of presenting itself in levels, intensities, and encounters, even as it describes those very terms.)

The first of these parallels, concerning the structure and sequence of the chapters, is easier to think about. The ordering of the chapters announces its open-endedness, its randomness, at the same time as its author asserts the chapters' logical order (from simple to complex). Deleuze is consistent in his lack of interest in Bacon's development, except where it serves his themes, and his text is a conceptual analysis rather than a chronology or history – and in that regard it does not require the images to be arranged in any particular order. Conley notes that this open-ended and yet structured presentation is consonant with Deleuze's interest in open-ended structures of argument, totalities such as 'a thousand plateaux' that 'cannot be accorded a finite measure' (2005, 134).

The book all but proposes that its structure, its form, is analogous to the 'logic' of its subject. As Conley puts it, 'concepts move through and across his oeuvre analogously to the way painterly forms migrate to and from many places in Bacon's paintings' (2005, 142). Some chapters are 'thumbnail summaries of a theory of aesthetics,' and others are fragments, or portions of larger arguments (2005, 148). Conley thinks *The Logic of Sensation* gave Deleuze a logic of composition that he took with him to his later projects.

Before the *Logic of Sensation* Deleuze philosophizes and conceptualizes; after the work on Bacon a greater and more supple sense of flow, flexion, transformation, and bodily force becomes evident. The style becomes the very image of what Deleuze draws from the life he lived with the paintings (2005, 149).

These are all structural parallels between the 'logic' Deleuze finds in the paintings and the text he produces. There is a strong parallel between Deleuze's central

theory of sensation, which exists in levels and strengths, and comes at us with immediacy and without systematic mediation, and the chapters in his text, whose fundamentally disordered order and varying strength and incision mirror their content: the question is how to read the decision to represent the 'logic' of sensation in the structure of the text (its chapters, its 'supple... flexion') as well as in the text's propositional logic (its argument).

Writing Against Figuration and Abstraction

The *Logic of Sensation* can be read as a model of how not to write philosophy *at* images, or imply images *are* philosophy, or that they're adequately imagined *as* philosophy, history, or criticism: Deleuze's text refuses to be a commentary, just as it refuses physical control of the images of the sort that is implied by conventional art historical or theoretical texts that incorporate reproductions into the flow of the printed page. The writing exists alongside the paintings, both because it is physically adjacent to the companion volume, and because it thinks by enacting parallel structures of force and meaning. Sensation is immediate, it is 'translated directly' (Deleuze is paraphrasing Valéry; *la sensation, c'est qui se transmet directement*): unlike abstraction and figuration, it does not 'pass through the brain' (2005, 32; 1981, 28).

There is a problem, I think, in taking this literally. If the text was actually embodying or exemplifying sensation, it would cease to argue altogether. Yet I am continuously tempted to make a parallel between the theme of avoiding both figuration and abstraction, and Deleuze's own writing as an attempt to avoid both history and philosophy. A useful vehicle for this parallel is Deleuze's notion of the Figure.

The liberation of the Figure from figuration enacts the liberation of writing from description, history, theory, and criticism. The 'very general thread' (*le fil très général,* an odd metaphor) that links Bacon to Cézanne, Deleuze says, is '*paint the sensation*,' in italics in the original (2005, 32; 1981, 28). It would not be misplaced, I think, to read this phrase as *write the sensation.* As Deleuze says of Bacon's supposedly grisly figures, 'the Figures seem to be monsters only from the viewpoint of lingering figuration' (2005, 123): a statement that could be made just as well about his own book.

There is a brief passage on Proust (about whom Deleuze had written a book), in which Deleuze agrees with John Russell's observation that Proust's theory of involuntary memory is similar to Bacon's practice. Deleuze comments:

> This is perhaps because Bacon, when he refuses the double way of a figurative painting and an abstract painting, is put in a position analogous to Proust in literature. Proust did not want an abstract literature that was too voluntary

> ([that would be] philosophy), any more than he wanted a figurative, illustrative, or narrative literature that merely told a story. What he was striving for, what he wanted to bring to light, was a kind of Figure, torn away from figuration and stripped of every figurative function [*arrachée à la figuration, dépouillée de toute fonction figurative*]: a Figure-in-itself, for example the Figure-in-itself of Combray. (2005, 56)

In Deleuze's critique, 'there are two ways of going beyond figuration (that is, beyond both the illustrative and the figurative): either toward abstract form or toward the Figure' (2005, 31). The Figure is a direct record of sensation, the object of Deleuze's study, and its 'logic' involves such things as color, the frame, the contour, and other elements that are the subjects of *The Logic of Sensation*.

It wouldn't be inappropriate to read this passage, and Deleuze's subject in general, as an allegory of his own sense of what it is to write philosophy to one side of painting or literature, rather than *for* or *as* painting or literature. As Conley says, Deleuze's style 'becomes the very image' of his experience looking at Bacon's paintings: it is meant to stand along with his experience of the art, just as the first (unillustrated) volume of the French original edition stands alongside the second volume of plates.

I propose that this passage, this sense of the Figure in the text, both in Proust and in Bacon, can also be understood as a story Deleuze meant to tell himself about the kind of writing he meant to accomplish. He was experimenting with writing the Figure in the text of literature: neither 'too voluntary' nor merely 'illustrative,' but a form of escape from both that was indebted to and dependent on their continuing presence. As such it is an especially strong model for how to write about images: such writing would be a deep challenge to academic modes of addressing images, up to and including post-structural theories by W.J.T. Mitchell, Jean-Luc Nancy, and others, and it would have the interesting virtue of being not entirely easy to justify, maintain, or even understand.

Note

1. These three terms are explored as part of a critique of art history and visual studies in the Introduction to *Theorizing Visual Studies,* and also online in a project called Writing with Images.

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Rhythm and Chaos in Painting: Deleuze's Formal Analysis, Art History, and Aesthetics after Henri Maldiney

Claudia Blümle

In *Difference and Repetition* Gilles Deleuze refers to the art historian and philosopher Henri Maldiney,[1] who in his lecture on the *Moi* published in 1967 developed an anthropological and psychoanalytical relation to the world. Deleuze in turn sketched this as a topological theory of the milieu:

> One series would not exist without the other, yet they do not resemble one another. For this reason, Henri Maldiney is correct to say, in analysing children's movement, that the infantile world is in no way circular or egocentric but elliptical; that it has two centers and that these differ in kind, both nevertheless being objective or objectal. In virtue of their dissimilarity, perhaps a crossing, a twist, a helix or a figure 8 is even formed between the two centers. (Deleuze 2004, 124)

Maldiney, who obtained a doctorate in both philosophy and art history, focused alongside anthropology and psychoanalysis especially on phenomenology. According to his own account, he returned to France from Germany after the war with Hegel, Husserl, and Heidegger in his backpack. (Maldiney 2007, 182-3) On the basis of anthropology, phenomenology, and psychoanalysis Maldiney then increasingly turned towards an aesthetics and a philosophy of art that was closely tied to a concrete engagement with art. His personal art history comprised prehistoric art, ancient stelae, Chinese watercolors, the mosaics of Ravenna, and works by Jan van Goyen and Paolo Uccello, Paul Cézanne, Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Georges Braque, and Piet Mondrian. Another area of interest was French postwar abstraction, especially the positions of Jean Bazaine, François Aubrun, Pierre Tal-Coat, and Nicolas de Staël. Deleuze too was expressly interested in the painting of this period; his focus, however, was not only on abstract painting, but also the figurative painting of this time, such as the new figuration in France.

Deleuze and Maldiney met personally a year before the publication of *Difference and Repetition* when in 1967 Deleuze became a colleague of Maldiney's in Lyon, where the latter held the chair of general philosophy, phenomenological anthropology, and aesthetics. References to Maldiney can be found throughout Deleuze's writings, in *A Thousand Plateaus*, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, *The Movement-Image*, *The Time-Image*, up to *What Is Philosophy?*, especially to two of Maldiney's texts on art history, aesthetics, and the philosophy of art: 'L'esthétique des rythmes' from 1967 and 'L'art et le pouvoir du fond' from 1973, both of which were reprinted in *Regard Parole Espace* (1994), the edition Deleuze and Félix Guattari cite. Along with Georges Didi-Huberman and Jean-François Lyotard, Maldiney was a key figure in contemporary French art history and philosophy during Deleuze's lifetime. Deleuze drew on several examples of artworks also discussed by Maldiney. Furthermore, he makes use of central concepts, such as *sensation,* the relation between *systole* and *diastole,* the *Mal* as stain or mark, the *aeon,* and not least *rhythm,* which Maldiney introduced into his discussions on art. In addition, Deleuze draws on Maldiney's aesthetic and art-philosophical considerations on the will-to-form and the will-to-art, as well as on chaos and rhythm as a point of reference of art to the world. Finally, Deleuze's references to Klee's writings, Cézanne's letters, Alois Riegl's questions of style and his *Spätrömische Kunstindustrie,* and Erwin Straus's *Vom Sinn der Sinne* can also be traced back to texts quoted by Maldiney. Through a comparison of these different references, it becomes clear that Deleuze drew especially on the connections made by Maldiney between philosophy and art history, which brought together and discussed the reciprocal relations between artists' statements, the formal analyses of paintings, aesthetics, and the philosophy of art. Nevertheless, the reversal that Deleuze carried out was to give Maldiney's phenomenological approach a poststructural and topological inflection, as can already be seen in the conclusion of *Difference and Repetition* in which the relation of a child to the world is thought as a twist, a helix, and a figure 8. Deleuze's recourse, in his history and theory of art, to phenomenology and its relation to art, as well as his critique of phenomenology was, as should be shown in the following, strongly indebted to the work of Maldiney.

Form

In the context of art, the distinction between *sign, image,* and *form* is, according to Maldiney, decisive. For Maldiney, sign and image are remote from art. They aim firstly at identification and recognition. Form, in contrast, is neither intentional nor signifying. A sign or an image refers to something other than itself, to a referent or model, in relation to which the sign or image either substitutes itself (in the

case of a referent) or calls something to mind (in the case of a model). The artistic form on the other hand manages without referent or model. Rather, it functions immanently, by coinciding with its own genesis. It is *Gestaltung* (formation) and not *Gestalt* (form). In distinction to the mental image, which represents and illustrates, Maldiney develops another theory of the image, which he thinks based on the showing-itself of the pictorial phenomenon in art. Here, the function of the image is not to imitate, but to appear. Whereas the image of reality consists in the illusion of its appearance, the reality of the image is the actual event of its appearing. (Escoubas 2003, 142-5) In turn, the being of appearing itself is reflected on and made visible in painting. (Escoubas 2003, 187) Inasmuch as appearing is subject to the conditions of form as well as of becoming-form, Maldiney's theory of the image pertains in particular to art. In this connection, Maldiney makes a connection between form and rhythm, whereby he distinguishes between form and the genesis of form, the "formants," as follows: 'A figurative form has [...] two dimensions: an 'intentional representative' dimension, according to which it is an image, and a 'genetic rhythmic' dimension, which makes of it precisely a form.' (Maldiney 1994, 155-6) Hence, Maldiney's considerations of ancient stelae, Chinese watercolors, the mosaics of Ravenna, the works of Hercules Seghers, van Goyen, Uccello, and Cézanne (fig. 1) make clear that differentiating pictorial elements are brought in relation to one another to produce, in the becoming of forms, a signifying present.

Figure 1: Paul Cézanne, *The Garden Terrace at Les Lauves*, 1906, pencil and watercolour on paper, 43 x 54 cm, New York, Eugen Victor Thaw Collection © akg-images.

Figure 2: Francis Bacon, *Study after Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X*, oil on canvas, 118 x 153 cm, De Moines, Iowa, De Moines Art Center © VG Bild-Kunst.

The figure of a structural reversal, according to which difference generates the image, also forms the starting point for Deleuze's considerations on art. On a number of occasions, Deleuze likewise comes close to an image situated beyond representation, narration, depiction, or illustration. What Deleuze is concerned with here is not, however, a dialectical negation, which would simply reject depiction only to remain tied to it in the same stroke. Instead, Deleuze carries out a structural reversal, one that can go in two directions: the first, the Platonic path, starts from prior identities in order to think the difference between copy and original; the second is the path of modernity, which starts from difference; depiction here would be un-

derstood as an operative interplay of difference. In the unfolding of this second, specifically modern path, Deleuze argues in relation to modern art and Pop Art, and in *Difference and Repetition* in particular to Andy Warhol. In reference to the painting of Francis Bacon, Deleuze introduces the distinction between "figure" and "figuration," which echoes Maldiney's distinction between form and the genesis of form. Figuration, the realm of depiction, representation, and illustration, refers to the respective form of an object. With Deleuze, one can also understand under figuration the reference of an image to other images, as in the case of Bacon's Pope series, which refers to Titian and Diego Velázquez, as well as to film stills from *Battleship Potemkin* (fig. 2).

However, the force and singularity of theses paintings do not lie in the figuration. In this connection, Deleuze quote's Klee's formula that art's purpose is "not to render the visible, but to render visible." Both the mode of abstraction as well as that of the isolated and deformed figure, which leads to the realm of sensation, makes possible a break with figuration. In his chapter on the diagram in *The Logic of Sensation,* Deleuze refers to a number of positions in painting, such as abstraction, action painting, and *art informel.* In contrast to its depreciation in *The Logic of Sensation* – it should not be forgotten, however, that Deleuze wrote this book at a time when Bacon occupied a contemporary and still disputed position – in *What Is Philosophy?* abstraction is attributed its own intensity of forces through the interaction of form, color, and surface (fig. 3). (Rajchman 1998, 55-76)

> The colored or, rather, coloring void, is already force. Most of the great monochromes of modern painting no longer need to resort to little mural bouquets but present subtle imperceptible variations (which are constitutive of a percept nevertheless), either because they are cut off or edged on one side by a band, ribbon, or section of a different color or tone that, through proximity or distance, changes the intensity of the area of plain, uniform color or because they present almost virtual linear or circular figures, in matching tones, or because they are holed or slit: these are problems of junction, once again, but considerably expanded. In short, the area of plain, uniform color vibrates, clenches or cracks open because it is the bearer of glimpsed forces. And this, first of all, is what makes painting abstract: summoning forces, populating the area of the plain, uniform color with the forces it bears, making the invisible forces visible in themselves, drawing up figures with a geometrical appearance but that are no more than forces – the forces of gravity, heaviness, rotation, the vortex, explosion, expansion, germination, and time. (Deleuze and Guatari 1994, 181-2)

Figure 3: Piet Mondrian, *Tableau 3, with orange-red, yellow, black, blue and grey*, oil on canvas, 50.9 x 44.4 cm, Basel, Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation, Deposit of the Öffentliche Kunstsammlung Basel © Öffentliche Kunstsammlung Basel, Martin P. Bühler.

In a text from 1953, 'Le faux dilemme de la peinture: abstraction ou réalité' – which Deleuze may well have known, as it was also printed in *Regard Parole Espace* – Maldiney, who was primarily interested in abstract art, took leave of the distinction between figurative and abstract art, to instead treat the dynamic configuration of figure and ground present in both figuration and abstraction as being of equal value. In the text 'L'art et le pouvoir du fond,' which Deleuze and Guattari also quote, Maldiney makes clear that in the most powerful works of art we perceive the ground as an analogon of the ground on which we move, or to the space of the landscape that surrounds us and that we traverse. (Maldiney 1994, 182) The visual-haptic pictorial space, which in contrast to the tactile is central to Deleuze's thought, relates on the one hand to the Egyptian and Byzantine art discussed by Maldiney, and on the other to Alois Riegl's considerations on *Kunstwollen*. In his text 'L'esthétique des rythmes,' Maldiney introduces Riegl as follows.

> In Byzantium the same style enlivens with the same meaning, experienced at the level of the forms, the architecture, the sculpture, the mosaics, the enamel, the ivory, the fabrics, and even the ceremony. What do these arts have in common? Something identical that is immanent to each one and nevertheless transcendent through this very identity. Riegl names this identical moment *will-to-art* or *will-to-form* (*Kunstwille*). Is it therefore form that brings about the style? Before answering it is necessary first of all to come to an understanding about form. The will-to-art that brings about the style of artworks is not directed to a system of established forms. A form is nothing in itself. A form *is* not, it *exists.* (Maldiney 1994, 162-3)

Against the background of Maldiney's renunciation of an ontological concept of form and the existence of form as emergence in the sensible, Deleuze develops the concept of transcendental empiricism as an aesthetic that undermines this duality. With a view to Hume, Kant, Husserl, and Heidegger, this concept states 'that in transcendental empiricism, transcendental philosophy is subjected to an empiricist critique, which in a strict sense binds it to experience, and that conversely empiricism is subjected to a transcendental critique, which makes visible the former's dependence on a philosophy of consciousness.' (Rölli 2003, 372) This concept is of interest for art history and its relation to philosophy inasmuch as form is not presented as an intelligible idea or as a non-representable transcendentalism, but is considered in its appearing (Maldiney) and becoming (Deleuze) by means of the sensible.

The Eye and the Hand

The constructed figuration, which stands in contrast to the mimetic figure, is to be understood as a consequence of the optical-tactile space, and the diagram itself is composed 'exclusively of insubordinate color-patches and traits.' (Deleuze 2003, 156) Against this background, Deleuze distinguishes between four values of the hand in relation to the eye in painting: the tactile, the digital, the manual, and the haptic. The first value of the hand, which Deleuze calls the tactile, can be related to the perspectival image. The optical space can be associated with virtual referents such as depth, contour, and relief, so that it can be felt and measured by the hand. In the case of Mondrian, the hand relates to the value of the digital, meaning that it is reduced to the finger, so that the hand is subordinate to vision (fig. 3). If one assumes that perception arises from the optical experience of different points of color, one becomes aware of the extent to which the abstraction of Mondrian creates a purely optical space that releases forces by means of the deframing and isolation of the

color fields. (Egenhofer 2007; 2008) Besides the values of the digital and the tactile, Deleuze introduces the function of the manual. In contrast to abstraction, which functions purely optically, the action painting of Jackson Pollock is distinguished by the manual (fig. 4). (Meister and Roskamm 2007) In this connection, Deleuze also speaks of the insubordination of the hand in relation to the eye, which leads to the dissolution of tactile contours and forms in the process of looking at a picture. '[T]he painting remains a visual reality, but what is imposed on sight is a space without form and a movement without rest, which the eye can barely follow, and which dismantles the optical.' (Deleuze 2003, 155) Besides the tactile, the purely optical, and the manual, Deleuze introduces, by reference to Francis Bacon who is not discussed by Maldiney, just as Maldiney also does not discuss the new figurative painting in France – the fourth value of the hand, the haptic. From the Greek *haptó* (to touch), the haptic function ensures the unification of two senses, the sense of touch and the sense of sight, as ground and horizon. This haptic quality assumes a frontal gaze and a close-up view, as form and background are now located on the same plane. In this moment the haptic is produced, which ensures a dynamic entanglement of eye and hand, vision and space, and surface and depth. Form is situated in a relational structure of space and vision, as well as of eye and hand, as is examined by Riegl by reference to Egyptian and Byzantine art in *Spätrömische Kunstindustrie,* and which both Maldiney and Deleuze place in relation to the art of the twentieth century.

Figure 4: Jackson Pollock, *Number 1A*, 1948, oil and enamel paint on canvas, 172.7 x 264.2 cm, New York, The Museum of Modern Art © VG Bild-Kunst.

Deleuze in turn, starting from the relation between eye and hand, introduces a conceptual art-historical distinction whereby *line* and *color* are related to the eye, while *trait* and *color-patch* relate to the hand. (Deleuze 2003, 154) With recourse to the color-patch as a *Mal,* which according to Maldiney besides the derivation from the Latin (*macula* = mark, stain) also relates to the German verb *malen* (to paint), Deleuze likewise thinks painting in its appearing, yet more strongly in its temporality and as event. The *Mal* in the sense of a zone of color, mark, patch, line, or point forms the ground of the picture, which, in the open, incessantly causes something to appear and to disappear, and as a color event contains the dimension of the unexpected. Color itself, however, is 'not constant, durable, and memorable, but inconstant, new, fresh, simultaneously fleeting and eternal, a non-actualized possibility.' (Vogl 1996, 254) Color itself is not an object. While one can point to objects that have a certain color, color itself, the yellow of yellow, is not an object but a stimulus.

For this, Cézanne, in his letters, uses the term sensation. A sensation is composed of numerous optical stimuli or color perceptions, which are more or less stabilized, and then dissolve again. (Gowing 1977) Besides the reference to Lawrence Gowing and his text 'Cézanne: The Logic of Organized Sensations' (1992) published in French in the journal *Macula,* Deleuze, in his considerations on Cézanne, refers frequently to Maldiney, who poses the question: Between sensation rhythmus is there continuity or discontinuity? And his answer is: Discontinuity and the leap as transition.

> That the 'transitions' of Cézanne – as Bonnard says – are conscious tonal values or, more precisely, in their very precision, encounters of tones, namely singular events that mutually exclude one another and strengthen one another through contrast; this sheds light on the secret and the restlessness of his 'little sensation.' Unlike impressionist notation, Cézanne's sensation is truly a 'phenomenon,' which is to say – in a Heideggerian sense – a mode of encounter. And the discontinuity of the encounters linked to the circumstance that as pedestrians we move step by step is both an obstacle and a support of rhythm, in which the events communicate with one another. At the same time, in the distance of proximity and the proximity of distance, man constantly inhabits the whole world anew. Here, too, rhythm is the articulation of the space-time of the breath. That is what leads to this hesitation in certainty, this trembling through uprightness, which makes Cézanne's space ring like a crystal – in the open. (Maldiney 1994, 169-70)

This vision, in the sense of the empirical simultaneity of perception, is made visible in the painting of Cézanne. It is set out paradigmatically in one of the last works he made: a watercolor showing a view from his studio terrace, whereby the subject can hardly still be determined (fig. 1). The free-floating bottom of the composition is formed by a greenish yellow area, which adjoins from below a horizontal bar of color of a fairly unified structure. These few elements are sufficient to allow the terrace of the Jardin des Lauves to appear before our eyes. This is bordered by a strip of loosely placed blocks suggesting the houses of the Arc valley. The edge of this zone is designated by a few horizontal brushstrokes. Above stretches the horizon with two areas of broadly painted blue, and it is possible that in the triangle in the middle Cézanne has hinted at the peak of Montagne Sainte-Victoire. In itself, however, the sequence of marks means nothing and can only still be perceived temporally. In the light composition the optical space, which is unified with tactile referents such as depth, contour, and relief, is now taken leave of. A perspectival structure, which converts space into a space of touch, conceives light as line. In *La Terrasse du Jardin des Lauves,* as in other paintings by Cézanne, this geometrical light composition is no longer present. There are no cast shadows, which with closed contours or shades of light and dark suggest objects to be rendered and in this way to consolidate into references. Instead, the picture is dotted with zones of color and unpainted areas that capture the blinding luminosity of an indeterminate light.

In the dynamic fleetingness of emerging and disappearing the character of the sensation consolidates in the image. In Cézanne's paintings, these sensations, which create the light, cannot be traced either to a particular time of day or to a particular time of year. When Cézanne detaches the picture from a linear perspective framework and from contour drawing, and differentiates the pictorial elements into traits and color-patches, he creates a loose relation of similarity between the painted and the visible. The traits and color-patches become independent of the single object and can no longer be conclusively attributed to a figure or a clear spatiality. (Boehm 1978, 464) What is represented is therefore also no longer automatically recognizable, but is felt via the sensible. Here, temporalized perception comes up against its own empirical conditions: it is composed of an infinite number of little perceptions, the sensations, which are able to summon perception in its changeable structure, to more or less stabilize, and to dissolve again.

The more they are called upon to paint sensation, the more these traits, patches, and zones of color – which according to Deleuze are neither significant nor signifying, but asignifying – are forced to break with figuration. In this connection, Deleuze develops in *The Logic of Sensation* the concept of the diagram, which comprises the operative totality of lines and zones, as well as asignifying and nonrepresentational traits and color-patches. Accordingly, the concept of the diagram opens

up a direction in which perception and ontology come into play again. Perception is composed of an infinite number of little (confused) sensations, which are able to summon perception in its changeable structure, to more or less stabilize, and to dissolve again. Space and time are thereby understood as a condition of experience, which is derived from the principle of intensity, and this means that the numerous internal temporalities and the static ordinal genesis are inseparably linked to dynamic and mobile structures. The perceptual conditions of the color-patches (*Mal*) and the traits are contained in the intensity as difference and do not allow themselves to be established abstractly before all experience as pure forms of intuition.

Concept and Aesthetics

Deleuze draws on Maldiney's theory of the sensible in art, which at the same time represents a critique of Hegel's aesthetics. According to Maldiney, due to the dominance of the concept over art, the spirit has stopped being formed and communicated in a perceivable form in artworks. This observation and the critique of the concept are taken seriously by Deleuze, who sets out to consider art in its sensible dimension and to analyze it both formally and structurally. His aesthetics strives for a valorization of the frequently disqualified sensible. As described in *Logic of Sense,* aesthetics suffers from a divisive duality: 'On the one hand, it designates the theory of sensibility as the form of possible experience; on the other hand, it designates the theory of art as the reflection of real experience.' (Deleuze 1990, 260) Deleuze is not concerned, however, 'to talk "about" painting with philosophical concepts taken from elsewhere, but to develop a theory' that aligns itself with what 'this painting produces itself.' (Balke 1998, 22) In this way, art becomes the object of a fundamental encounter, which forces one to think, and discloses the being of the sensible in the artwork. Against the background of the critique of Hegel, according to whom everything is thought starting from the concept, Maldiney answers as follows: 'If art does not owe everything to the concept, it owes everything to rhythm. Here, logic and aesthetics diverge.' (Maldiney 1994, 153) Only starting from rhythm can an aesthetics of the sensible be thought, just as there is only aesthetic rhythm. Against this background, he develops his attempt to replace the concept by rhythm, which accepts the open.

Due to his considerations on rhythm, Maldiney's theory of the image is closely connected to the question of temporality and becoming. His undertaking is to discuss rhythm, which was primarily applied to the various temporal arts, such as dance, music, and poetry, in relation to art.[2] (Maldiney 1994, 160) In this connection, he refers to the work of the linguist Émile Benveniste, who was able to show that rhythm does not designate a phenomenon of flowing, but a configuration that

brings 'something in a state of movement' (Benveniste 1974, 370-1) into appearance. According to Maldiney, rhythm is thus articulated as a space-time articulation in art too. Rhythm, which can only be perceived in the here and now of its taking place is neither measure nor irregular cadence, but emerges into art out of chaos and as a coexistence of opposing movements. This in turn can be made visible: 'art is the truth of the sensible, because rhythm is the truth of the *aisthesis*' (Maldiney 1994, 153). Against the background of this thesis, Maldiney refers to Richard Hönigswald's *Vom Problem des Rhythmus: Eine analytische Betrachtung über den Begriff der Psychologie* from 1926. Hönigswald's distinction between 'rhythm-form' (*Rhythmusgestalt*) and the 'founding elements' forms the starting point for Maldiney's considerations on rhythm in art.

> To determine a founding element as a single one means observing it from the point of view of acts of producing positing in which it could be formed with others, or could even form. Only through interaction, which is present in the forming production itself, is the single element determined. (Hönigswald 1926, 27)

Hence, the founding elements, which are only differentiated from one another in the act of forming, are only given from the point of view of rhythm-form. The interaction, which Hönigswald calls rhythm-form, is linked by Maldiney not only with aesthetics; Maldiney describes and thinks rhythm as a coexistence of complementary movements in art. Maldiney understands these as a shattering of calculable space and as a visual and sensible manifold, which can be seen especially in the paintings of Cézanne (fig. 1). The relation of the viewer to the painted image bears comparison here with the relation of man to the world as landscape. Starting from the distinction between cartographic and landscape space, as developed by Erwin Straus in *Vom Sinn der Sinne,* Maldiney proceeds on the assumption that the landscape dismantles all temporal, spatial, and concrete determinations. Central here is that this dismantling takes hold not only of the physical world, but also man in the landscape enclosing him. In this moment, man also stops being an objectifiable being. This relation to the landscape, which is equally a relation to the world, forms the origin of art:

> However, the first moment, as Klee says, is that of being lost. Being lost is the situation of man in the space of the landscape, the first form of the 'nowhere without negation.' The space of the landscape owes its precise meaning and its psychological and existential status to the analysis developed by Erwin Straus in his study "Die Formen des Räumlichen" published in *Nervenarzt*

> in 1930. [...] As enveloping fullness, in the middle of which we are *here,* it is the primordial spatiality that comprises neither system of reference nor coordinates nor point of origin. (Maldiney 1994, 149)

According to Maldiney, nobody has better described this sense of being lost as the first moment in art than Cézanne in his letters to Émile Bernard, in which he describes how he loses himself in his motif, for example in the view of Montagne Sainte-Victoire (fig. 1). In the loose and multidirectional structure of colors, lines, and planes, the distinction between figure and ground, as well as between form and content is dismantled and shown as an *a posteriori* mode of perception. It is preceded by the emergence from dynamic structural relations. (Uhlig 2007, 302-5) In itself the sequence of marks can only still be perceived as relational structure. A vertical lilac strip can be made out between two brown blocks of color that can be interpreted as a tree trunk as well as its shadow. Likewise, the lines above the green patch could describe the branches and twigs of the tree as well as thick shrubbery. This indeterminacy as 'the constant reciprocal reinterpretation of the same color-plane-text towards different directions of meaning' (Boehm 1978, 464) generates a temporality that also concerns space. If one reads the light unpainted patches as a low wall on which a flowerpot is standing, then in view of the possibility that the vertical lilac strip can be interpreted as either a tree trunk or its shadow, the question unavoidably arises whether this tree painted with a broken outline is found *in front of* or *behind* the wall. This undecidability leads to a back-and-forth movement of the objects situated spatially before or behind in relation to their surroundings. This shifting relation between form and chaotic as well as differentiating patches of color cannot stabilize here.

Systole and Diastole

According to Maldiney, art responds to the invasion of chaos and the visual manifold in different ways. The first response to the abyss (Cézanne) or to chaos (Klee) is vertigo. (cf. von Hermann 2003) 'In vertigo we are exposed to all of space, which in a universal recoiling around us and in us is abyssal itself. Vertigo is an inversion and a contamination of the near and the far.' The second response to the abyss is developed by Maldiney on the basis of rhythm, in which the open is given as a 'being-manifest.' 'Movement no longer arises from an engulfing, but from an emergence.' (Maldiney 1994, 150-1) Starting from this premise, Maldiney describes rhythm as a movement of expansion and contraction, which he describes with recourse to the conceptual pair systole and diastole. In connection with art, it is this continuous rhythm that, in the open, appears (systole) and disappears (diastole), and manifests the being of

the image. (Goddard 2008, 100) According to Maldiney, painting is not there to be seen, but to allow to see. The distance to the perceived picture is suspended, and instead the organization of the sensible manifold comes to the fore.

For Deleuze too, the eye, which in its relation to perspective construction institutes the domination over the world, no longer forms the starting point of his philosophy. The departure from the perspectival image means that although pictures are always seen, they are no longer addressed to an eye, but rather open a view onto an image without a frame. Painting is 'traversed by a deframing power that opens it onto a plane of composition or an infinite field of forces.' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 188) Here, the distance to the picture, which within the perspectival image is constructed via the eye point, is suspended, so that the sensation as optical stimulus functions directly on the nervous system and takes hold of the body as a physiological signal of pure color zones and lines. The missing eye point, and thus the missing vanishing point, leads to a catastrophe of drawing and painting that emerges together with the rhythm.

Deleuze calls this organization of the picture in painting the diagram, which does not function in a figurative or perspectival way, but brings forth the figure, which besides contour and structure forms one of the three basic elements of painting. These three basic elements – structure, contour, and figure – make it possible to speak of a movement in the image. This movement acts in two directions. Deleuze calls the first, with recourse to Maldiney, systole, which passes from the structure through the contour to the figure; conversely, the second, the diastole, passes from the figure through the contour to the structure. In this way, the diagram as relational structure and total operation of structure, contour, figure is mobile, as described by Deleuze in relation to Bacon's Pope series (fig. 2): 'The diagram always has effects that go beyond it. As an unbridled manual power, the diagram dismantles the optical world, but at the same time, it must be reinjected into the visual whole.' (Deleuze 2003, 138)

Like a dark curtain, the structure fills the whole picture plane. Related to the structure is the contour, the yellow lines that serve as a support. The contour refers to the remnants of a throne; the backrest for example sinks in the shallow depth so that it is not clear whether it is in front of or behind the curtain. The structure thereafter presents a uniform color field, which nevertheless as a curtain curls spatially around the contour like a cylinder. Enthroned on this contoured support floats the figure of the Pope, who is clinging to the yellow poles of the armrests. The systole, that is, the movement that begins with the structure and arrives at the figure via the contour, leads in this moment to an isolation of the figure: the isolated figure of the Pope, who supports himself acrobatically on the armrests. The diastole begins conversely with the figure to lead to the structure. The pastose white brush marks,

which render the figure's lower garment, transition into the round curved poles, which like a parted curtain extend the folds of cloth outwards. These curving dark-green strokes, like the vertical stripes, lead to a deframing of the picture. In this case, the contour changes, becomes a semi-sphere. In this way, the figure is dissolved in the structure, in the picture plane, so that the contour no longer acts as a deformer, 'but as a curtain where the Figure shades off into infinity.' (Deleuze 2003, 32) This also shows the diversity of the function of the contour, which as a membrane ensures a communication between figure and material structure. The contour is initially isolating, it acts as a deformer; by unifying with the structure, however, it becomes the curtain behind which the figure dissolves.

> The Figure of the screaming Pope is already hidden behind the thick folds (which are almost laths) of a dark, transparent curtain: the top of the body is indistinct, persisting only as if it were a mark on a striped shroud, while the bottom of the body still remains outside the curtain, which is opening out. This produces the effect of a progressive elongation, as if the body were being pulled backwards by its upper half. (Deleuze 2003, 29)

If the systole leads to an isolation and athletics of the figure, the diastole develops a contraction and dissolving of the figure. Within the painting everything is distributed into diastole and systole. The systole that compresses the body and passes from the structure to the figure; the diastole that stretches and dissolves it and leads from the figure to the structure. But there is also a double movement. The systole as first movement can also function in a diastolic way, when the body is elongated to better terminate itself. In the same way, a systole can also operate in a diastolic way when the body contracts in order to escape. Even when the body dissolves, it remains contracted through the forces that take hold of it to deliver it to the surrounding space. It is the coexistence of these double movements of systole and diastole in the painting that Deleuze calls rhythm, and the synthetic character of these movements leads to an actualization of the sensation. Accordingly, the sensation is not a snapshot of movement, even if Bacon's work often draws on Muybridgean movements; rather, sensation is the movement that passes from one order to another, that transposes one plane onto another.

In this thinking the dim curtain is central, who draws through the figure of the screaming pope clawing at his throne in Bacon's *Study after Velazquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X.*. Not only does it deform the figure, it also lets it float placelessly within the pictorial space. The yellow structure in the lower image field, on which a further curtain opens up, and the backrest of a throne behind the figure, mark off a stage in form of a three-dimensional circle. This establishes a tiny, even shallow

depth, within which the localisation of the pope figure remains indefinite. As a result of this indefiniteness, an alternation between appearance and disappearance of the figure is triggered in the painting. That's why the question of whether the pope is located in front of the curtain and thus meets the viewer, or whether he submerges behind the curtain in the black darkness, cannot be answered. This question is in turn considered by Deleuze in his book to where he describes the effect of a progressive elongation which can be ascribed to how the figure becomes indistinct behind the thick folds (which are almost laths) of a dark, transparent curtainshade. The portrait of the pope dissipates into the structure. (Deleuze 2003, 32). According to Deleuze, the impression arises that the curtain striates the entire surface and thus the figure rhythmically withdraws and emerges. Yet, he replies to this with the following observation: if one looks closely at the curtain in the lower image field, it becomes evident that the curtain itself 'falls between the two planes, in the interval between the planes.' (Deleuze 2003, 138) While it appears to float in the foreground in the upper image field, it moves to the background in the lower part of the picture, because a second, wider curtain, painted over it, appears spatially in front of it. In their flatness and semi-transparency, both curtains not only overlap with the yellow structure, that suggests a room, but are themselves a zone of indistinguishability among the picture planes in the spatial foreground and background. In order to consider these dim curtains in their relation to surface and depth, Deleuze uses the term 'shallow depth'. In this, he refers to Clement Greenberg, who used the term 'shallow depth' in his article *Pollock five years later* in the New York Times Magazine from April 16 1961, which was published in French in 1977 in the publication *Macula*. (Greenberg 1977, 50) According to Greenberg, Pollock's drips and the empty spaces between them, which in their painterly web become woven together, respond to the flat multiperspectivity of Cubism and generate – in the French translation by Marc Chenetier – a similarly ambiguous illusion of shallow depth (*elles créent une semblable illusion ambigue de profondeur superficielle* [*shallow depth*]). In the footnote on *shallow depth* the translator adds that the contradiction of shallow/depth can also be described as *profondeur maigre*, which he borrows from the vocabulary of oceanography. *Maigre* here qualifies the shallowness of the upper deep ocean, which as a weak, thick and diaphanous surface leads to a reduced illusion.

Deleuze transfers the ambiguity of the oceanic shallow depth, which Greenberg recognises in Pollock's painting, to Bacon's painting. Because space tips over into flatness in Bacon's painting, it has 'an Egyptian look to it' – according to Deleuze. With recourse to Alois Riegl, form and ground are connected to each other by the contour and hence lie on a single plane of a near and haptic vision. But the difference to Egyptian representation consists in that in Bacon's painting there is 'no

perspective, instead a shallow depth' which separates foreground and background. It divides 'both planes – the foreground of the figure and the background of the colour field'. Furthermore, the shallow depth does not constitute an environment, in which the figures are positioned, rather Bacon leaves its 'validity intact'. Through this, it attains an 'active presence'. In this sense the curtain in *Study after Velazquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X* becomes the autonomous subject of the intermediate space. The curtain 'occupies and fills the shallow depth' and thus constructs a rhythmical connection between the planes of figure and ground. The curtain as shallow depth consists in turn of significant strokes and spots that use different pictorial techniques in relation to the image source.

Due to the folding of the surface, this curtain suddenly becomes three-dimensional, for the drapery of the flat curtain, establishing a spatial image plane itself, unfurls towards us through the deformation of the fold. The surface doesn't penetrate depth that can found beyond it. Rather depth is, in reverse, an effect of the surface. It is the surface that generates a folding and shallow depth. Three years before *Study after Velazquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X.,* another version was developed in 1950, which marks out the curtain in a bright red that creates a clear contrast to the purple clothing of the pope as well as with the grey background. What seems essential in relation to shallow depth though is, that the curtain surrounds the pope spatially like a cage. Noticeable here on the left is a perspectival tapering. Curtain rod and curtain rings are also depicted in the upper part of the picture, letting the coloured stripes become a curtain. In the last version of *Study after Velazquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X.* from 1953 the curtain coincides with the surface of the painting. At this point it is important to mention that the canvases are not primed, that the paint is absorbed by the canvas, and that in all three paintings the naked canvas can be seen in the light brown areas. The transformation in the dealing with the curtain makes one thing very clear in the last version from 1953: there no longer is a recognisable curtain rod that allows the curtain to become a motif in the painting. Instead, the whole painting becomes a curtain.

The different pictorial techniques of folding, overpainting and their destruction of narrative figuration and reproduction reveal an overlay process in the picture. They allow a variety of illusions to emerge. The uncanny aspect of this painting consists therefore not in the recollection of the many recurring images as clichés, but in their simultaneity of here and there, the not completely present and the not completely absent. Here, the image between actuality and virtuality becomes the subject of painting. Consequently, Bacon's painting sensuously demonstrates how the canvas is a site for endless numbers of illusions, and that the ghostly phenomena are not reproductions of a fixed object, but instead constitute the sinking and the emerging of these images in water – in the shallow depth. But the medium – that

creates this revealing appearance and concealing disappearance of illusions – is the curtain itself, that becomes her the function of a milieu.

Diagram and Milieu

The violent chaos stands in relation to the figurative givens, just as the rhythm in relation to the open brings about a new order in painting. While in the case of Maldiney chaos forms the starting point of all art, Deleuze and Guattari think rhythm in a permanent relation to chaos. 'From chaos, *Milieus* and *Rhythms* are born.' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 345) Chaos is the milieu of all milieus. From this chaos different milieus emerge that consolidate or dissolve back into chaos. In the milieu as form, the relation to chaos is in this sense permanently present. Rhythm on the other hand arises when there is a transition from one milieu to the next. The in-between is the common condition of rhythm and milieu, while the difference lies in the fact that rhythm emerges between the milieus that have rhythm. That is why rhythm and the milieus that have rhythm are never on the same plane. (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 346) Here, they distinguish between a *functional rhythm* and a *becoming-expressive of rhythm* and take into account the becoming of differences, connections, and concatenations. With regard to the consolidating and closed milieus, which in art are broken apart by means of defiguration, one of Deleuze and Guattari's central interests in art becomes clear. In the moment in which the viewer stands in front of an artwork he or she becomes immersed in a milieu, and in this moment all distance to the artwork is suspended. At the same time, however, art prevents a particular milieu from stabilizing. Instead, an open and becoming in-between of rhythm opens up between the different milieus. In his phenomenological philosophy of art, Maldiney addresses himself to rhythm as a movement of appearing and disappearing.[3] In their philosophy of becoming Deleuze and Guattari grasp rhythm as a movement between chaos as ground and the forming milieus. No longer the static form nor the spatial juxtaposition of forms, but rhythm in its space-time dimension allows philosophical aesthetics and art in the twentieth century to encounter one another in a new way. Maldiney's considerations on temporality in the image and on rhythm as a category of the sensible were decisive for Deleuze and Guattari's thought on a dynamics of space-time and on the time- and movement-image. By making visible in the image a loose, multidirectional structure made up of color-patches and traits, Cézanne, Klee, Mondrian, Pollock, and Bacon disclose a differentiation immanent in the image. Here, the distinction between figure and ground as well as between form and content is dismantled and shown as an *a posteriori* mode of perception that is preceded by an emergence from dynamic structural relations. (Uhlig 2007, 302-5) On the basis of the metonymic relations the image follows the sense

of the *and*. Maldiney turns the constant and incessant sequence, which repeatedly switches from the boundless back into the specific, into the phenomenological: 'It is diastole–systole: the world that seizes me by closing in around me, the self that opens to the world and opens the world itself.' (Deleuze 2003, 42-3) Particularly in 'L'esthétique des rythmes' he develops a chiasmus, a double movement of expansion and contraction that he describes with the conceptual pair systole and diastole, and founds the relation to the world and to the open in painting. Deleuze on the other hand directs the attention to the connection, the *and,* which connects the double movement of systole and diastole. As a consequence, the metonymic relations in the image can be described with Deleuze as '*nonorganic* vitality' (Deleuze 2003, 129) and second abstraction, which follows the sense of 'the "and" that moves outside,' (Rajchman 1998, 64) and which allows a pure concatenation to come to light in the place of a recourse to the subject. Deleuze created a concept of abstraction that comprises both abstract and figurative art. This means that in the image the differentiating pictorial elements are not placed in a linear connection of a chain of signifiers, but rather operate in a changing and topological structure of relations. This 'second sense of the abstract' (Rajchman 1998, 64) distinguishes itself from the first, which relates to the Platonic sense of abstract form and defines a pure, intelligible idea. The second abstraction on the other hand has its ideal neither in the negation of the visible picture nor in the empty canvas, but comprises in the same measure the sensible and the intelligible, which exist together without the sensible in the image being subordinated to its intelligible form and the essence of the image coming to light in the form. Rather, the image has its essence and law in its sensible appearance. In the second form of abstraction, the classical organic organization of the image made up of a whole and parts is replaced by a planar structure that pervades the painting. The painting of Cézanne for example is composed 'as if the classical *organization* gave way to a *composition*.' (Deleuze 2003, 128) The relation between composition and organization no longer creates a unified, organic pictorial context, but makes visible the disintegration of the organic pictorial order itself (fig. 1). Correspondingly, the rhythm discloses on the one hand the becoming-form in the image, and grasps on the other the relation of the image to an outside, as it is also dealt with in Bacon (fig. 2). In the place of composition, the diagram operates as a disorganized, deformed, and virtual totality, as a visual abyss, which simultaneously brings about order and rhythm. In the measure in which the organization disintegrates, the diagram emerges as an operative totality of lines and zones, of asignifying and non-representational traits and color-patches. The diagram provides a theory of the sensible that is simultaneously a theory of forming and undermines the divisive duality between a 'theory of sensibility as the form of possible experience' and a 'theory of art as the reflection of real experience.' (Deleuze 1990, 260) While the

philosophical concept of abstraction passes from the sensible to the reflection of the perceived, Deleuze insists that even the most abstract image is given sensibly. He does not situate the forming after the perception and nor does he allocate it to reflection, but looks for it in the perception itself. The diagram is the thought level of the image that performs in itself an ongoing mediation between the image and its outside. Depending on the nature of the diagram, the image enters into a relation of representation, or else does not. Although the perception of the diagram can be blocked through the depiction of a figure, figurativeness in no way excludes the second abstraction in painting: painting is constantly thrown back onto its traits and color-patches and does not look for support in an order that exists outside painting.

In contrast to Maldiney, who thinks the relation of art to the outside as world, Deleuze and Guattari replace the world with the milieu. When Deleuze and Guattari quote from the lecture *Über die moderne Kunst,* given by Klee in Jena in 1924, they comment on this as follows. Everything begins, Klee says, with the fact that

> the artist begins by looking around him- or herself, into all the milieus, but does so in order to grasp the trace of creation in the created, of naturing nature in natured nature; then, adopting 'an earthbound position,' the artist turns his or her attention to the microscopic, to crystals, molecules, atoms, and particles, not for scientific conformity, but for movement, for nothing but immanent movement. (2004, 372)

Repeatedly Deleuze and Guattari give Maldiney's phenomenological approach to art as the truth of appearing a structural and topological inflection, which is also accompanied by a critique of phenomenology, as emerges in *What Is Philosophy?* 'Phenomenology needs art as logic needs science; Erwin Straus, Merleau-Ponty, or Maldiney need Cézanne or Chinese painting. The lived turns the concept into nothing more than an empirical opinion as psychosociological type.' (1994, 149) For the history of art a distinction can be made productive from this dispute: between a distanceless but precise, sensible, phenomenological description of art on the one hand and a resulting structural and topological analysis of the artwork on the other. This is thought, however, without the relation of a subject to the world, but as a relation of chaos, rhythm, and the resulting milieu.

Translated by Benjamin Carter.

Notes

1. Henri Maldiney was born in 1912 in Meursault on the Côte d'Or. At the École normale supérieure in Paris he studied philosophy under Léon Brunschvicg. Looking back he remarked that his most important philosophical influence during this period was Jean Cavaillès. In the following years he began studying the writings of Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger. After World War II Maldiney obtained a doctorate in philosophy and art history. He taught at Ghent University and developed a psychoanalytically oriented phenomenology of art drawing on Erwin Straus, Ludwig Binswanger, and Roland Kuhn. Subsequently, until 1980, he held the chair of general philosophy, phenomenological anthropology, and aesthetics in Lyon. In the years up to his death in 2013 he lived in relative seclusion in the south of France. (Maldiney 2007, 182, 184)
2. Maldiney addresses rhythm in the image consistently, not only in 'L'esthétique des rythmes' from 1967, but also for example in *L'art, l'éclair de l'être* from 1993 or *Art et existence* from 2003.
3. On Deleuze's use of phenomenology, see especially Andermann 2006.

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Deleuze and Didi-Huberman on Art History

Gustavo Chirolla and Juan Fernando Mejía Mosquera

The work of Georges Didi-Huberman has rethought art history in a number of fundamental ways, and has drawn significantly on the work of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari to do so. In particular, the notions of the survival (*Nachleben*) of the image, of the *dynamogram* of art history, of a non-humanist art history, and of a rhizomatic temporality, or 'Renaissance' as Didi-Huberman puts it, owe a significant debt to Deleuze and Guattari. There are two important mediators of this relationship: Aby Warburg and Friedrich Nietzsche. While Didi-Huberman has written a book on Warburg, and has been deeply influenced by him, Deleuze and Guattari – perhaps surprisingly – never mention Warburg's work.[1] Nevertheless, they share a great predecessor in the figure of Nietzsche, who through Deleuze's book *Nietzsche and Philosophy* enables Didi-Huberman to bring the work of Warburg and Deleuze and Guattari together in his own revaluation of many fundamental art historical values.[2]

Aesthetics of Force

The classical notion of an image explains it as being the result of the relationship of matter and form that expresses a meaning, and in a larger sense as manifesting the 'spirit' of the time or epoch in which it was produced. This humanist understanding of the image regarded time and history as teleological processes within which the history of art manifested the spiritual development or destiny of humanity in a linearly ordered succession of images. For Deleuze and Guattari and Didi-Huberman however, the image is a sign of a certain interaction of forces, a chaotic and often arbitrary interaction that nevertheless expresses an underlying 'diagram' or aesthetics of force.[3] The image-sign is not the result of relations between matter and form, but between materials and the forces that animate them. This new diagram for the production of art emerges with Mannerism, before being fully developed in the Baroque.[4] As Deleuze writes in *The Fold*; 'In the Baroque the coupling of material-force is what replaces matter and form (the primal forces being those of the soul).' (1993, 35)

The notion of the survival of images developed by Didi-Huberman is possible thanks to the set of Deleuzian concepts that we call an 'aesthetics of force,' and describes the relationship of memory to images. Warburg says that memory is *dynamorphoric,* meaning that it bears and transforms forces, but it is not a transmitter of meaning. In this sense, Warburg argues, memory is a *Dynamogramm*, an idea which is, as Didi-Huberman observes, a response to Nietzsche's desire for a psychology of forces rather than meanings (2002, 180-182). The *Dynamogramm* gives us knowledge of its constituent forces, and as such may also offer a morphology of force (2002, 136). This debt to Nietzsche is clearly shared by Deleuze, whose own aesthetics of force also draws on Nietszche's ontology to give an account of art and images. The important point here is not simply that Didi-Huberman relies on Deleuze's *Nietzsche and Philosophy* in his explanation of the play of forces in an image, but that this idea is also modulated by its passage from Nietzsche to Warburg, a passage that requires us to rethink our understanding of art history.

Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition* was another important influence on Didi-Huberman's reading of Warburg. In particular, the crucial notion of survival in Warburg is reworked by Didi-Huberman through Deleuze's understanding of the eternal return as repetition. This notion of the 'eternal return of the same,' as Nietzsche put it, is not understood by Deleuze to mean the return of the identical, but as saying that what is the same in what returns is difference. For Didi-Huberman, Nietzsche wrote about the immanence of plastic force, and Deleuze interpreted this as the repetition of difference, but it was Warburg who applied superior empiricism to art history.[5] The notion of *Nachleben* shows that historical time is a plastic force that does not cease to come back, does not cease to survive, and in each survival does not cease to be metamorphised. There is no *Nachleben* without metamorphosis.

Art history as a practice is organised, Didi-Huberman argues, around conceptual couplings – matter-form from Aristotle to Vasari, and from Kant to Panofsky, and material-forces from Nietzsche to Warburg and Deleuze (2002, 389). Each of these genealogies are organised around quite different philosophical problems, and indeed Didi-Huberman believes that to conceive art history according to an aesthetics of force offers a significant philosophical alternative to the humanist art historians (primarily Gombrich and Panofsky) who have attempted to cut out the Nietzschean thread running through Warburg's work, because it puts the humanist character of the discipline in jeopardy (2002, 142-143). Didi-Huberman (with Warburg), on the other hand, wants to reinvent art history as a practice, so that it ceases being a humanist history of art and undergoes what he calls a *renaissance*. In developing this concept Didi-Huberman considers its various existing meanings, beginning with Winckelmann's work on the Italian Renaissance (2002, 11-

27). Didi-Huberman shows how Winckelmann's model of art history arises from an *organic* notion of history, which imagines that it develops in the same way as an embryo (for example) grows into a fully mature animal. When Winckelmann writes about the Renaissance he pictures it as culture's point of full maturity and perfection, a moment of flourishing after which only decline and decadence was possible. Jacob Burkhardt (a crucial source for both Warburg and Nietzsche) on the contrary, thinks of the Renaissance in vital but not organic terms, regarding it as *impure* rather than complete (Didi-Huberman 2002, 110-111). For Burckhardt, there is no Art History without a morphology of forms in time, and he understood these forms as being constituted by a play of forces (*Potenzen*) from which they derive their various modes of existence. Nietzsche regarded Burkhardt as his master, as we can read in his letters (Didi-Huberman 2002, 118), and various Nietzschean concepts can be traced to Burkhardt such as 'living fossils' and 'mobile elements in history'. As Didi-Huberman puts it, 'in Burkhardt, time is a time of frequentation, hybridisation, anachronism; and so it is a foretelling of Warburg's survival' (2002, 113). Burkhardt's work on the Renaissance and Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy* are two of Warburg's most important sources. The Apollonian and the Dionysian are the figures of Nietzsche's early aesthetics of force, and although it is connected to the *Dynamogramm*, Warburg's concept also goes beyond Nietzsche. For Nietzsche music was the Dionysian art par excellence, while for Warburg both Apollonian and Dionysian forces are at work in painting. Warburg was able to find in marble what Nietzsche could only find in sound: the genius of existence itself, a will that makes itself be understood (Didi-Huberman 2002, 181). In the same way that Nietzsche describes music and tragedy and Warburg painting and sculpture, Deleuze describes the procedure of art as based on non-visible or non-perceptible forces, twilight forces, as in Bacon, forces that the body has to face and make visible through its effects, its shakes, spasms and retching. In Deleuze's diagram of artistic production material-forces are equivalent to Nietzsche's Dionysian element, whilst the emergent forms are equivalent to the Apollonian element. As Didi-Huberman puts it, 'here there are no constructed forms without the abandonment to forces. There is no Apollonian beauty without a Dionysian background.' (2002, 270)

Renaissance

In his 1893 work on Botticelli, Warburg follows Burkhardt in claiming that the Renaissance must not be understood as a moment of splendour and maturity, as an accomplished form that incarnated its content in the matter and technique of the time. Warburg imagines a different mode of occurrence, a different mode of return, a different kind of life that can resurface and be reborn in a way that can-

not be explained as the successful union of matter and form, but as a violent and surprising anomaly, living in spite of its models as a force with multiple relations and tensions including those of time. In this sense, *renaissance* means the survival of stubborn elements of the past that emerge in unconscious ways, as a violent, unpredictable kind of life. In the notion of *Nachleben*, the term *Leben* (life) stands for a kind of germinal life that grows from an origin that doesn't stop coming back, an impure origin acting as a vital residue that survives in its repetitions, and constantly gives culture its beginning. In this sense, *Nachleben* anachronizes history as Didi-Huberman shows (2002, 86), by expressing the coexistence of heterogeneous times. This is why we speak of a 'time-image,' because the image is made of different and heterogeneous times, or configured by time as plastic force. The coexistence in an image of heterogenous times that are in tension, in contradiction, in diverse stratifications and contrapositions, and that are emerging in unexpected movements against the chronological flow of time – all this produces an anachronistic time, and an anachronistic image. Critical movements, unexpected irruptions, tectonic and overlapping layers of history are the geological morphology of survival and explain how the past can be reborn and never ceases surviving in the present.[6] This utterly inorganic model of life clearly echoes Deleuze's concept of the Body without Organs.

Although Didi-Huberman references different art historians than do Deleuze and Guattari, we can nevertheless trace a number of similarities and echoes between them. Both seek to construct a non-humanist art history out of an aesthetics of force. For example, the notion of a non-organic vitality in Deleuze comes from Willhelm Worringer, while Didi-Huberman pursued a very similar idea following in the footsteps of Burkhardt and Warburg and using their concepts of *Nachleben* and vital residues. Both proposed a new notion of life to the organic-teleological notion of life at the basis of humanist art history. For Deleuze inorganic life emerges in the Gothic and in Mannerism as a set of forces of deformation. Nevertheless, the main elements of the concept; its multiple heterogeneous connections, the fact it doesn't take place in an euchronistic time but in an anachronistic one, its connections in a transversal time, and the emergence of the event, makes the connection between Warburg and Deleuze and Guattari, and their concepts of dynamogramm and rhizome, obvious.

Psychoanalysis and Seismography

Before going further it is necessary to point out that there is a basic difference (a difference of philosophical sensibility) between Deleuze and Didi-Huberman concerning their relation to Freud and psychoanalysis. One of the main aspects of this difference is the central position in Didi-Huberman's work of the notion of the

phantom. While *Difference and Repetition* (1994, 104, 124) and *The Logic of Sense* (and in particular the 'Series of the Phantasm' (1990, 210-216)) contain many references to Freud, and *Nietzsche and Philosophy* also establishes several connections to him, Deleuze discards the theatrical notion of the phantasmatic unconscious after he begins to work with Guattari (he moves, he says, from the theatre to the factory). When Didi-Huberman claims he only differs with Deleuze in his philosophical sensibility, he is referring to this difference over psychoanalysis. But while Deleuze and Guattari do not specifically use the notion of the *phantom*, it nevertheless echoes with Deleuze's concept of hysteria, or his and Guattari's understanding of schizophrenia.

In the chapter on hysteria in his book on Bacon Deleuze talks about the 'portrait' of hysteria that was built by 19th century psychiatry. There he makes reference to every movement this phenomenon produces in bodies: contractions, paralysis, haste, sluggishness, seizures and poses etc.. Deleuze draws a connection between these movements and the figures in Bacons paintings, it allows him to talk about hysteria in the work of the Irish painter, and indeed in painting in general: 'with painting hysteria becomes art' (2003, 52). For Deleuze, the task of painting should be to liberate sensation from representation in such a way that it becomes pure presence. Painting should achieve through lines and colours the visual sensation of an excess of presence. It's been said the hysterical person is the one that imposes its own presence and that for whom things are too present. On the other hand, Didi-Huberman has dedicated a whole book to hysteria: *Invention of Hysteria. Charcot and the Photographic Iconography of the Salpêtrière* (2003). This subject keeps reappearing in all his works. In this book Didi-Huberman points at how important it was for Freud to meet Charcot and work at la Salpêtrière, to attend that theater of hysteria: 'it filled my eyes completely' (Freud's own words) before devoting himself to listening, and to the invention of Psychoanalysis (Didi-Huberman 2003, 80-1). Freud will read hysterical symptoms already recognized by Charcot in terms of a *hiding screen* and will notice the important role of memory (displacements, amnesia) as the key for understanding the formation of the symptom. A decade later, hysterical symptoms were interpreted as unconscious phantoms that, though a fusion of desire, representation and activity, were able to find a figured form (Didi-Huberman 2003, 158-160, 212-214). These references to hysteria give a sense of the differences between Deleuze and Didi-Huberman regarding psychoanalysis. Deleuze in the book on Bacon (published in 1981) renounces any talk about phantoms and the theatre of the unconscious, as what he is interested in when talking about hysteria are the *autoscopic phenomena*: I see and I see myself in a head that I no longer feel is mine, I don't feel I am in my own body but I see myself in that body that I see naked when I'm dressed, etc. This eye's function is seeing but it is dislocated, it is a transient poly-

valent organ of the Body without Organs. The BwO is not populated by phantoms but is traversed by intensities that pass through it, painting as hysteria has equipped our body with eyes in the back or in the belly. Didi-Huberman, on the other hand, acknowledges that Charcot's and Warburg's symptomatologies are totally opposed. Warburg has no regular frame that allows the symptom to be defined as a clinical category as Charcot may have expected; closer to Freud, Warburg's symptom does not relate to a traumatic or neurological determination, instead it is opened to an over-determination. 'With Freud, the hysterical symptom doesn't depend on an iconography anymore: it is not a picture (representative, protocol) nor a reflex (even if it is a traumatism). Instead [Warburg] develops multi-polar dynamogramms.' (Didi-Huberman 2003, 296-7) However, Didi-Huberman also seems to concur with Deleuze when he understands the theatre of hysteria as the *scene that is not meant to be represented* (Mallarme's words). This scene that is not meant to be represented is an excess of presence, this exorbitant gesture 'was nothing but the ostentation of an absence, the shady and clamant vacuity of an empty space' (Didi-Huberman 2003, 252-3). Note that Didi-Huberman's reference here is to Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition* and the section on difference in itself (1994, 67-69).[7]

Furthermore, beyond biographical anecdotes regarding Warburg's experience of mental illness it is possible to *read* his understanding of the art historical process from the point of view of the schizo rather than the phantom. In this sense art history is an experience of forces and affects that disrupt and break down clichés and normative understandings, a catastrophic or even chaotic process that then generates forms and diagrams that returns Warburg, and art history back to a certain equilibrium, or sanity. In this sense the phantasmatic symptoms appearing in art history that Didi-Huberman draws from Warburg could also be seen as schizo-signs. These can be linked to a suggestion made by Didi-Huberman himself: In 1918 Warburg suffers a psychotic breakdown, and this can be understood in his own terms as a seismographic historian as a symptom of WWI. Warburg built an archive with news from every corner of the world, thousands of news reports, he drew the front lines in his notebooks, he traced the trenches and drew the geography of those schizo-movements that were about to swallow millions of human beings. According to Didi-Huberman, Warburg had gone from being a seismograph-historian in the manner of Burckhardt, keeping track of symptoms and keeping a distance from the shakes (quakes), to becoming a seismograph-historian in the manner of Nietzsche, he ended up drowning in the events themselves. In the end, the collapse of European humanity was to take place in his very own mind, and this limit experience drove him to the very verge of madness; 'The frontline and the schizo were in him. And then, just as with the Nietzschean seismograph, he collapsed most abruptly'

(Didi-Huberman 2003, 370). From 1921 to 1924 Warburg was hospitalized at the Bellevue Clinic at Kreuzlingen where Ludwig Binswanger was his doctor, as well as the 'first psychiatrist to introduce Freudian psychoanalysis in an institution for the mentally alienated' (2002, 379). Didi-Huberman thinks that it was due to the special characteristics of Bellevue Clinic that Warburg was able to extract the foundations of a new individual re-composition and the foundations of a new knowledge from madness, in the words of Warburg, 'out of the monster's dialectic'. First, Warburg never stopped writing, an experience that was usually painful and frustrating, but one through which he was trying to battle the chaos of his own psychic forces by charting his delirium using schizo-graphics. Second, thanks to constant conversations and anamnesis therapy with his psychiatrist Dr. Binswanger, who understood psychoanalysis as interpretation essentially based in experience, and developed a perspective that linked psychoanalysis to phenomenology beyond Freudian orthodoxy, which allowed Warburg to find again a 'nucleus of truth to which all of his thought could or should be reborn' (2002, 378). Didi-Huberman offers the suggestion that we can only reference here (and maybe develop elsewhere), that Warburg got from his limit experience

> a knowledge (*Erkenntnis*) that is able to transform the "confession" (*Bekenntnis*) of a schizoid into the cultural theory of symbolic schizos, is able to transform a pathos or a symptom in cultural theory of the pathos (or of the symptom). I can't stop picturing the fascination that Gilles Deleuze would have felt with such a movement. (2002, 368)

Another connection that could be drawn between Didi-Huberman's psychoanalytic language and Deleuze's aesthetics of force is between Deleuze and Guattari's geological model of the unconscious and Warburg's idea of survival. Didi-Huberman connects Deleuze and Guattari's geological morphology to Warburg's notion of *pathosformel*, and uses their geological model of time and of images to discuss Warburg's conception of art history.[8] The concept of survival involves utilises a rhizomatic model of time, a geological *Dynamogramm* of its constituent forces.[9] This idea connects to a very interesting conceptual personae in Warburg's work, the art historian as a seismograph. Warburg, like both Nietzsche and Burkhardt according to Didi-Huberman, are sensible seismographs, receptors of (shock) waves of memory and knowledge. Burkhardt speaks about non-continuous, non-linear, non-teleological forces of time. The seismograph-historian belongs to time and registers the seismic movements of the history of culture as different densities, crises, breakups and catastrophes. (2002, 131, 132)

Warburg was interested in the forms of visualisation of movements in fluid or non-homogeneous mediums, as well as in the work of Etienne-Jules Marey on chronophotography, and in other instruments developed in his day such as the 'myogram' (Didi-Huberman 2002, 124) of the convulsions of a hysteric. For Warburg these devices offered new forms of visibility of the body, ways of making the body's unconscious forces visible. For Didi-Huberman these forms of visualisation work as metaphors by means of which Warburg connects the *Dynamogramm* with the *Pathosformel* (2002, 122-124). The art historical dynamographer reveals the forms and the complex nature of their movements that constitute the history of images, which must be analyzed and cannot be reduced to only one aspect or meaning. She must develop biological and psychological models according to its findings. In his seminar of 1927 Warburg spoke about the threatening nature of historical life, and of how the historian stands on the edge of the abyss, not only describing visible movements, but also inscribing and transmitting the invisible movements that may come to occur, that clash with each other, waiting for the moment to emerge. Didi-Huberman speaks of a tactile record of the symptoms of time (2002, 124) that comes close to Deleuze's notion of the haptic. Events and images resonate in the seismograph, they transmit vibrations and shock waves to an optical device, to an inscription roll that allows them to appear before the sight of others.

There are many references and elements at play in this point. The historian offers his body as the painter offers hers (as Merleau-Ponty suggests, 1964 9-25); the art historian is also sensible to these invisible tectonic movements and her work is also to make them visible to a spectator, to show how art does this job, and to show how it works in an image. The art historian has to show how the image transmits movements, but also how she transmits that movement as it occurs inside herself as a symptom, and in which she may lose herself. Warburg points at a very peculiar dialectic of the image as a way to do justice to the risks of the art historian's work, which Didi-Hubermann (following Walter Benjamin) calls a 'strange dialectics' (2002, 106). The art historian is neither neutral nor objective; she is inscribed in time. There is a strong empathy between Warburg and Nietzsche on this point. Nietzsche and Burkhardt are for him two kinds of seers, singular subjects who are able to experiment with the symptom and see images as occurrences of survival. In this sense they represent two basic methodological aspects of Warburg's own work. (Didi-Huberman 2002, 128-132) For Warburg however, Burkhardt keeps a distance between time and its phenomena, and so does not take the same risks as he and Nietzsche do. The experience of seeing and suffering the symptom he calls 'geological incarnation' in Nietzsche and 'demonic incorporation' (*survivances démoniques*) in himself. (Didi-Huberman 2002, 130) Indeed, in his life Warburg faces phantasmagorical delirium, and the dynamograph becomes, as he explains in the 1927 seminar

on Nietzsche, a form of self-portrait. Warburg sees his own drawings and writings as reactions to the geological movements animating him, and the results of his own body acting as a seismograph.

A-signifying Signs

For Didi-Huberman there is a difference between Deleuze pre- and post-Guattari. This difference emerges in one of Deleuze's lectures from December 1971, the period in which he and Guattari were writing *Anti-Oedipus*, a lecture that is also important for understanding their aesthetics of force. Although Deleuze's subject here is not aesthetic but the overcoding and decoding of the flows of desire, and in particular the shift in social organisation that accompanies this. Deleuze claims that capitalism decodes flows of desire, dismantling the previous hierarchies that had overcoded it, and erecting new machines in their place. Deleuze goes on to show how the released decoded flows are then axiomatised, and offers an example of aesthetic decoding to explain this. Deleuze points to the hierarchical, pyramidical structures of Byzantine painting practiced in Venice, which were a result of 'despotic overcoding';

> there is an old despot, there is the father, there's Jesus and there are the tribes of the Apostles. In one of Delphiore's paintings, there are rows of pyramids which are spread in fine rows facing straight ahead. It is not just the people who are coded and overcoded in Byzantine art, it is also their organs which are coded, coded and overcoded, under the great unifying influence of the despot, whether this despot is God or the father or whether he is the great Byzantine Emperor.

But then, after capitalism had already been established for a while in the city, and in the midst of Christian painting, a kind of madness emerges in the Venetian School, and it's as if everything suddenly escapes its former strict limits:

> a kind of radical break: all of a sudden we see the hierarchy of overcoding breaking down, the ruin of the territorial codes, the flows of painting go insane too, destroying all of the codes, a flow passes. We get the impression that painters – occupying their usual position amongst artists in relation to the social system – create Christs that are totally queer, they are totally mannerist Christs, it's all sexualized, they create Virgins who stand in for all women, and baby boys who have just nursed, little boys pooping, they really play at this process of decoding flows of colour. (1971, 6)

This break is a kind of Mannerist hysteria emerging from the decoding of capitalism, a hysteria caused by the figures in the paintings individualizing and becoming the owners of their own organs, and so being able to suddenly do what they want and pursue their own interests. What we see here, Deleuze argues, is the end of the overcoding defining the social body before capitalism and under the rule of the despot, and the emergence of a new form of control, one operating through axiomatics. There is now

> a strange sort of pictorial machine that conjoins and that will give rise to the unity of the picture, no longer a signifying unity of a code or overcode, but a system of echoes, of repetitions, of oppositions, of symmetries, a veritable conjugating machine, where flows of colours and decoded features are conjugated. There emerges a real pictorial axiomatic that replaces the failing codes. (1971, 7)

The emergence of the Venetian School is an amazing example of the decoding and recoding of the flows by which a whole new set of possibilities for painting, a new coding of the organs, an unbelievable creation of the world, the body of Christ as a joyful experience of the BwO, emerges. The creation or emergence of Mannerism is therefore not a story of decadence after a point of supreme health and maturity during the Renaissance. It is something else and it is related to time and history in a way that is not teleologically accounted for. Mannerism was labeled in traditional models of art history as both a decadence and as the stage previous to the Baroque. So, Deleuze makes it possible to speak about Mannerism not as an epoch or movement but as a decoding process. What is important for him and Guattari is that the despotism of the signifier is abandoned and flows in every direction become possible. The consequences of the body of Christ as a BwO in the history of painting are countless. Although the language here is that of flows and not of forces, the notion of the BwO is already there, and makes it possible for us to see the subordination of the form/content relation to that between forms and forces. As a result, it is possible to connect this with some of the subjects we have already discussed. The body of Christ as a BwO can be connected to the hysteric/vibrating body, as can the way painting invents a BwO, which is evident in the decoding of painting that takes place in the Venetian School and the Byzantine codes.

We can understand this better through an example of Deleuze and Guattari, who call Tintoretto a *painter of forces* in *What is Philosophy?* In all his work the play of forces, flows, movements is highly evident. In *St Mark Saving a Saracen from Shipwreck* (1562-1566) (fig. 1) for example, the ship of the Saracen is in the middle of a wild swirl, and with no respect for any previous code St. Mark performs a

Figure 1: Tintoretto, *St. Mark Saving a Saracen from Shipwreck* (1562-1566), Accademia Venice, 398 x 337 cm.

Figure 2: Tintoretto, *St. Mark's Body Brought to Venice* (1562-66), Accademia Venice, 398 x 315 cm.

kind of pirouette to pull the body out of the ship and free it from the storm, a force stretches the body and it suffers a deformation when this force struggles with the forces of the storm. In *St Mark's Body Brought to Venice* (1562-66) (fig. 2), a night scene in the Piazza, everything is caught up in the movement of lose brushstrokes, a blizzard agitates every element as a group of thieves tries to steal St Mark's body in the midst of a contrasting mass of shadows and light. The heavy body being carried by the thieves, the shadows of the bodies flying through the scene, the dark clouds in the sky starting to cover the piazza, the animals that will carry the body, a thief falls and takes a drape with him, in all of this there is no trace of the codes ruling Christian painting in Byzantine art, not because these have fallen into decline but because they have been recoded.[10]

As Didi-Huberman writes; 'What remains in the survivals is not the meaning, the problem is displaced, changing every moment, its the *signifying trace* itself.' Maybe Deleuze would put it differently, and call it the *asignificant trace*. Why? When we were speaking about the despotism of the signifier and the coding of flows we touched on the subject of meaning, and now its time to underline the importance of this notion for Warburg and to show how it is connected to Deleuze. In developing our idea of an aesthetics of force we pointed at a movement, a displacement of the relationship between form and content onto the relationship of material and

forces. So the problem of meaning and content falls back onto this other dimension of material-force, and this movement is one Warburg also makes, and in doing so he comes, Didi-Huberman claims, very close to Deleuze (2002, 163). Warburg puts his efforts into showing the displacement of the meaning, or content (signified) into the signifier, but we see that this change is just an illusion because in the order of the signifier the signified/meaning is always at work. Didi-Huberman insists in using these terms (signifier/signified) because they work well with his Freudian-Lacanian affiliation, but the important thing is the conceptual coincidence that goes beyond the terminological divergence. This can be seen if we consider the *asignificant trace,* a concept that comes from *A Thousand Plateaus*.

Deleuze and Guattari have abandoned Saussure's signified-signifier. They produce a theory of the sign following Hjelmslev, using the notion of a *regime of signs* within which the relationship signified-signifier is only one of the possible relationships. The sign works in many ways. Painting for example, may work as a signifier, may be read or interpreted as a signifier, but that is only a fraction of what painting is. Painting cannot be explained or comprehended in terms of the relationship of signified-signifier although some of its elements may work that way from some points of view. Deleuze and Guattari would place painting, understood as a relationship of materials and force, in what they call an *asignificant regime of signs* because painting works as an index.

Deleuze and Guattari developed their regime of signs by following Pierce. For Pierce there are three kinds of signs; Icon, Index and Symbol. Icons are a highly coded regime of signs, as in our previous example of the religious coding of Byzantine painting which resulted in what Deleuze and Guattari call the despotism of the signifier. But what happens when Mannerism decodes the Byzantine order? Deleuze shows that colours begin to perform new functions that are not limited to the manifestation of meaning (ie., a signified) and this marks the shift to a new regime of signs, namely indexes. The aesthetics of force employs signs with an indexical nature, and so we see that what Warburg might have called *the significant trace* works as an index in Deleuze and Guattari's aesthetics of force.

When Didi-Huberman recovers Warburg's work as a model for art history he opposes an iconographic understanding of painting that was championed by Winckelman, Panofsky and Gombrich, for whom the main task of painting is to manifest meaning and performs a symbolic function. For Didi-Huberman humanist art historians inscribe painting in overcoded symbolic regimes in which they work as symbols or icons. Didi-Huberman is concerned with what happens when the code is broken in a way that is compatible with Deleuze's view of Mannerism from the perspective of an aesthetics of force. This means that the trace in Didi-Huberman is not understood as the contour of a figured figure but as a dynamic,

surviving, repeated act of the figuring figure.[11] Didi-Huberman uses this language as a means to explain Warburg's work, and for him the word *Gestaltung* or shaping is very important (1927, 44). In Didi Huberman's *The Surviving Image* he says that his terms of 'asignificant trace' and the pair 'figured figure' and 'figuring figure,' 'sum up ... the figural' (2002, 163). For Didi-Huberman, if painting fulfils a symbolic function it does so only as a memory that transmits the imprint of a movement, and here the notion of index fits more closely. For us this is what Warburg calls an *energetic engram* in his last handwritten notes. In these terms the artist of the Renaissance would be the recipient of an *ancient dynamoforic memory*, a *Nachleben* of what is remembered not as the meaning, but as the imprint, or the remains of what is left as a print or mark. In this sense, Didi-Huberman's understanding of Warburg's art history not only draws on Deleuze's work, but exhibits many of the same strategies, to the point where they can both be called a – and these are Didi-Huberman's words – a Superior Empiricism (2002, 143).

Notes

1. The English translation of Didi-Huberman's *L'Image survivante: histoire de l'art et temps des fantômes selon Warburg* is yet to appear, and so all translations from this book are the author's own, with the references being to the French edition.
2. Didi Huberman refers to *Nietzsche and Philosophy* in 2002, 157, 159, 165, 171.
3. There are two senses of Deleuze's aesthetics of force. The first derives from the Nietzschean pairing of material and force, and the second is inspired by Paul Klee. This second aspect develops the idea that the task of art is to make non-visible forces become visible (see Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 342, 344, 346). Deleuze is closest to Didi-Huberman and Warburg in the first aspect.
4. For Deleuze, in the Baroque form depends on a relationship of forces. Such forces emerge precisely where matter won't stop folding, unfolding, re-folding and building an infinite number of textures, from mountains to the ripples on the water, to organic tissues to ornamental fabrics. It is from the manners in which matter folds that different kinds of texture arise, out of the forces tangled in this folding operation forms come into being. 'Matter that reveals its texture becomes raw material, just as form that reveals its folds becomes force. In the Baroque the coupling of material-force is what replaces matter and form.' (1993, 35) Deleuze insists on this diagram of the production of art (material-forces: form). From the infinite movement of the inorganic line in the Gothic according to Worringer to the baroque operation of elevating the fold to the infinite.
5. As Didi-Huberman acknowledges, 'Deleuze has shed light on another aspect of this plastic force, it is about knowing what form of knowing reconciles empiricism with its principles, if it constitutes a superior empiricism it is because this is an essentially plastic principle [... that] is not wider than that its conditions.' (2002, 152)
6. On vital residues see Didi-Huberman 2002, 82.
7. See Didi-Huberman 2003, n. 238, 253.
8. Didi-Huberman connects Warburg's nonlinear conception of art history to the rhizome (2002, 24, 388, 404, 446), and to strata and stratification (2002, 24, 37, 40, 95, 158, 404, 446, 460).
9. Didi-Huberman makes several mentions of rhizomatic modes of thinking about time (2002, 25 and 106), talking about the difference between Aby Warburg and Cassirer in relation to the notion of rhizome (447), and also about *montages rhizomatiques* (428).

10. Arnold Hauser saw this in his book *Mannerism, The Crisis of the Renaissance and the Origin of Modern Art.* Deleuze doesn't mention Hauser, but he also doesn't consider Mannerism a case of decadence.
11. For Deleuze the distinction is not between the 'figured figure' and the 'figuring figure,' but between the figure and the figural. According to Deleuze painting isn't figurative because the figure has no essential narrative or representational function. Figure as force is called the figural (see 2003, 14). Didi-Huberman uses the term figural in 2000, 13.

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Colliding Chaoïds in Iconology

Sascha Freyberg

Quo magis res singulares intelligimus eo magis Deum intelligimus.
Spinoza, *Ethica*

Wann wäre je Natur im Bilde abgetan?
Unendlich ist das kleinste Stück der Welt!
Nietzsche, *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft*

Complete Fact

In 1912 Aby Warburg gave a talk at the international conference for art history in Rome, which he himself had helped to organize. On this occasion he introduced the notion of 'iconological analysis' (1979, 185). Today this event is acknowledged as the birth of iconology as an art historical method (Heckscher 1967).[1] In his talk Warburg called for a methodic widening and an opening towards 'world historical' perspectives and connected this with a more general plea against the one-sidedness of 'mystic' or 'materialistic' moods in the discipline. Art historical research, Warburg argued, had to take into account the 'conditions of possibility' for historical effect (immediate affect and indirect reception), like intellectual context, social environment, cultural patterns, and the function of perception and social memory. Thus Warburg directed research towards a historical study of images, including historical and anthropological dimensions and the systematic task of a theory of images. Art historians as iconologists still engage with works of art but also examine other artifacts and designs. The work is first and foremost a cultural object, a *symptom* (Panofsky) of specific socio-cultural configurations or situations at a certain point in time (and space) charged with affective and intellectual energy. Iconology tries to account for the inherent conflicts of traditions, visible in the changing configurations of form and content. Thus art history had to be oriented towards a full-blown history of culture, already hinted at by Jacob Burckhardt, obliged to contribute to this more general endeavor. No wonder that social historians and sociologists of

art did not found it hard to relate to this approach, which widens the view towards socio-political conditions of art production (Antal 1949). To be sure, Warburg's research was focused on particular works of Renaissance art but he soon realized that the methods of art history are not sufficient to cope with the singular artifacts. To focus only on the singularity of the work of art, the artist or formal structures (a widespread tendency in art history at the time) did not lead to an adequate understanding (of the work, its meaning, its contexts and its singularity), and especially the intricate relation of affect and idea could not be accounted for; likewise the correlation of word and image, thought and action – central questions for Warburg – remained out of sight. Furthermore the purely formalistic approach closed the work off from cultural history. Instead of unraveling the Gordian knot of antagonistic demands of art and history, it was just cut through. To account for this imbalance Warburg proposed to integrate findings from a lot of different disciplines, not to say from all the human sciences, because even in the analysis of a single work they all have to be related (at least in the background). Therefore borders between humanities and science had to be transgressed in order to methodically connect research in different fields. In the reception of iconology, which became famous in art history only after Warburg's death (in 1929) due to the publications of Erwin Panofsky, the fact that transgression was used methodically caused some confusion, to the effect that it was very seldom understood and applied accordingly. In an intellectual climate hostile to wide questions in general and Hegelian legacies in particular, either its usefulness as a 'method' was denied or implicitly 'normalized'. In the first instance the inherent strife in connecting 'everything with everything' (Lenin on Hegel) was noted but dismissed. In the second instance this aspect was simply ignored reducing the perspective or rather identifying it with more established iconographical methods.

Among the scholars of the circle later formed around Warburg and his library in Hamburg – the *Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliothek Warburg*[2] – this cultural historical framework of iconology was rather a shared perspective or mindset with common principles (and not a strictly operationalized method for a specific discipline). The self-conception of the 'Warburg circle' (Sears 2013) was that of an *Arbeitsgemeinschaft*, a working group for research and debate, consisting mainly of art historians and philosophers (Saxl, Wind, Panofsky, Cassirer, Bing et al.), where the differences were at least as important as the connections (Schubbach 2016a). What Warburg stressed as *Auseinandersetzung,* meaning the mutual dynamics between the historian and his object, the group established as an inter-subjective *modus operandi* and an integral part of their respective research processes. The original circle and its scholarly networks were broken up when the Nazis gained power in 1933. The library was transplanted to London and the scholars dispersed.

However, iconology/iconography became the most respected approach, the 'international style' of art history, by the middle of the century. This was due to Panofsky's success as the leading art historian in the USA. Though his works seemed to become more and more focused on strictly art historical-philological matters he always tried to account for the general problem of historical interpretation. Therefore he proposed a three-level schema, which remains one of the most fruitful and suggestive orientations for the discipline. However, the erudite and scholarly manner of Panofsky's work often overshadowed its general significance. Furthermore, the form of iconology as iconography became rather trivialized in art historical reception and dissemination (Hadjinicolaou 1986).[3] Criticisms of the approach focused on the limited scope of objects and applications that were solely engaged in finding literate sources to decipher pictorial motives. Since the impact of iconology was partly made possible due to the imbalances in art historical research at the time, the approach itself was seen as pure counter-action. Thus iconology/iconography consequently was criticized as only accounting for questions of 'content' and ignoring 'form' (Kubler 1962). It was thereby identified with art historical mainstream positivism, whereas in fact it originally was the exact opposite.[4] Although the name survived, the original meaning of the approach had been lost (to the effect that the original members, who were critical of this development, refrained from discussing the method). The complex relation of transgression and limit still forms the challenge and conundrum of the method.

And yet, the basic idea can be formulated very simply: iconology as a cultural historical approach tries to account in a methodical way for the formula *omnia in omnibus* (*panta en panti*). It is oriented towards a kind of universal history and expresses precisely the metaphysical as well as heuristic ideal of 'complete fact,' which Whitehead introduced at about the same time.[5] The general historical orientation then is not pre-established or deduced but is the speculative correlate of the inquiry. Iconology's legendary attentiveness to detail is only fully understandable in connection with this idea. The ways to delimit or to put this aspiration into perspective are controversial and this may be a reason for its disputed status, which also was amplified by its proximity to dialectic approaches.

It also shows that the method of iconology, which in some respects resembles today's historical network analysis, in fact is opposed to a 'logic of oppositions' and seeks to go *beyond* the form-content-dualism precisely because it wants to arrive at a more 'complete' *and* concrete cultural historical (or psycho-historical) level. Hence it goes beyond art history thematically and methodically (without denying its import as research perspective *per se*). In this way it can be seen as a 'holistic' or integrative approach, which actually was informed not only by many disciplines from biology and psychology to anthropology and religious studies, but also by

philosophical aesthetics and not the least by methodological reflections. The confusion found in countless writings about Warburgian iconology is caused by disciplinary limits and often stems from its hagiographic perspective. Combined with exactly those 'mystic' and 'materialist' moods Warburg dismissed in favor of a more complex view, this supports superficial narratives, which tend to ignore the work of other members of the circle.

Edgar Wind, who maybe is the most underrated of these scholars, gave an early and encompassing view of Warburg's approach and the principles of the 'science' Warburg called *Kulturwissenschaft*. Wind's article remains one of the best and most concise descriptions of the method, emphasizing the complicated 'experimental' dynamics inherent in the iconologists historical intervention.

> The scholar who thus brings to light such a long-lost complex of associations cannot assume the task of investigating an image is simply a matter of contemplating it and of having an immediate empathic sense of it. He has to embark upon a conceptually directed process of recollection, through which he joins the ranks of those who keep alive the 'experience' of the past. Warburg was convinced that in his own work, when he was reflecting upon the images he analysed, he was fulfilling an analogous function to that of pictorial memory when, under the compulsive urge to expression, the mind spontaneously synthesizes images, namely the recollection of pre-existing forms. (1993a, 26)

It is easy to see how this pertains to the problem of 'historical objectivity,' including speculation, aesthetical experience and hermeneutics (Klein 1970), but instead of describing it as aporetic (or a closed circle) a methodological solution is sought: speculative imagination is necessary but in need of touchstones or tests ('external' and 'internal'). This follows from the historian's function as 'medium' in trying to revive past life or meaning. In the moment the historian wants to give life to historical phenomena he is faced with the task of methodical reconstruction.

Logics of Metamorphosis

In recovering the alignment towards a more general theory of images from the Warburgian approach scholars in art history and other disciplines today often use the term 'iconology' (if it is not misused as a void lemma like 'The Iconology of xyz') as a generic name for a general theory of images – or what in German is called *Bildwissenschaft*. In this discourse the works of Deleuze and Guattari are embraced as being an integral part. This is mainly due to their metaphysical affinity to art and

aesthetics (or what Guattari called a 'new aesthetic paradigm' (1995)) and their insistence on affect, which certainly is the reason for their impact in all fields of art and media. Their impact in the discipline of art history was rather belated. However, when their work gained more influence it often motivated rediscoveries of neglected, seemingly outdated theoretical or historiographical works (e.g. Elie Fauré, Henri Maldiney or Wilhelm Worringer), a fact that distinguishes their reception in art history from that of all other 'post-structuralist' works. The older art historiographies, mentioned above, mostly tackled (somewhat speculatively) questions of form, time and style with almost the same 'vitalist,' or better, dynamical vocabulary, that Deleuze and Guattari themselves use; evoking forces, rhythms, flows and energies. Apart from its mystic overtones the function of this vocabulary in all these cases can be defined very precisely as a way to integrate aesthetic experience into the description and analysis of artifacts. The attention to this aspect is to be greeted, but now all the questions of speculation versus objectivity seem to recur. In face of this problematic Deleuze and Guattari's procedure of constructing dualistic models, as dialectic alternatives, based on research of different fields is in need of explanation. This would include a clarification of the relations of art, science and philosophy, especially the aesthetic grounding, but at the same time this would come into conflict with the style of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, which aimed to present a kind of 'pop-philosophy' of creative hybridisation.

In their last work *What is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guattari tackled the intricate relations between the 'forms of thought'. Here they define philosophy in relation to science and art: all three are equally creative forces. They are defined as 'chaoïds': three ways of engaging with and confronting chaos. Each approach is equally valid but has different aims and methods. Isabelle Stengers called the book 'Deleuze and Guattari's last enigmatic message,' which puzzled and even disappointed a lot of readers who were enthusiastic about their former writings (2005), one of the complaints being their insistence on the *distinctness* of each chaoïd. This seemed to contradict the idea of entanglements, flows, assemblages, multiplicities and rhizomes of their earlier works (Deleuze and Guattari 1977, 1987). Stengers notes that in comparison the general response to *What is Philosophy?* was less enthusiastic, which was often treated as being merely a 'pedagogic' or 'methodical' appendix (see e.g. Negri 1995). The whole approach of the work thus establishes a tension in their oeuvre, which cannot easily be put aside. Stengers may be on the right track when she argues that the motivation for *What is Philosophy?* is a matter of 'resistance'. In this sense it would be a work of critique, even a self-critique, as Deleuze and Guattari might indeed have felt the need for an untimely counter-action against contemporaneity (or what Stengers calls the spread of *la bêtise*). Their glamour and gloom could have the same reason: the ambiguities of *Capitalism and* Schizophrenia, which can

already be noticed in Deleuze's philosophical work. Roughly speaking, these ambiguities basically concern the metaphysical affinity to art and the attitude towards science (and the scientific 'image of thought'[6]) and more formally the strict dualistic modeling. The consequences can be observed in their rhetoric, methods and the fascination with the 'magic formula [...] Pluralism=Monism' (1987, 20). What has been described as their attempt to construct a dialectic (Jameson 2009, ch. 5) they present as anti-dialectical. The presentation of a new phenomenology of the concrete often belies the professed aims, and at times the procedure of uncovering polarities in cultural complexities seems arbitrary or opaque. Seemingly antinomic pairs are related and (following the Althusserian tradition) are presented as asymmetric (e.g. incommensurable). With this strategy Deleuze and Guattari seem to insist that even in *aporia* there are 'lines of flight,' there is always something escaping the antinomy. Dualisms are just necessary tools:

> No, this is not a new or different dualism. [...] We invoke one dualism only in order to challenge another. 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/Guattari 1987, 21)

Although it is clear that their presentation has performative dimensions and also has a Dada strategy in mind (*Dada n'a pas d'idée fixe. Dada n'attrape pas les mouches*), one cannot help asking, if the kind of modeling, which rather seems like the mystic formula of passing through oppositions, is really as necessary, as they claim. The main problem is, that the 'asymmetries' often appear symmetric, and so become ideological, especially when it comes to historical constellations. Thus another question concerns the fragility of the dualisms. Of course we have to concede that the models are not meant as historical tools, but it nevertheless seems that they could not avoid the 'pitfalls of the binary' (Jakobidze-Gutmann 2014).[7] And even if 'universal history' becomes a more humorous endeavor, can it not be written without becoming somehow ideological or purely haphazard? Does the framing of dialectic ('wicked!' (Jameson 2009, 102)) not result in cutting off mediation or understanding at all? Is there no other way of presentation that can cope with complexity?

Maybe some of these questions motivated the approach of *What is Philosophy?*, an approach connected to the idea of the three 'chaoïds'. This connection becomes even more obvious if we consider the definition of 'pop-philosophy' Deleuze gave in his article on Hume. With Hume, says Deleuze, science and philosophy become inquiry and turn toward practice (we could say that Deleuze marks here the beginning of Pragmatism). Hume's philosophy is a pop-philosophy because it speaks at

the same time in a *popular and scientific* voice (Deleuze 2003, 162-9). It seems that it was failing this dimension that flawed *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (not that it makes its suggestions totally futile or that this flaw was bad for its public success). If the approach of *What is Philosophy?* tries to account for this flaw then it follows that it is not only pedagogical but tries to provide more transparency of criteria. Now the model is pluralistic instead of dualistic and the presentation often favors dialectical formulas. In regard to the relation of philosophy and science (or concepts and functions respectively) they state:

> The two lines are [...] inseparable but independent, each complete in itself [...] It is in their full maturity, and not in the process of their constitution that concepts and functions necessarily intersect, each being created only by their specific means [...] The concept does not reflect on the function any more than the function is applied to the concept. Concept and function must intersect, each according to its line (1994, 161)

Not only is the autonomy and value of each 'chaoïd' emphasized, but philosophy is also placed in a genuine relationship to science. It is now suggested that only if we consider the plurality by respecting the directions and limits of each approach, can an intersection (or disturbance of the structures) be possible at all: Transgression and limit. It is indeed a project of opening possibilities by distinguishing and delimiting methods, and a good reason to read their whole work backwards.

History, however, still constitutes a blind spot. For example, 'chaoïds' seem to have no relational history.[8] The presentation of their relation is purely structural. And although they still rely on the materials of historiography and the human sciences, Deleuze and Guattari seem to ignore those disciplines.[9] Strictly 'localizing' them ('in-between') contradicts the functional conception. The concept of a 'chaoïd' is *reconstructive* instead of a classifying. The tripartite structure of creative forces seems hardly relatable to the human sciences, since 'science' is defined by Deleuze/Guattari as a logico-functional procedure, for which they only give examples from the 'exact sciences'. Furthermore, they consider the functional 'reference' science produces only partially in its *experimental* aspects. Although science thus seems to be reduced mainly to mathematical methods, it is to be emphasized, however, that these methods are treated as *creative forces*, as an *opening up of the world* rather than a tool to quantify a given world. And if it would be possible to widen the understanding of functional and referential methods beyond a strictly mathematical usage, they could be related to strategies of (re-) collecting, assemblage and interpretation in the cultural and human sciences, too.

Each 'form of thought' moves on a certain plane, follows a certain line, but of course it is possible to jump lines or *shift the perspective*. In his historical epistemology Ernst Cassirer showed that it was the breaking up of the classical prohibition of *metabasis eis allo genos* (the 'transition' from one field to another) that made the development of experimental science possible in the first place. If this is done non-transparently, at will or arbitrarily, however, it becomes doubtful. Accordingly, for Deleuze and Guattari 'chaoïds' productively engage only on very elaborate levels forming intersections and meta-stable relations like colliding galaxies. However, does the wrong mode of speculation or interpretation not consequently lead to the collapse of the precarious balances and interrelations?

Meaning and Violence

On May 20, 1931 Erwin Panofsky, at the time professor for the history of art at Hamburg University, gave a talk in front of the Kiel section of the Kant-Gesellschaft. One year later the text was published in *Logos – Internationale Zeitschrift für Philosophie der Kultur* (see Panofsky 2012). Here he introduces not only the schematic 3-level-model of what would later be called the iconological method,[10] but he also tackles the general problem of interpretation in art and philosophy. In the article he makes explicit references to Heidegger's book about Kant. Heidegger's 'remarkable comments on the nature of interpretation' are for Panofsky of value not only for philosophical interpretation, 'but in fact characterize the problem of any interpretation' (Panofsky 2012, 476). In this he seems to be in accordance with many French philosophers after WWII. Panofsky quotes the following passage by Heidegger – a passage often repeated and characteristically amended by Deleuze:

> Now if an interpretation [*Interpretation*] merely gives back what Kant has expressly said, then from the outset it is not a laying-out [*Auslegung*], insofar as the task of such a laying-out remains framed as the making visible in its own right of what Kant had brought to light in his ground-laying over and above the explicit formulation. Kant himself, however, was unable to say more about this. But with any philosophical knowledge in general, what is said in uttered propositions must not be decisive. Instead what must be decisive is what it sets before our eyes as still unsaid, in and through what has been said. . . . Certainly, in order to wring from what the words say, what it is they want to say, every interpretation [*Interpretation*] must necessarily use violence [*Gewalt*]. (1997, 140-1)

Panofsky accepts this suggestion also for art historical research and stresses 'that even our most unassuming descriptions of pictures and their content, since they are inevitably interpretations, are subject to the effects of Heidegger's argument' (2012, 476-7). However, at the same time, he tries also to give reasons for this circumstance and asks about the limits of the method. 'For even the apparently unproblematic statement of phenomenal meaning effectively brings to light 'what is unsaid,' and, so, uses 'violence.' The fundamental question arises: who or what draws a line around this violence?' (2012, 477) Here is not the place to discuss the criteria Panofsky gives for the limitation of 'violence' – though it would indeed be worthwhile. The important point here is that in relating philosophical and art historical interpretation Panofsky circumvents the traditional split between 'systematic' and 'historical' interpretation.[11] He manages to go *beyond* this distinction *without negation*. This is important to see, because this move shows the iconological method is grounded in a seemingly unusual dialectical form, which proves to be a useful methodical research instrument; a fact that hitherto often has been left implicit, ignored or misunderstood. In his conclusion Panofsky emphasizes the 'dialectical' or 'morphological' principle of iconology, which relates transgression and limit:

> These processes which our analyses have extrapolated as seemingly separate movements on three separate levels of meaning and also as border skirmishes between the violence of subjective interpretation and the skillful application of objectively verifiable criteria, in practice, are intertwined to form a process both unified and in tension. Any given instance can only ex post facto and theoretically be dissolved into individual elements and special actions (2012, 482).

A process both unified and in tension – this is precisely the non-trivial conception of form based on the idea of *metamorphosis* we can find in Goethe (and later, for example, in D'Arcy Thompson, who like Ernst Cassirer connected it with the ancient Greek concept of *harmonia* – a Heraclitean notion). It was used by Cassirer as a basic principle in his philosophy of symbolic forms (1923-1929). It is important to understand the 'principle of fecundity' (S.K. Langer) and the practical value of such a model in cracking open seemingly antinomical, paradoxical or aporetic formulas to concrete inquiry. The idea of metamorphosis as a 'complete fact,' which can not be grasped in total except as an idea, restitutes the unlimited possibility of the thing (avoiding false 'localization' or 'misplaced concreteness' in Whitehead's sense) but at the same time it gives concrete criteria of the limits to consequent inquiry.

Splitting or Retrieving?

The ambiguities in the work of Deleuze and Guattari also had effects on discussions in image theory and especially on the reception of iconology. While some kind of proximity between iconology and 'postmodernism' in general as well as Warburg and Deleuze/Guattari in particular had already been insinuated,[12] these proximities were made explicit and became operative in the works of Georges Didi-Huberman (2012, 2017): 'Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari give us a language in which to index the philosophical power and audaciousness – the "superior empiricism" – of Warburg's project' (2012, 50). Although this presentation has its merits, showing the force and historiographic implications of Warburg's ideas and underlining the importance of transgression, it is systematically flawed, because it mystifies Warburg's work. This is not only due to the psychologizing of Warburg's motives but also due to the way his work is contrasted with philosophical tradition and with the rest of the 'Warburg circle' (Wedepohl 2011). Didi-Huberman's hagiographic approach not only fashions Warburg's work as 'psycho-iconology' (2017, 330 and passim),[13] but dismisses the connection with philosophy (especially that of Ernst Cassirer), while inventing a story of heresy quite contrary to the whole spirit of the circle. He fails systematically to come to terms with the problem of *delimiting* transgression, as well as with the concept of *function* in iconology and epistemology[14] and arbitrarily introduces incommensurable distinctions (e.g. between the concepts of symptom and symbol). The significance as well as the mutual consequences of a proximity to 'schizoanalytic' problematics are cut short by the way Warburg's work is (not) placed within its (social, historical, scientific and philosophical) context. In short, this kind of presentation seems to repeat the confrontation between classicism and romanticism (or intellectualism vs. affectivism) and risks making the legacy of Warburg a mere cliché.[15] This interpretation of iconology nevertheless appealed to a lot of readers and a lot of scholars from different fields have taken Didi-Huberman's account for granted in surprisingly uncritical ways.[16] The reason for its success was on the one hand its style of presentation, on the other hand its adaption to the repeating pattern of antagonistic juxtaposition (apart from Didi-Huberman see especially the more blatant attempts in Iversen 1991 and 1998). In general this points to the fact that instead of retrieving iconology with its historical, methodological and systematical complexities, a bifurcation was somehow seen as unavoidable. Thus the work of Warburg itself was split up, ignoring his self-conception as humanist and scientist (Warburg 2012) as well as the roots of his program in the history of style with its Goethean as well as Kantian and Hegelian heritage (Vidrih 2014). Arguments over the split of iconology are, to be sure, not a recent phenomenon. It is implied, though more tentatively, already in the interpretations of scholars like Carlo Ginzburg, Giorgio Agamben and Hartmut Böhme. That the

'entourage' of Warburg mistook his intentions or reduced them to false systematizations has nevertheless now become an almost canonical opinion.[17] The problematic line of reception begins with the seminal 'intellectual biography' of Warburg by Ernst H. Gombrich (1970) which presented Warburg and his work to a broader audience for the first time. Although Gombrich's work is important, it was full of doubts concerning the more 'speculative' side of Warburg. And when it comes to the question of the scientific status of iconology, speculation and the problem of the involvement of the researcher, ironically, a work like that of Didi-Huberman (2017) forms the symmetrical counter-part to Gombrich's account, which was severely criticized by Edgar Wind (1993b) exactly because of its tendency to reduce the complexity of Warburg's thought.[18] Thus Wind's criticism can to some degree also be directed at Didi-Huberman's presentation of Warburg.

> The incisive style of the man is lost in the pullulating swarm of ephemeral notations, from which he emerges, like a spectre, in the now fashionable guise of a tormented mollusc: shapeless, flustered, and jejune, incessantly preoccupied with his inner conflicts and driven in vain to aggrandize them by some unconquerable itch for the Absolute (Wind 1993b, 107).

The 'Warburg circle' as a very small research collective working like in a 'laboratory' of the cultural sciences consisted of German Jewish scholars, who generally remained academic outsiders.[19] Even though it was clear to all scholars of the circle that each of them had their own perspective, they upheld the 'unity' of the collective (which Warburg defended especially in respect to his connection with Cassirer).[20] This may also have had political reasons (Schoell-Glass 1998), but more important than external factors was the shared understanding of their respective works as different contributions to a common project, even though an art and psycho-historical approach are in tension with the perspective of philosophy (Schubbach 2016a). Neither superficial equations nor more or less arbitrary splits are needed to account for connections as well as differences.[21]

Warburg, however, maybe put his personality into danger during the research process as few others did or would do. Like the chemist Johann Wilhelm Ritter he made 'experiments' *in vivo* uncovering the active part of *pathos*. For, these 'experiments' presented the invisible (ultra-violet light or cultural/psychological presuppositions respectively) and challenged ignorance on pain of confusion. Every one of his colleagues was aware of this, though only a few such as Walter Solmitz and Edgar Wind dealt with it explicitly. Wind, who was inspired by pragmatism and process philosophy, tried to account for the methodological implications of the researcher's involvement, analyzed 'some points of contact between history and natural science'

in relation to this problem (1936) and foresaw a lot of possible shortcomings in the (future) reception of Warburg's work and method (as a wild 'Theory').

What can be observed in the reception of iconology are not only fundamental debates about the role and conception (or 'end') of art history as a discipline. The polemical juxtapositions in the name of the new and the readiness of others to accept them seem to be symptomatic. At the same time the basic conception of 'complete fact' and its consequences are obscured again, pertaining to an aesthetics, which can cope with the 'observer effect,' the scientific status of historical research, or the relation to philosophy.

Continued Ends

The metaphysical questions, evoked by the puzzle of persistence and change, pervade the work of Deleuze and Guattari. Even the severest anti-dialectical, anti-organicist statements or the most polemical over-the-top parts of 'schizoanalysis' are motivated by these questions and are marked by similar procedures of a rather strict dualistic modeling in order to produce figurative concepts. But their main concern is: How can we think non-totalizing, fluent and open *form*? Their answer unfortunately is not so much inquiry as it is a staging of the question. An alternative answer was given in Ernst Cassirer's philosophy (1910, 1923-1929). Encompassing the examination of a vast range of empirical material from all sciences, combined with an affinity to the arts it was based, so to say, on the revision of 'the 25 years of philosophy' (because, as has been recently confirmed, the history of philosophy does not span over 2500 years but is a hundred times shorter (Förster 2011)). In this period, defined by Kant's critical gambit and Hegel's phenomenological check-mate, the debate about the relation of philosophy and science, as Förster has pointed out, is connected with the search for a *method* of 'intuitive understanding' inspired by Spinoza. Thus it may be the adequate starting point for analyzing the methods of iconology as well as the work of Deleuze and Guattari. This may facilitate a distance to our own contemporary often modernist sensibility, open up a space for reflection (*Denkraum*) and new interpretative perspectives. This may also help to make the profound challenges aesthetics and historical image studies pose to philosophy and its conception visible (Zittel 2010). Instead of just concentrating on discursive logic, the validity of 'iconic forms' (Krois 2011) can now be investigated without split, reduction or mystical reification.[22]

On the other hand this pertains also to the basis of art historical research, when, for example, methods are reflected or notions like object, effect, image, or epoch, manner and style come into play. These notions are, so to say, art history's connection with metaphysics and universal history. How do we grasp change? How can

we model time? Does this belie the fact that 'art history has come a long way in establishing itself as a positive human science independent from its metaphysical beginnings' (van Tuinen 2017)? To be sure, these notions, or better their supposed implications have been condemned by some art historians as philosophical remnants (Dittmann 1967; Kubler 1962), and their Hegelian underpinnings have been especially criticized (Gombrich 1969). In this way philosophy more often than not was presented as a kind of ideological superstructure, and therefore as an enemy to accurate art historical method.[23]

The seemingly problematic relationship of art history and philosophy, however, can be taken into account when using a ('metamorphological') process view, which can be attained by acknowledging the ferment of 'the 25 years'. While science is concentrated on particular objects, philosophy has to account for the procedural and relational aspects to arrive at a more 'complete' idea (of their interplay). Hence, generality is not an abstraction but it is a 'concrete universal' to articulate ideas and disclose events and structures. In this way it remains also descriptive. Thus it becomes obvious how iconology and metaphysics or the history and the philosophy of culture differ and intersect. While it is not possible to focus on parts and wholes at the same time, the connection of the *differential* as well as the *integral* remains crucial for both aiming at an '*empirisation' of the transcendental*. When Warburg described their common work as a mining of the same mountain from different sides, it was not the expression of a desperate hope but a precise description. From different sides and angles philosophy and art historical research try, for example, to account for the construction of styles, which becomes visible when the morphological procedure of the picture series is connected with the concept of function. The operating principle of a picture series (Woldt 2014) is precisely, the 'rule' of the observed or assembled process. A 'style' is both a general and concrete term, which is constructed diagrammatically to form a type – a 'transcendental leaf' as Goethe said.

In his *Logic of Sense* Deleuze writes, that philosophy 'always pursues the same task: Iconology' (1990, 260) thereby criticizing the strife for 'images' as totalizing unifications. If we take *metamorphology* (as addressing both formation as well as a language to speak about it) into account, this expression takes on a different meaning. Instead of adapting 'to the speculative needs of Christianity,' 'iconology' upholds the difference of totaliy and unity as a method of inquiry because even a single picture is both concrete and general, one and many. Thus it adapts the operating mode of science, which implies speculation and the impossibility of heresy. However, as scientific procedure it needs to establish a resistive reference to chaos, which confronts speculation with the empirical. In the human sciences it is obvious that this referent is not only external. What historians as scientists recollect is therefore more than a narrative or subjective view. Warburg himself pointed to the 'regulating

forces' of inquiry and the limits for speculation with respect to Nietzsche.[24] 'History is what hurts' as Jameson pointedly says (1981, 101). The forms, the dead and their works and institutions are part of reality.[25]

The legacy of morphology and dialectic for Cassirer implied a new theory of concept based on the idea of the concrete universal (1910), connecting the logic of sensibility and expression with the idea of the mathematical concept of function. From now on concepts cannot be defined as if pieces of the world just need a name, but always denote tensions, polarities or correlations that must be elaborated.[26] They are, so to say, paralogical, but as such challenging and unclosing. Thus they show the way out of theoretical antinomies and consequently Cassirer's broad concept of symbolism (including the 'dimensions' of expression, representation and signification) became crucial for iconology (Woldt 2011). To be sure, the idea of the mathematical function is not used here as a principle of quantification or reduction. On the contrary, it is widened to denote the expression of the form of movement, or its 'rule'. The basic figurative principle is the 'complex whole': *hen diapheromenon heauto* (Heraclitus). The consequence is not a comforting 'harmonization'.[27] On the contrary, here *harmonia* denotes a principle of the *perpetuation of tension*. The 'unity in plurality' has to be read radically (in Marx's sense) as a two-tier concept and as insistence on a relation in asymmetry. Therefore, mediation can only be provided by inquiry or praxis, not by mere intellectual means (e.g. simplification or uniformity). That is not a dismissal of philosophy but instead a hint at its true meaning. The metamorphological conception puts the emphasis on the process of emergence and its conditioning forces. This *transcendental perspective* can always only be partly accounted for, because scientific reconstruction has to proceed from the product, while the philosopher also shares the artist's interest in the process of *formation* (Klee 1966, 45).

Notes

1. A more elaborated presentation of iconology and Warburg's legacy is given by Rampley's article (2001), which came to my attention only after this text was finished.
2. Developing out of his private library, it was opened to the public by his assistant Fritz Saxl in the early 1920s when Warburg was still in treatment for his mental illness. The K.B.W. co-operated with the University of Hamburg and thus became a privately funded public institution with a focus on the 'survival of the classics'. Over the main entrance the motto of the library was mounted: MNEMOSYNE. This would also become the name of the picture atlas Warburg was working on, but never finished.
3. Other more or less adequate criticism pointed to symptomatic lacunae (Bredekamp 1986), but more often than not worked with pre-established schemata (e.g. Ginzburg 1986 in affirming *microstoria* or Didi-Huberman 2005 in affirming the 'naïve gaze'). 'Proofs' for the inadequacy of the method itself often referred to the absence of explicit accounts, ignoring not only the given hints, but also the simple principle that analyses of method should not so much concentrate on texts, but on the reconstruction of the process of inquiry behind the presented results. This ignorance can be

observed as a deliberate strategy in Kubler (1962), whose otherwise interesting book *The Shape of Time* secretly takes over crucial questions of the iconologist, who, stripped bare from all his ideas, has to play the straw man.

4. Bourdieu put this very clearly in an interesting post-face to his French translation of Panofsky's book 'Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism' (Bourdieu 1967). Today Panofsky (with his hidden connection to Peircean Pragmatism via Edgar Wind) is acknowledged as a source of Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus'.
5. Whitehead's concept of 'complete fact' pointed to a regulative ideal for both philosophy and science, but made it clear that in the end this ideal can be read as an aesthetic conception (1967, 146).
6. The often quoted claim by Deleuze, for example, that he is interested in the Bergsonian project of a process-adequate metaphysics for science (Villani 1999, 130) seems relatable to his published work only to a small degree.
7. Their rhetoric often resembles rather 'the absolutism of the 'epistemological rupture,' punctuating Thought into its 'false' and 'correct' parts, once favoured by the Althussereans' (Hall 1980, 57). Given that Brecht was right in calling Hegel the greatest humorist in philosophy it is in this humorless way they also seem to fail Dada and the performative dimension of enduring contradictions and self-overcoming (*Dada soulève tout*). And even if we concede the explicit invitations for 'toolbox-reading,' in the end they become stooges for actors they didn't invite. Of course, someone like the sly Mikhail Lifshitz, 'fossil' of Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy and 'commissar' of classical enlightenment, would see this only as the logical fate of all 'radical' (post-) modernisms.
8. This relational history was of genuine interest to the Warburgians, a fact construed in the criticism of Panofsky et al. as devaluating the image to the status of an illustration. However, the iconological position was based on the idea of an interplay between 'word and image,' 'thought and vision' etc. Iconologists assumed (taking the tableaus of Renaissance art somehow as paradigmatic) that a painting or any other work might only be appreciated in connection with the help of historical and intellectual understanding.
9. They refer to the human sciences only as 'doxology' or 'pseudo-sciences' and it is hard to see how a positive meaning could be implied. A laborious reconstruction could maybe provide other aspects.
10. This heuristic character has often been ignored although it was explicitly emphasized by Panofsky. The three levels of interpretation in reality are intertwined or may happen at the same time. The canonical presentation distinguishes between pre-iconographical description, iconographical analysis and iconological synthesis (see Panofsky 1955). The better-known English version and variation of the model appeared at first in Panofsky (1939, Introductory, § 1), with an understandable and clarifying but theoretically unfortunate focus on Renaissance art.
11. A basic decision has to be made if the 'exegesis has the aspirations and the duties of conforming to the rules of historical interpretation' (Panofsky 2012, 481).
12. This proximity was established, because of similarities in the often labyrinthic method of iconology with rhizomatics. In the case of Warburg, his more speculative dynamical vocabulary, his attention to passions, some points of contact with Benjamin (see Kemp 1975) as well as several recorded autobiographical statements or notes from his papers were taken as hints of an affinity. In the working journal of his library he writes for example: 'Sometimes it would seem to me as if I attempted, in my capacity as a psycho-historian, to interpret schizophrenia of Western Civilisation in an autobiographical reflex' (see *Tagebuch*, Warburg et al. 2001, 429).
13. A quite emblematical blunder may indicate the consistency of Didi-Huberman's argument: In stressing the notion of 'psycho-iconology' for Warburg's work (2017, 330) he refers to an article by Klaus Herding (1990). Only Herding never uses such a notion. Instead he uses the term *psycho-ikonographisch* in his article to denote certain poorly thought-through attempts to psychologize works of modern art, reducing them to symptoms of the artists personality. Herding rejects these attempts as the reversal and perversion of Warburg's ideas.

14. See his disastrous article attempting to debunk an 'epistemological myth' (Didi-Huberman 1994).
15. Warburg is presented as if he was never an art historian at all. Furthermore, a false opposition between *symptom and symbol* is built-up, in which the medical model of symptoms is connected to the idea of an *ineffabile*. For a critique of this kind of anti-semiotic elusions in recent image studies see Halawa (2014).
16. To say it in short and in the style of the book: Warburg's stomach might not have agreed with Didi-Huberman's eel broth (2017, 15). It is strange, that Didi-Huberman, who is well aware of dialectical models and sees the shortcomings of earlier accounts, provides the same one-sidedness, dismissing all that what would establish a tension with his interpretation based on Nietzsche, Benjamin and Freud. A lot of readers don't seem to care though. Instead the resulting cliché is often either fully affirmed (as in Michaud 1998 or more tentatively in Johnson 2012) or used as a tacit presupposition (with respect to the relation of transcendental philosophy and history, see for example Hagelstein 2014). These attempts to follow Didi-Huberman seem either to necessarily end in confusion (see Raulff 1998) or self-contradiction (see Schubbach 2016b).
17. Weinberger (2001, 639) contrasts Warburg's inherently paradoxical formulations to alleged reductions and *Systematisierungen* of Saxl, Wind and Panofsky – tellingly, as if this was obvious.
18. Wind also criticizes the isolation of Warburg from his colleagues and 'scholarly friendships' and wonders: 'Considering that Warburg never assumed that he could understand a historical character unless he had meticulously related him to his intellectual surroundings, it seems extraordinary that he himself should have been made the subject of a monograph which ignores that fundamental principle.' (1983, 110) Didi-Huberman, who mentions Wind's critique as well as his reception of Warburg (Wind 1931), does not see the performative self-contradiction in his comments on Gombrich. Wind (and other sources) are exploited without giving them a voice or acknowledging their work. In fact, Didi-Huberman has to down-play their systematical importance constantly (see e.g. 2017, 52).
19. Peter Gay, who considered the circle in it's historical context of the Weimar republic, wrote in his concise characterization of the K.B.W.: 'The austere empiricism and scholarly imagination of the Warburg style were the very antithesis of the brutal anti-intellectualism and vulgar mysticism threatening to barbarize German culture in the 1920s; this was Weimar at its best. Warburg's celebrated formula that Athens must be recovered over and over again from the hands of Alexandria was more than an art historian's prescription for the understanding of the Renaissance [...]; it was a philosopher's prescription for life in a world threatened by unreason. [...] the influence of the Warburg Institute, if profound, was narrow; all its survivors testify to its serene isolation.' (1968) How to fight unreason with scholarly and scientific research how to write a pragmatic or effective history remained a crucial question in the work of Warburg and the K.B.W.
20. This episode is vividly depicted from Solmitz's perspective in Grolle (1994, 11-12).
21. The different interpretations and presentations of the Cassirer-Warburg-relation and their rhetoric are already critically examined in Jutta Faehndrich (2000).
22. Krois (2011) unfolds the idea of a Philosophical Iconology. See also Freyberg and Blühm (2014). Settis (1997) already linked iconology and morphology on the grounds of *pathos* and *ethos*.
23. Disputes about method in the human sciences often seem to take conceptions of philosophy and its history for granted, which are not shared by many philosophers. Nevertheless, it is also because of the way these concepts are *presented* in philosophical discourse, that these clichés are reproduced.
24. In a journal entry Warburg notes that the progress in anthropological research would have helped Nietzsche's work. '*Wenn Nietzsche doch nur mit den Tatsachen der Völkerkunde und Volkskunde vertraut gewesen wäre! Sie hätten selbst für ihn durch ihr spezifisches Gewicht regulierende Kraft für seinen Traumvogelflug besessen.*' Quoted in Gombrich (1970, 185).
25. This is also the central motive in Heiner Müller's prose poem *Mommsens Block*, which Müller dedicated to Félix Guattari (Müller 1993).

26. Unfortunately correlations are often confused with proportions or other more defined or closed connections. It should be added that a confrontation of Cassirer's theory of concept with the first part of *What is philosophy?* would probably enrich both sides.
27. It must be granted that the reception of Cassirer hitherto had many difficulties in acknowledging the vast consequences of his relational approach. Also the meandering and conciliatory style of Cassirer's 'old-fashioned philosophy' (Cassirer) makes it more difficult to uncover its basic principle. The direction of his conception, nevertheless, is clear and seems the more radical the more it tries to reconcile.

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The Image and the Problem of Expression: Towards an Aesthetic Cosmology

Bertrand Prévost

Should we be surprised if the most hackneyed kind of metaphysics found its last refuge in the artwork, or if images and aesthetic phenomena in general serve as an inexhaustible receptacle for the more established ontologies? To consider images in terms of things, if not substances; to look at aesthetic phenomena in terms of objects, with their shapes, qualities and properties; to think of the aesthetic relation as a relation to the viewer and to devote undue attention to representation, aesthetic judgment, and so on. All of this belongs to a scholarly metaphysics that finds in Aristotle for antiquity and Kant for modernity its two founding pillars – a spontaneous metaphysics, which projected the theoretical presuppositions in which it is rooted onto the experience of images.

Under these conditions, we can understand how expression could become the object of a malediction, because it doesn't seem to belong to either objective properties or subjective representations. Aesthetic phenomena no longer appear as such for a consciousness as they no longer have specific properties. Aesthetic phenomena are neither objective nor subjective, but expressive. Malediction? No doubt the commitment of expression to a question of power provides it with a very strange character, given the tidy place philosophical and scientific modernity has specifically reserved for the concept of force [*force*] or power [*puissance*]. Let us not forget that Deleuze understands 'Spinoza's problem of expression' in terms of the question 'What is a body capable of?' – in other words, he understands it in terms of the question of the potential or the power of the body.

More importantly, it is the other commitment, the commitment to a concept of nature, which nowadays seem totally outdated. To feel images as living things, shot through with powers – does this not amount to a more or less vague animism which rocks the entirety of philosophical and artistic rationality? And does not modern science owe its success to dispensing with the idea of an animated world of occult forces or phenomena inhabited by powers? To put it succinctly, expression would

bring us back to the pre-modern experience of a vibrating cosmos, swarming in a thousand ways.

And yet. If humanist and classical art theory could only conceive of expression in terms of the subjective projection of human passions onto images, such that the term 'image' primarily refers to the representation of emotions, a certain modernity has managed to find the means for a profound renewal of the artistic experience. We are here thinking less of the abstract expressionism of Pollock – still so full of a projective subjectivism – than of a decorative Matisse. '[E]xpression for me,' he writes, 'lies not in the passion that bursts through on a face or shows itself in a violent movement. It is all available to my canvas: the place of the body, the voids that are around them, the proportions, all this has its share' (Matisse 1908, 42). This phrase, everywhere diffused in Matisse's work, revives a profoundly immanent mode of existence.

Expression and Cosmology

It seems to be impossible to reintroduce the concept of expression in the artistic and aesthetic field without taking into account its correlation with a somewhat renewed apprehension of nature. That is why invoking the expressivity of aesthetic phenomena invariably involves the implementation of a natural history of art, or, equivalently, an aesthetic cosmology. It is obvious that here the notions of art and nature lose almost all of the specific characteristics that philosophical and scientific modernity has lent them, starting with the supposedly great division that would exist between things of culture and things of nature, the effect of which has been precisely to subjugate art.

Art, nature, expression. If invoking a natural history of art comes back down to 'renaturing' aesthetic phenomena, to bring them under a horizon that is neither intentional nor sociological or anthropological, but *cosmological* – this already assumes a certain picture of nature, and also a double movement or a double bind. This is first of all to dare to once more pose the question of a cosmic or natural unity, that is to say to merrily practice natural philosophy in a pre-Kantian innocence, without for that matter turning into the freewheeling independence of positive knowledge that the natural and human sciences bring us. In fact, we inscribe ourselves into a quite identifiable philosophical framework, although one largely minoritarian in the history of philosophy. From Spinoza to Nietzsche, as well as Bergson and Deleuze (and, in a certain sense, Leibniz), via Whitehead, Simondon, Ruyer or Chambon, there is a whole lineage of thought that, in the same gesture, denies the modern dissolution of the cosmos by more or less explicitly acting as a natural philosophy, without for that matter falling into the transcendent unity of a na-

ture conceived of as pre-ordered or undifferentiated. And if the term 'metaphysics' can – and indeed must – be used properly, it is first of all to indicate that this natural unity cannot be reduced to the sum of its constituent layers or divisions (matter, life, spirit), without transcending them in an external order or in a divine or scientific teleological plan (in the idea of progress). In fact, all of the above philosophies are logically speaking metaphysics of immanence, which give back the strength or power of being to things, think in terms of an individuation that is primary in relation to individuated objects, and place movement back inside of things and no longer in the transport from one thing to another.

Better yet, these are all *metaphysics of expression*, where nature has an entirely expressive sense. What does this mean? Naturalism only wants to see an *explication* in the relation between each natural stratum: symbolic productions, for example, are based on an organic substrate to explain biological processes which in turn are explained by physicochemical processes. But naturalism fails to see the *implication* of each strata in the other; it does not want to see this envelopment which involves all natural strata and is expressed by singularities, exactly in the manner of Leibniz's monads, each of which, in its singular way, expresses the world. For there is indeed a continuity between a virus and a musical note, between the explosion of a supernova and a walk in a landscape...

This double relation of explication and implication, of development and envelopment is at the heart of expression, because it connects the global and the local, the particular and the general through the expressivity of a world or nature. This nature cannot be reduced to the sum of its parts (the global is not the sum of all localities); it is not fixed forever in a particular stratum (physical or biological); it never constitutes a founding base. Rather, it consists only of a transverse movement in itself between strata; it is a nature that merges a plane of human, mineral, animal, vegetable participations... 'Unnatural participations or nuptials are the true Nature spanning the kingdoms of nature.' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 241)

Reintroducing the concept of expression into the artistic and aesthetic field is certainly a delicate task. We are aware that the concept of expression is over-saturated. In the arts, first of all, the phrase has not ceased to be invoked in relation to everything from classical art theory to Matisse and to all forms of expressionism, placed under the guise of a more or less fuzzy aesthetic idealism, if not a downright classical concept of representation (since the term refers to the classical and Renaissance theory of art as the expression of passions, or the visible demonstration of the invisible inner soul through bodily movements) – to say nothing of the common belief that art is about 'an artist expressing himself'. This situation is all the more remarkable in view of the apparent deterioration of the philosophical concept of expression. Though it survives in theories of language and logic, the explicitly ex-

pressive *ontologies* (from Plotinus to Leibniz), meanwhile, do not seem to have survived in scientific and philosophical modernity. And this is for good reason: such metaphysics constituted an obstacle to the development of rationalism to the extent that they were dragging along with them a thought still thought in terms of force, one that clung to occult, magic, divine or astral powers – all things that modernity has neutralized by only acknowledging *mechanical* forces, which is to say, relations of shocks between one object and another. We no doubt understand why it may be the field of psychology in which the phrase retains some validity, referring to the expression of emotions. But this creates a great risk of putting expression in a subjectivist straitjacket, since by saying that man *expresses,* it is usually understood that man expresses *himself*. It is always 'his' emotion that is expressed (fear, anger, love, joy, tenderness...), which always implies an externalizing movement from psychic interiority to an external body, to a facial expression, body language, but also color, sound or even smell...

Expression and Psychology

In the history of art – the discipline – it is primarily if not essentially from a psychological point of view that the question of expression has been asked. Aby Warburg had in fact already given a fundamental role to expression [*Ausdruck*] in the long history of images in the West. The invention of pathos formulas [*Pathosformeln*], for example, gains significance only in relation to an expressive movement that is more powerful and profound than the simple classical question of 'the expression of passions'. Suffice to say that the term 'expression' as used by Warburg came from a deeper terrain than that of representation, which undermines it from below and imprints it with strange movements. In this regard, we must see how the Warburgian iconology has been able to develop methodologically as the inverse of the Panofskian iconology, given that – to take up the beautiful and simple constructions of the master of Princeton – Panofsky went from expression to the symbol, starting first by asking what there was to see in an image and then afterwards interpreting it. The iconology of Warburg, by contrast, departs from symbols made to interpret (astrological signs, for example) in order to unearth what is expressed, without prejudging what there is to see. Now this is a psychology that has made the expressive dimension its primary subject matter, or at least its framework, in order to conduct a 'historical psychology of human expression,' to reunite 'a collection of documents on the psychology of modes of human expression' – this is what the great art historian of Hamburg clearly envisioned.

This way of articulating the aesthetic question of expression in a psychological dimension could only lead to a psychology that fatally envisioned psychic processes

in dynamic and shifting terms. Expression, for Warburg, in a psychic sense, means that we are dealing with 'a *psyche* that is not confined to the usual heroic novels of the artistic personality'. It therefore seeks a more fundamental and transversal, more impersonal and transindividual *psyche*, a communal mental condition that one is accustomed to call body and soul, the image and the word, representation and movement, and so on (Didi-Huberman 2002, 280-1). Suffice to say that such a psychology would devote a large role to the unconscious, an unconscious not determined as a simple negative of consciousness, a non-thought, but an unconscious of bubbling instinctual forces, stirring powers, an unconscious that would constitute the heart of Freudian metapsychology.

This is where we find the overall interpretation of Warburg's thought that has led Georges Didi-Huberman to make the 'conflict between Id (*Es*) and Ego (*Ich*) – primary process against secondary process,' (Didi-Huberman 2002, 186) in its relation to the issue of 'symptom,' the common horizon of Warburg and Freud. Even if the strictly argumentative terms of Didi-Huberman's interpretation are questionable, it is clear that Freud and Warburg share the same world.[1] Didi-Huberman has furthermore emphasized the practical value of the Freudian model, so that it would perhaps require a patient and meticulous theoretical work in order to capture the consistency between Freud and Warburg. It would be necessary to return to the fundamentals of metapsychology and to the question of the theoretical conditions – philosophical but still scientific – of two 'points of view,' namely the dynamic point of view and the economic point of view. Without going into too much detail, since this is no doubt not the place for such an investigation, it appears at first that it is a profoundly *dialectical* conception that allows for a community of thought between Freud and Warburg, insofar as both think the dynamics of psychic processes in terms of a conflict between forces, a contradiction between powers, or a fight between affects. All the Warburgian polarities – the ecstatic *Ninfa* against the melancholy river god, the *Monstra* against the *Astra,* the primitive against history, magic against rational science, the organic against the inorganic, etc. – are perfectly consistent with the analytic idea of an unconscious which opposes the consciousness, of an Id constantly fighting against the Ego, of a duel between primary and secondary process, of an Eros struggling with Thanatos. There is a logic of *shocks* at work here, where the mind thinks of itself as the place of an autonomous conflict of drives from which it derives all of its dynamics, all of its expressivity: the Id pushes in one direction [*sens*], the Id pushes back. This is undoubtedly what gives both Freud and Warburg their romantic perfume: the importance they attach to negativity up to the point where it is given a real sovereignty is their common recognition of 'the tremendous power of the negative' (Hegel 1977, 19). That the mental or visual symptom suffers synthesis and only knows 'formations of compromise,' which

leaves open conflicts and constantly moving contradictions does not change the situation, it is always a dialectic or a logic of contradiction, the contra (*dia*)-diction (*logos*) that is at work.

But perhaps more profoundly still, the question of expression finds its raw material in an *energetics* that plunges Freud and Warburg into a common element. No doubt this does not touch the delicate grounds of metapsychology, or what we recognize as the 'economic perspective,' i.e. the quantitative dimension of drive energy: from what principles do impulses receive their positive and negative variations? And where did they come from? What gives them their strength? How is such energy distributed, how does it circulate? How do we go from a 'quantum of affect' to a representation? We know how Freud's theory was fueled by a physical model of energy, particularly through the use it made of the thermodynamics of Helmholtz, and the concepts of 'free energy' and 'bound energy,' of entropy, degradation and of the conservation of energy. Now, the most intricate Warburgian theoretical insights traverse the same universe, even if they remained in draft form without ever being systematized: the question of a 'dynamogram,' of an 'energy engram' as a unit of affective memory, the 'polarization-depolarization' couple, and so on. There would no doubt be a lot to say about this shared vision in which the dynamics of a psychic economy is understood in terms of a 'primary' energy, 'free,' 'natural,' as opposed to 'organized intelligence' with clearly differentiated performances.[2] But for now, it is particularly important to emphasize that even a psychic theory of expression can not do without a thought of force or power.

From there, two theoretical possibilities are emerging, which are perhaps not contradictory. Either the expressive dynamics is imported, not exactly in the image (singular), but rather in the theoretical field of the image, in aesthetic knowledge, under an epistemological shift that does not necessarily need to justify or explain the basis of its principles as they are operating. This perspective has animated the history of the most cutting-edge art with the success and critical pertinence we are familiar with, especially in the work of art historians such as Louis Marin, Hubert Damisch, Daniel Arasse or Georges Didi-Huberman.[3] It is no doubt the Freudian concept of figurability (*Darstelbarkeit*) that provided the invaluable theoretical material for capturing the richness of the work of images, which is thought precisely in terms of the dream and its basic operations (displacement, condensation, distortion, insensitivity to contradiction, etc.). From this point of view, a parallel brings psychic expression and aesthetic expression together according to a heuristic approach that judges only by concrete results. We borrow the functional image of the dream as an analogy, without necessarily having to explain the different epistemological relationships between primary mental processes and visual processes (which is to say: aesthetic phenomena).

But another possibility remains open, a more axiomatic one, which inquires into the nature of this relationship between image and psyche. It is no longer content with drawing a parallel, but seeks to build a continuity between them. For if it is one thing to say that images work *like* a dream, it is another to ask whether there is a *foundation* common to both, which would establish not an epistemological but an ontological relationship between the nature of the psyche and that of images. And in this case, the foundation is by definition subject to a critique through physical and even metaphysical principles. One can easily say that the work of Didi-Huberman on images, at least from *Confronting Images* (1990) to his work on Warburg, *L'image survivante* (2002), is marked by a clear evolution, or rather a clarification that sets up a gentle continuity between the first and the second theoretical possibility: moving from a 'visual unconscious' to a 'visuality of the unconscious' by explaining the *psychic substrate* of the visual unconscious, its subjective seat.[4]

Where does visual expressivity wind up, since we are made to depend upon a psychic inscription and since, to put it bluntly, we are made to depend upon a *representation,* albeit unconscious? It will lead to aesthetic 'energy' merging with the energy of the unconscious subject so that the expression only refers to a subjective projection, or, to use the more precise vocabulary of Freudian metapsychology, to the 'investment' of a subject in an image. The beautiful concept of a 'visual unconscious' would then have no more than a relative value (relative precisely to the subject) or, literally speaking, only be understood as a metaphor, as a movement from the *psyche* to the object. For the question remains open: *which unconscious are we talking about* when we free expression of all forms of subjectivity?[5] Are we aware that we are dealing with the same problem as that of the relation of the psyche to matter, and that it is necessary to be metaphysically armed in order to assume a thought of things, *in* things, inasmuch as even the inorganic thinks?

Logic of Expression

To think an expressivity of images which is neither subjective nor objective, i.e. one which fits neither in a representation nor in a thing or any other content, is not to dissolve it in an experiment that tends toward aesthetic mysticism. The expressivity, subtle though it may be, is fully positive and works through singular and specific dynamics that have yet to be described. But it is correct that its subtlety means that it must be understood more as a *moment* or a transitional phase than as a state of things. We say that *there is expressivity when an image is outside of itself.* A logic of exteriority, certainly, but which one? The most common mistake is to think of the proper movement of expression – all of this crystallizes in the prefix 'ex-' – as of the externalization of something interior, be it an idea, a drive or any other form

of content, although it is usually conceived in a psychological mode. But even if expression does describe a movement of exteriorization, it has nothing to do with the passage of interiority to exteriority. It is from itself that the image must exit, and this requires a series of dynamics of the type: detachment, tearing, peeling – all being movements by which an essential individual or body abstracts itself, in the precise sense of 'ab-stract,' where it pulls itself from itself, loses its individuality, its corporeality. This is why Emanuele Coccia was so inspired to think of the image in terms of being 'out of place':

> our shape, our appearance is now *out* of ourselves, *out* of our bodies and *out* of our soul. [...] The image (the sensible) is the existence of anything outside of its own place. *Any form and anything that manages to exist outside its own place becomes* image. Our form becomes image when it is able to live beyond us, without becoming itself another body, without stopping at the surface of the other body. (Coccia 2010, 31)

This kind of expropriation of bodies and, more generally, of all forms of individuality is exactly what characterizes the expressive movement.

The deep expressivity of the human voice, for example – and no doubt the deferred action [*après coup*] of music – obviously manifest this autonomy that characterizes a sound which is issued by a body (human or instrumental), but escapes so as to be able to exist and be perceived independently of it. It is not strictly speaking the voice and its qualities, whether this voice be sung or not, which is expressive, but it is a relation of liberation, in no way imitative, that it maintains with the body that issued it. The suggestive power of fragrances and odors obviously belongs in the same category: they gain expressivity through their detachment from the bodily substance that emits them, and yet their smell does not at all resemble a body. Or, further still, our gestures and postures, whether practiced or pictured, are a wonderfully expressive field – not exactly in terms of the classic model that wants a bodily movement to express a movement of the soul through a kind of externalization of the interior, that is, where 'expression' would mean imitation and representation – but in a mode of disembodiment that makes the bodily movement, the gesture, lose its organic or utilitarian function. It is undoubtedly in this sense that it is necessary to understand the richness of invention through which images, at least since the Italian Renaissance, escaped from gestures and bodily attitudes. This is shown for example by this extraordinary drawing of Antonio Pollaiolo showing *Adam at Work* (fig.1), resting on his hoe after the fall. It is quite significant that the work has an iconographical theme; Adam does not grab his hoe. The movement that takes possession of Adam's hand in its expressivity drags along both the instrumental use-

lessness as well as the organic non-functionality. If there is labor here, it is more the result of an expressive trait of mania that works for its own sake, without being finalized in a tool or structured in a bodily organization (Prévost 2007, 161-2).

Figure 1: Antonio Pollaiolo, *Adam at work*, pen and ink, Florence, Uffizzi, ca. 1470. D.R.

Is it any surprise if animals open up expressive possibilities as rich as manmade pictures? So great is their ability to depersonalize, to take on shapes and colors, or the most unlikely positions, breaking up any form recognizable as an animal. Consider, for example, the case of *Lophorina superba* (the Superb Bird of Paradise (fig.2)), a bird of paradise living in the mountain forests of New Guinea.[6] The posture it adopts at the climax of his courtship reaches a rarely attained loss of individuality, such that it is no longer able to distinguish itself as a bird. On a branch cleaned prior

to the occasion, the bird deploys its iridescent blue-green plastron to its maximum degree on both sides of the chest and along the collar over its head, then drawing it into a double range encompassing the head and plastron. The head is raised, the beak and eyes are rendered almost invisible and reveal two circular patches of the same color as the shirt front on the forehead. The show is accompanied by small jumps and snaps like whiplashes. The image that then occurs is unparalleled: a large, elongated black oval crossed by a kind of huge mouth, metallic blue, with two little eyes of the same color. When you face it, the bird of paradise loses almost everything, not only its avian individuality – there is no bird that looks anything like this – but even its *individual* form. It is an unlikely abstract face that rises, a form like nothing else, which has no more than a formal consistency with the body of the bird and is totally detached from it.

Figure 2: Lophorina Superba displaying. D.R.

It is obviously not for nothing that Deleuze and Guattari called upon animal expressivity to shape their concept of territory. 'There is a territory precisely when milieu components cease to be directional, becoming dimensional instead, when they cease to be functional to become expressive. There is a territory when the rhythm has expressiveness. What defines the territory is the emergence of matters of expression (qualities).' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 315) No need here to detail the theory of the territory, but only to retain the idea that its expression is not entirely dependent on the internal impulses of individuals, nor on an adjustment to external circumstances. The 'territorial motifs' name precisely the modes by which movements and emissions of sound and odor are no longer connected to instincts and organic impulses, be they sexual or aggressive, while the 'territorial counterpoints' describe how these same movements, postures, chromatic events, cries and so on are detached from any form of exterior milieu and its topographical, geographical, meteorological, etc. characteristics (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 317-18). The term here refers to nothing mechanical. 'Expression,' Pierre Montebello correctly remarked, 'is in brief the exhaustion of inner impulses and the relation to external circumstances, in a new relation to Earth and the cosmos. The mode of being of the singular animal has no other origin than this impersonal expressive dimension.' (Montebello 2015)

We must insist on the irreducibility of expressivity to any partition between interior and exterior, or any division between a subject and an object. We have already said that it has nothing to do with the expression of interiority. But the detachment that characterizes it cannot in principle provide the durability or stability of an external object. An expressive trait ceases to be as soon as it is caught up by a body, a quality or an individuality. Expression always happens between bodies in a subtle, almost ethereal state. It allows us, for example, to consider the skin of an animal not merely as a physiological envelope, but as an expressive area with the ability to detach from any internal organization of any form of organic nature, without for that matter being individuated in an object – like a garment – totally outside the animal body. Expressivity would rather be on an anorganic plane, neither organic nor inorganic. The spots around the eyes of the jaguar or the shimmering effects of parrots are not entirely inorganic, because chemically speaking there are still living cells that compose them and since there are always morphogenetic processes that govern their formation; but they are not entirely organic either, since they cannot be traced back onto anatomy or organic divisions, and above all since they often remain a-functional in relation to the conservation of space.[7]

This is undoubtedly all still very rough. How can we grasp this kind of disembodiment more precisely? It can be done by the deeply Stoic gesture of thinking expression as incorporeal. Indeed, the incorporeals talked about by the Stoics[8] are 'quasi-things,' which are neither objective nor subjective, do not belong to us but at the same time don't have their own body, i.e. they neither act nor suffer. They are surface beings, which do not so much exist as subsist at the surface of things, as real expressive facts, as the ethereal results of shocks between bodies. The meeting of meat with the blade of the butcher's knife, for example, produces an event – a cut which is not identical with the states of affairs of the body involved: a 'cutting' occurs outside the body and remains an autonomous event; and even when the bodies are gone, even when the meat has been consumed and the knife has turned crooked, the fact of the cut persists. If intangibles are not things, substances or qualities, they are not for that matter ideal or abstract, for they describe intensive transformations that are always detached from the body that undergoes them. When we say 'Socrates walks,' we need to think of 'walking' as independent from Socrates (which is precisely what Aristotelian substantialism cannot understand, because it always understands this phrase to mean 'Socrates is walking'). It is a theory of expression that is at stake here,[9] a theory that can be stated in a grammatical form, given that the Stoics were perfectly able to articulate their physics of the incorporeal event through a logic of verbs. Verbs, which is to say pure expressive dynamisms, never merge with nouns and adjectives, i.e. the bodies and their states.

While it is relatively easy to take the example of a body that walks, because the intangible process is evident, it is quite another, more subtle case to spot the process in an image, to the extent that the plastic dynamics are covered over by shapes and qualities, or, to put it another way, insofar as the transitivity of aesthetic problems is neutralized by the apparent intransitivity of the body of the image.[10] The problem may well be expressed in grammatical terms, and if such a strange grammar of expression is possible, it could only work by prohibiting the use of nouns and adjectives, because the first can only identify formal – and therefore nameable – substances; and the latter can only qualify sensible impressions, again identifying them, and therefore eventually displacing them metaphorically. Such a prohibition would make sure that we do not leave the evidence of bodies and individuals without questioning what is happening *in* what we see. How then do we describe an image without prioritizing nouns and adjectives, if not by giving all their importance to *verbs*? One should always think plastically with verbs, and this is not an easy task, since verbs by definition describe processes, which is to say transformations.

It is obvious that this primacy of verbs has nothing to do with any action represented, and only makes sense outside of any iconographic content. For example, when Georges Didi-Huberman escaped the modern becoming of the Warburgian *Ninfa* in the *longue durée* of images (2002a), the question 'What does the nymph do?,' does not apply at all to his iconographic work: she walks, she runs, she sleeps, she follows Dionysus, she joins a swan, or a cloud of gold. These actions, in effect, do nothing but describe false movements and are like accidents that remain secondary to a body-subject that would remain motionless. The real expressive movement, the incorporeal expressed, so to speak, would for Didi-Huberman be the *Ninfa's* fall, her 'sovereign decline.' *Ninfa* falls, or rather a 'falling' comes, as an event, unto *Ninfa*. Fall, here, is expressive ('sovereign'), because it is detached from all individuality, all iconographic subjectivity, even to the point where visually speaking the body of *Ninfa* is disappearing: the fall causes the bifurcation of his drapery, which separates from her body so as to fall on the floor and deteriorate in the dust on the sidewalk. It is the same case for sensible qualities. Colors, for example, have nothing expressive in themselves. They only become so when they exceed their chromatic individuality, when a red becomes blue, an incorporeal and expressive blue, which would have nothing to do with the bodily quality of the color purple; or even when they lose their qualitative chromatic property, such as the series of *Space Divisions* (1976) by James Turrell, where color is detached from its optical physicality to become an embracing material, tactile and thick.

All of this is to indicate the fundamentally intensive nature of expression. We are constantly reminded of the lesson of Deleuze that an intensity can never trace over an extension or quality; it is not explicated by them but always gets implicated

in them. No doubt empirically or factually speaking, no intensity is ever perceptible without form or qualities covering it; but it still remains distinct in principle. It is moreover not even certain that to speak of '*an'* intensity is correct, to the extent that an intensity is never individual and will continue to stand out from constituted individualities. And that is why expression cannot be explained, at least not be explained by things – extensions, forms, *qualities,* materials, and contents – but can only be felt by following its lines of involvement *in* things, its way of being wrapped up in the thick of individuated things, expanding, moving or broadening them. The Warburgian *Ninfa* probably represents an ideally typical case of such expressive transversality, insofar as it does not mean a real or fictional character (which is why we must keep its name Italian name, so as not to confuse it with ancient nymphs, even if it shares some traits with them), referring not to an iconographic figure or an individual, but to 'an' intensity, this 'an,' following Deleuze, referring above all to a pre-individual singularity. The question is never how to recognize *Ninfa* in time and especially in space, i.e. 'where is *Ninfa*?' It is rather to ask: 'to what extent is *Ninfa* able to nest?' In other words: what is its power of implication? How far does its enveloping force go? In a painting by the Pollaiolo brothers representing *The Rape of Dejanira* (fig. 3), it is clear that the figure of *Ninfa* is explicated iconographically in the character of Dejaneira. But we must equally affirm that her hair is involved in the tail of the centaur, given the strange proximity of her dress to the tail, as if the two forms are married (the thing is all the more remarkable in that *Ninfa* does not distinctly show its characteristically long hair). It must be said again that she is involved in the slenderness of the tree which, on the right side, seems to prolong the movement of the tail, as if a vegetal transformation was the only escape possible, effectively transforming Dejanira into an unlikely Daphne. We must finally see how *Ninfa* is involved in the foaming whiteness of the river, as if forming folds of a diaphanous gown, a dress made of water that always recedes from the grasp of our hands and thus relates the *Ninfa* to the mythological motif of the spirit of living waters.

Figure 3: Antonio and Piero Pollailo, *The Rape of Dejanira*, det., tempera and oil on panel, Yale, Yale University Gallery, ca. 1470. D.R.

The Dissolution of Expression in Modern Cosmology

How far? [Jusqu'où?] That is probably how the question concerning expression should be posed, at least in its logical schema. How far does an expressive envelopment go? Does the separation of bodies and individuals exhaust itself? Up to where does its power take it? It is now clear that the spatiality which is here in question can only be understood from an intensive perspective, through a deeper principle than that of any form of extensive locality. But it is precisely the intensity of expressivity which crosses not only the limits of the unconscious, but those of the psyche itself. If expression always draws transverse movements, if it crosses subjects and objects, kingdoms and scales, the natural and the artificial, the biological and the cultural, then it is ultimately the world that is enveloped in it. But this world or nature cannot therefore be understood within the limits that philosophical and scientific modernity have set for it.

In fact, we have shown this from the beginning. Breaking expressivity out of psychology brings us back to the question of the constitution of philosophical, scientific and artistic modernity and its major divisions: between object and subject, matter and thought, primary and secondary qualities, etc. Put differently, we cannot emphasize expression in the artistic and aesthetic field without taking into account its correlation with a concept of nature and its involvement in a real cosmology. But which cosmology? Which natural philosophy? Now it appears that a subjectivist understanding of expression, which would amount to the neutralization of its effect, would necessarily belong to a modern cosmology, a naturalism built specifically to prevent thinking the sovereign expressivity of images, their capacity to envelop parts of the world deemed radically heterogeneous.

We must therefore critically revisit this constitution. Everything happens as if there is a choice between two possibilities: either we, consciously or unconsciously, take images to be cultural *representations*, and they become the object of anthropology; or we consider the images *for themselves,* as physical beings, and they become the object of natural science.[11] In the same way: either we consider man as a maker of essentially symbolic images, and we articulate this production in the same way as we do other symbolic productions (such that its study becomes a matter for the humanities); or we see in the human above all a natural being determined by biological conditions (and the task becomes one for cognitivism). In these circumstances, the expressivity of an aesthetic phenomenon can only consist of a representation, a subjective representation, even if that of an unconscious subject.

But this division is inseparable from a mourning over the disappearance of the world. Paradoxically, nature did not manage to arise from the rubble of the cosmos, the cosmic unity of the ancients became supplanted by a purely *legislative* natural

unity: nature could no longer consist of anything but laws, these 'laws of nature' providing the objective basis for rational science. This new natural constitution could then introduce special jurisdictions in which certain regions prevail over others, it could then divide and group sets of phenomena together by subjecting them to laws that would apply only to them: matter, life and consciousness.[12] Each area or specific layer then functions as the substrate of the others (the symbolic/psychic, organic/living, the physico-chemical/mathematical) and each has its own specialist, if not its lawyer (the physicist, the biologist, the anthropologist/philosopher). Hence the question of the unity of nature could hardly make sense any more, since nature was reduced to the sum of its jurisdictions, with the addition of its strata.

Now, it happens that the discourse on art since the Italian Renaissance (a discourse which should not to be confused with the actual works), is no stranger to this modern cosmology and even often accompanies it. The imitation of nature, the importance of mathematics and geometry – a necessary consequence of the primacy of the extended – the status of representation, the development of perspective, all theories of the project and their attempt to build a bridge between the creative spirit and matter (Idea, *disegno,* design ...), the insistence on the subjectivity of the artist, the experience of artistic contemplation (in its entirely empirical conditions of putting a spectator in front of an image)... all these artistic and aesthetic reasons have been of great influence in creating a modernity centered on the distinction between subject and object (Prévost 2013).

We can only be astonished to see that the apparently most deconstructive attempts are still largely dependent on such a cosmology. Should we be surprised, given that they sometimes explicitly claim to be returning to naturalism? One cannot therefore subscribe to the type of criticism of aesthetic objectivity that Jean-Marie Schaeffer in particular has developed:[13] there are no objects that are given in advance as aesthetic, there is no home turf, there are no aesthetic hierarchies and 'anything' can 'do' aesthetics – a phrase which modern art has even made its 'categorical imperative' (De Duve 1989, 107-44). So that it becomes relative whether or not objects are recognized as being aesthetic – and the anthropology of images has shown that the image may not even be a manmade object, nor even an object at all. Of course the aesthetic is relational – it certainly is. But related to what? That is the whole question. It is not certain that invoking 'aesthetic lines' or an 'aesthetic investment,' fundamentally changes the game. Undoubtedly, the field of aesthetics is thereby considerably expanded, and aesthetic lines do open up a wealth of anthropological variation. But by making it so that an object is only aesthetic in and through representation, and by postulating an 'aesthetic intentionality' inevitably winds up in an aesthetic subjectivity, which moreover still wraps the image up in a Subject as the basis of representation – even if we refrain from naming it as such.[14]

Conversely, we should take note of the radically opposite theoretical turn that one sees again today, which would reinvigorate a strange aesthetic objectivism, with its 'properties,' its canons, its 'beauty,' its 'truth,' its art criteria – a whole world that brings back an old scholasticism that was believed to be extinct.[15] But it will be understood that aesthetic subjectivism and objectivism are just two sides of the same coin, and it is useless to radically attack aesthetic objectivity without at the same time overthrowing aesthetic subjectivity and vice versa. For the subject-object pair assumes that its terms are reciprocally presupposed, the subject lives through the object and the object through the subject. Never forget that in the history of Western thought, the subject and object were given, forged, designed and set up *together,* in the same philosophical and scientific, theoretical and experimental movement, according to the same line of demarcation. This much is clear: *subject-object does not describe a relation*. And this is certainly the most insidious trap that you can fall into: the 'relationship' of a subject to an object opens up nothing, nothing is connected. For the heterogeneity of the terms is at the heart of the relationship, and there are only relationships that connect different things. Or: subject and object only describe the same thing in two opposing views but strictly symmetrical, they amount to the same. And it is even the same with modern cosmology which, at its peak, has precisely denied any metaphysical status to the relation by creating a frontal opposition between substances: *res extensa* and *res cogitans*, matter and spirit, presence and representation, substances which are for themselves totally foreign to the relation. Materialism and philosophy of the mind share the world by 'bifurcat[ing] nature into two divisions [...] the nature apprehended in awareness and the nature which is the cause of awareness' (Whitehead 1920, 30-1).

What stands before us then becomes more specific, by detaching expression from all forms of subjectivity it becomes necessary to think of *aesthetic phenomena in themselves*. But difficulties immediately arrive, since we cannot ignore that the concept of in-itself is philosophically loaded and is, to be more precise, polluted by its confusion with objectivity. But to posit the existence of images in themselves, or an expressivity in itself is absolutely not to say that images or aesthetic phenomena consist of objects, or that they are objectively determinable. On the contrary, we have not ceased to point out how expressive features are beyond all objective existence and that these features immediately lose their expressivity as soon as they are objectified, individualized or substantialized in a body. It would be necessary to conceive of a *non-objective in-itself*. How do we see pictures for themselves, since 'self' does not refer to a property or an objective identity? How do we detach art, and above all the aesthetic phenomenon, from the world of representation without substantializing it into isolated monads? Which even means: how do we think of a relationship between these images which does not pass through the representation

of subject (or an 'aesthetic conduit')? Nature, as we are beginning to see, names nothing else but the plane, or specifically the in-itself, of these relations. This makes it so that that a natural history of art could be practiced as a special case of natural philosophy, as Whitehead, in the early twentieth century, defined it, namely: the study of

> the relations *inter se* of things known, abstracted from the bare fact that they are known. Natural philosophy should never ask, what is in the mind and what is in nature. To do so is a confession that it has failed to express relations between things perceptively known, namely to express those natural relations whose expression is natural philosophy. (Whitehead 2006, 30)

Can we understand that this 'in itself' does nothing to argue for a return to aesthetic objectivity? It must be forcefully insisted upon that images or aesthetic phenomena are relations, because it might not be easily grasped how difficult it is to support such a proposal. As always the question returns: relation between what and what? And the risk remains that the response does not live up to the heights of the question, i.e. that it manages to cancel or neutralize any form of relationship, like the false solution of the subject and object. The entire theoretical issue is contained in this question: how does the image in itself describe a relation? And how could an in-itself be relational? Do we not then move the relation between image and image to the interior of a 'same' image, one outside of which the image loses its identity and is no longer *itself*? For perhaps there is no authentic relation that is not a relation to self, a relation that involves an internal difference, a difference inside of the same thing and not a difference between two things. But is that not exactly what 'in-itself' means? Does the in itself not open the image up to the possibility of a relationship with itself, a relationship *in* the image, in *it*?

Is it necessary to repeat that an image in itself does not designate an objective image, detached from any relationship? It is exactly the opposite, and this is where the aesthetic phenomena derive their expressivity, inasmuch as they continue to deal with the world's traits, 'in itself' designating only this fleeting moment where these compounds are synthesized for themselves, where the image, as if taken from life, is no longer an organized area but a composition between a gesture and a way of life, between a semiotic form and a painterly style, between a colorful drip and traditional dyeing. It is this power of involvement which is then at work and, expressing a detour – a singular configuration of matter, life and mind, a mineral downturn and organic, symbolic and plant, human and – *in* the world – comes to express a world.

Translated by David van Putten. Revised by Sjoerd van Tuinen.

Notes

1. As B. Vouilloux (2011) has shown.
2. Warburg wrote: 'life in its tension between the two poles which are natural energy, instinctive and pagan, and organised intelligence' (quoted in Michaud 2001, 282).
3. It is undoubtedly in Didi-Huberman 1990 that one can read the most successful systematization of this relation. See also D. Arasse 1997.
4. It is therefore quite logical that the theoretical emphasis in Didi-Huberman's work moves so easily from rather aesthetic questions (concerning notions of the whole, the figure, the visual, etc.), to entirely psychological questions that carry over the conditions of the first. Otherwise – especially in a critical approach to the declaration of intentions by Donald Judd about the 'specific objects' of minimalism – the historian of art does not hesitate to return to the classical thesis of a subjective foundation of experience: 'There is thus an experience [...]. There are thus *experiences*, which is to say differences. [...] There are relations put in presences, there are subjects which, alone, bestow upon minimalist objects a guarantee of existence and efficacy.'(Didi-Huberman 1992, 40, [editor's translation]).
5. In this respect, it seems to us that Jacques Rancière in the *L'inconscient esthétique* moves a bit quickly with his positing of an 'aesthetic unconscious', which does not diminish the interest of his work.
6. See Dawn W. Frith and Clifford B. Frith 1988, 183-8.
7. To show this, we permit ourselves to refer here to our book, *L'elegance animale, sur l'expressivité des formes vivantes*, which revolves around the work of the Swish zoologist Adolf Portman. (Prévost 2009)
8. Emile Bréhier's short book (1928) on the Stoic incorporeal remains relevant.
9. Deleuze understood this perfectly, and in fact started from the Stoic theory of incorporeals to build his own theory of the expressive sense in *Logic of Sense*.
10. The approach in Anne Cauquelin (2006) should be noted here, as it reinvests all contemporary artistic practices with the question of incorporeals by juxtaposing the four forms of incorporeals in the Stoics (the expressible, the place, time, vacuum) and the mediums and aesthetics modes typical of contemporary art (immaterial, virtual, empty ...). But it seems that this attempt is doomed to fail in principle, to the extent that it seeks to identify incorporeals in objects or materials – even if they are of a dematerialized 'aesthetic material' – in other words to cast incorporeals onto bodies and states of affairs, when the advantage of the incorporeal is precisely not to be a substantial event, but rather neither thing nor quality but expression. And one does not see why contemporary art is more intangible than the art of the Italian Renaissance.
11. It should also be emphasized that this view is not so strange in the history of art, as many studies from the fields of conservation and heritage often give an important place to the physicochemical examination of works of art. That such analyzes are required for restorative work is obviously understandable, if not commendable. What is less clear is when they tend to impersonate the history of art ...
12. There is obviously a deliberate use of the Kantian vocabulary of law here.
13. See especially J.-M. Schaeffer (2000), who picks up the theses he developed in *Les célibataires de l'art. Pour une esthétique sans mythes* and makes them explicit.
14. As is the case in Jean-Marie Schaeffer, *Adieu à l'esthétique*. Schaeffer claims that there is no aesthetic phenomenon in itself; everything is relative or relational aesthetics. The aesthetic does not have its own turf, there is no hierarchy of objects predetermined to be aesthetics. What, then, makes the aesthetic phenomenon? Schaeffer replies bluntly: 'representation' or 'aesthetic conduct directed at an object which is its referent' (2000, 25-6). There is only 'aesthetic investment', an 'intentionality' directed towards objects and phenomena that are absolutely varied phenomena in principle. Schaeffer seems very reluctant to locate or rather to speak of the term 'aesthetics' logically. If 'aes-

thetics is not an objective property' but a 'relational' property, why not make it a *subjective* property, between a *subject* and an object? Schaeffer strangely speaks about the relationship 'between an object and an individual' (2000, 16) or remains in the limbo of a 'relational property' or elsewhere, uses pronouns such 'we' (2000, 26), 'I', or 'human being' (2000, 9). Speaking of intentionality, even Brentano or Searle – rather than Husserl – possess the merit of having clearly placed the operation in the subject, thereby making the problems of aesthetics into a problem of subjectivity.

15. See, for example, Zemach (2006) and Réhault (2013). Such a move would be comparable to what is happening in philosophy today, the subjectivism of modern philosophy giving way to a resurgence of objectivism or realism, as 'object-oriented philosophy' or 'Speculative Realism' (Graham Harman, Quentin Meillassoux).

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The Late and the New: Mannerism and Style in Art History and Philosophy

Sjoerd van Tuinen

As evidenced by his readings of Aloïs Riegl and Heinrich Wölfflin, Deleuze's interest in early art history is deeply vested in the history of style. The titles of his books alone point to two philosophical concepts for historical styles, expressionism and baroque (and indeed, there is a third, 'Bergsonism'). In *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze and Guattari propose concepts of classicism, romanticism and modernism, just as in his books on painting and cinema Deleuze relies on a whole taxonomy of the Gothic, the Byzantine, and the Egyptian, as well as on notions of impressionism, expressionism, constructivism, neo-realism, and many others. In fact, his interest in style far exceeds the (history of) art, since according to the modal philosophy of univocal being, all that exists does so only because it has a style or manner: 'being is said "in all manners" in a single and same sense, but is said thereby of that which differs' (Deleuze 1994, 304, 36). Ontology itself presupposes art, just as art, before it becomes a separate domain with its own plurality (painting, sculpture, architecture and so on), is inseparable from a diversity of manners of making exist.[1]

Among the art historical styles that Deleuze pays particular attention to, there is one which, besides expressionism (which is developed through his reading of Spinoza), has equally an historical and a systematic value, namely mannerism (which is developed through his reading of Leibniz). Just as, from its inception, the question of mannerism's historical existence has been a constituent problem for the history of style, there is a way of proceeding in philosophy that one can call properly mannerist. Bergsonist philosopher Vladimir Jankélévitch once formulated an opposition of 'modal' to 'substantialist' philosophy. Represented by the mannerist poet Baltasar Gracián, modal philosophy means that 'all is an effect of style,' that there is 'nothing behind appearances,' and that '[b]eing is practically what it resembles.' This notion that appearances are not less than being but otherwise than being, namely its becomings, takes the form of a 'rehabilitation of the accident' from its Aristotelian subordination to essence. (1980, 15) Identity is only the mode in which a being has being in becoming. In itself, however, a mode is nothing but what will be.[2]

More recently, this interest in the modes of existence has gained new prominence in Continental philosophy with the work of Bruno Latour, as well as with translations of Etienne Souriau and Gilbert Simondon. Contemporary analytical ontology or modal metaphysics is still Aristotelian insofar as it moves within the holy trinity of ground, essence and modality. Its main modalities are the classical modalities of necessity, contingency, possibility, and impossibility, each of which prioritizes the logical modality of identity or essence over existence. But the crux of mannerist philosophy is precisely that a manner is never given, neither in essence nor in existence. We must modalize the relation between potential and actual itself: what passes from potential to actual is not an essence, but the modality in which being alters itself. (Latour 2011, 312-3) At the threshold of potential and act, there are just as many modes of existence as there are becomings, since every mode is the operation through which potentiality itself acquires reality and produces determinate effects.

My aim here is to reconnect this systematic sense of mannerism with its art historical sense. After a brief discussion of how philosophy intervenes in art historical debates surrounding mannerism, we will first revisit the paradox of what Jean-Luc Nancy has called 'the singular plural of the essence of the arts' (1996, 35). Well before the beginning of the historical era of Art and its alleged modern end, mannerism already demonstrated that the vestige of art, once we give up its claim to an essence or dominant style, is a plurality of manners, each of which marks 'art's beginning' – or becoming – 'otherwise than art' (1996, 93-4). Moreover, while mannerism is a concept of becoming specific to art, occurring in the 16th century qua historical 'style,' it is not limited to art. For both Giorgio Agamben and Deleuze, it describes a general economy of use. As we will see, however, their interpretations (lateness versus novelty) and evaluations (alienation versus naturalization) nonetheless diverge, such that, with Agamben, mannerism remains bound by the classical opposition of style and manner, whereas with Deleuze, it explodes into modernism.

Art History and Philosophy

In art history, mannerism generally refers to European art situated chronologically between the Italian High Renaissance and the early baroque, with firm roots in the former and in part overlapping with the latter. The single most important aesthetic premise of mannerism is the cultivation of style. The term mannerism derives from the Italian *maniera*, which has its origins in the older literature of aristocratic etiquette. In the 16th century, the 'age of refinement' (Henri Focillon), it becomes used by artists for justifying themselves in public controversy. It is contrasted to the aesthetic judgment of mannered stylization (*manierato*, *manieroso*) that Giorgio

Vasari criticized for example in the self-generating abstraction of Perugino, in whose work artistic creation would be reduced to stereotype, witty affectation, preciosity, artificiality and technical facility. Reflecting its vulgar meaning until today, art historians have for a long time regarded mannerism mainly in this second sense as the uncomprehending and mannered imitation or *Entartung* of some previous, more mature style.[3] From its earliest days onward, they have understood the history of art as something that is cyclical, passing through succeeding stages of blossoming, flowering, and decay, and it was classical figures such as Giovanni Pietro Bellori and Luigi Lanzi who gave the art of *maniera* its negative connotation as the outside against which the historical self-understanding of classical art has traditionally established itself. Their rejection bears great similarity to the way postmodernism would later be regarded as a decadence of the modernist revolutions, with artists trying ever harder to be noticed, developing signature styles and personal quirks that make them instantaneously recognizable but prohibit the growth of new schools. Perhaps the most exemplary is the judgment of Wölfflin, the first main art historical authority to undertake an anti-classical revaluation of the baroque, who still ignored mannerism as an independent movement and took the 'first stage of the baroque' merely for 'the style into which the Renaissance resolved itself or, as it is more commonly expressed, into which the Renaissance degenerated.' (1964, 15)

The twentieth century has seen a great diversity of attempts in art history to reinterpret and revalue mannerism in terms of positive and apparently non-classical purposes. For some, including Deleuze and Agamben, it is the dissolution and not the appearance of the renaissance that created the conditions for modern art (expressionism, surrealism, pop art, postmodernism). The baroque attempt to overcome this crisis in the name of a renewed cultural unity or harmony, by contrast, is far too reactionary and historically bound to pass for a revolutionary breakthrough. (cf. van Tuinen 2014) Mannerism, to borrow a term from Riegl, is a struggle, a battlefield. Only when style becomes problematic does it become programmatic. As Arnold Hauser argues, its critical state is the 'normal' state of creativity rather than its exception: 'During its longer periods in history ..., art seeks to keep as much as possible of the confusing, incomprehensible and inexhaustible wealth that classicism seeks to hide behind its crystalline forms.' (1979, 24) Thus instead of keeping us from using the term 'mannerism,' the often-heard warning that art during 'the period following the deaths of Pope Leo and Raphael lacked the unity of the Classic style and that the artists preference for experimentation has resulted in a variety of styles'[4] (Hall 2001, 9) is precisely a reason to opt for it. If there was a 'triumph of mannerism,' as the title of the first comprehensive exhibition suggested, this is also a triumph for art as it emancipates itself from the classical identity of Art in a generalized will to style.

Perhaps we can say something similar of the problem of the many diverging interpretations and evaluations of mannerism in art history itself. If the historiography of mannerism has been a 'kaleidoscope' – so many theses, so many empirical mannerisms (Maurer 2001, 12) – then the challenge for philosophy is to produce a concept that both retains the wealth of their historical heterogeneity and reconnects them in a negentropic order of becoming, i.e. an inessential coherence that exceeds (not: transcends) their shared age of reference and the confused determination of its historical existence. For the very emphasis on manner or style – a purely processual term that enables us to define art as practice and event rather than as historical object and lineage – reflects this plurality and enables us to distinguish mannerism from the stylistic unity of the Renaissance and the baroque.

This properly philosophical distinction between history and becoming deserves special attention, since mannerism, due to its intrinsic relation to a previous, more classical style, cannot be conceived without its own conception of time. The period is often described as a natural extension of the art of Andrea del Sarto, Michelangelo, and Raphael. It is no surprise that the historiography of art was itself born with Vasari in the context of the sixteenth century. As we shall see, however, mannerist art not only relies on the past to legitimate the present in the sense of providing its model or image, but also seeks to legitimate the past precisely through the present. By giving the model a second existence in the copy, it makes the past return in the present (now-here) as virtual participant in the construction of the future (no-where). It thus turns repetition against itself, making it a transformative force that grounds 'a tradition of the new' (Deleuze 2003, 123). For the art historian, this means that mannerism's way into the future also provides a way back into the past. (cf. Chirolla and Mosquiera in this volume on *renaissance* as rhizomatic temporality.) Perhaps this 'untimeliness' has led to the paradox that mannerism never received its own place or actuality within this history. What if mannerism, as an essentially contested concept, is an abstract tendency that cannot be reduced to its historical conditions of appearance and recurs throughout art history, all the while subsisting and insisting virtually, like a problem that outlives its solutions?[5]

The Paradox of Style

Mannerism raises an interesting problem for philosophy, because it reveals a logical paradox in the concept of style. As Erwin Panofsky once observed, style is predicated on both distinction and similarity; it both preserves coherence while offering difference. (1915) Art historians like Wölfflin use it both for referring to the individual manners of expression of artists and artworks and for generalizing a formal aesthetic epoch.

On the one hand, the sixteenth century marks a crucial moment in the individualization and emancipation of the artist. Benvenuto Cellini explains in his *Autobiography* how the artist seeks refuge against the vagaries of the market in autonomous creativity and singular personality, thus actively justifying himself in public controversy. At around the same time, Vasari developed a whole taxonomy of artist's different personal manners: besides the graceful manner (*maniera dolce*) of Raphael and the heroic manner (*maniera grande*) of Michelangelo, the anatomical manner of Pollaiuolo, the sweet manner of Parmigianino, the diplomatic manner of Bronzino and so on. Thus at the beginning of art criticism and art history, manner is both an affirmation of a positive judgment of artistic quality and a description of the freedom and method with which each artist deviates from nature and the more original models from the past. In Vasari, manner marks a loss of artistic innocence, since the 'modern' artist is now explicitly expected to go beyond the general taste in a particularly affected way.

On the other hand, the mannerist focus on particularities puts at risk the very idea of a unified art and the principles of its historical development from the *vecchia maniera* to the *maniera moderna* and the *terza èta*, as well as the criteria for distinguishing historical and geographical manners such as the *vecchia maniera greca*, *maniera egizia*, *etrusca*, *tedesca*, *fiamminga*, *italiania*, *di Lombardia*, *di Roma* and so on. A selection needs to be made between a true style and its perversion and decline. Almost from its inception, art historians and philosophers have therefore tended to reduce many of the personalized manners to artificial tricks or stereotyped 'mannerisms,' which ultimately, in classicism, would led to the rejection of mannerism tout court. Kant and Hegel's judgments are typical: 'Mannerism [*Manierieren*] is another kind of aping – an aping of peculiarity (originality) in general, for the sake of distancing oneself as far as possible from imitators, while the talent requisite to enable one to be at the same time exemplary is absent.' (Kant 2007, 147) And: 'For manner concerns the particular and therefore accidental idiosyncrasies of the artist, and these, instead of the topic itself and its ideal representation, come out and assert themselves in the production of the work of art.'[6] (Hegel 1975, 291) But is a manner by definition also mannered? And does it follow that the artistic significance of a whole stylistic epoch ultimately lies in its dissolution in subjective idiosyncrasies, as if the 'stylish style' – to pick up on John Shearman's famous formula – was ultimately lacking all style?

If the concept of mannerism is to resist the generic judgment implying artistic degeneration, then the classical division between an essential style and its particular varieties or mannerisms is impossible to uphold. As Shearman's tautological definition reflects, in mannerism the particular itself aspires to the status of a universal, forcing into contradiction the generic set of which it used to be a part and becom-

ing itself like a class that includes itself as its sole member. Mannerism constitutes an anomaly and each manner produces its own conditions of anomaly. Everything happens as if the epoch explodes into so many divergent becomings which can no longer be objectified as the sum total of historically identifiable instantiations or mannerisms.[7] Speaking with Bertrand Russell, mannerism appears to constitute an 'illegitimate totality.' But then how could we still use the concept of mannerism in any meaningful way?

The Singularity of Manners

Like all paradox, the paradox of style submits logic to something that exceeds thought: practice. As the word suggests, 'mannered' is a subjective quality of an objective standard. It describes an accessory deviation from a more original identity. Mannerisms are therefore always external variations on a model or form that is already deemed 'ideal' or 'perfect' in itself. A manner, by contrast, is also capable of immanent deviations that drag every established model along. Giancarlo Maiorino has pointed out how the Italian *perfettamente*, so often used by sixteenth century theorists of art, puts the highest standard of classicism into a superlative quantification that is logically redundant. From humanist 'perfection' (*perfezione*, used by Brunelleschi and Alberti) to the early mannerist 'wholly perfect' (*perfetissimo*, used by Castiglione and Vasari) to the later mannerist 'perfectly' (used by Vicenzo Danti), this hyperbolic excess 'brought perfection within a "modal" reach at the other side of the concept itself. Mannerism returned to the realm of practice what humanism had raised to ideal heights.' (1991, 20, 3, 16) In the shift from the noun to the adjectival to the adverbial – from idealisation to stylization – it discovers an inventiveness and variability beyond measure: 'The adverbial mode toned down teleological concerns, so that perfection brought out forms of a "mannered" understanding of its own potential.' (1991, 30) With mannerism style becomes a playful repetition that gains strength from its own redundancy and absorbs all content into its own expressivity: 'excess took on itself, reversing matter into *maniera*.' (1991, 27)

Rather than a stable identity, mannerism reveals style to be an internal manner of change. (cf. Gilmore 2000, 112) It marks both the breakdown of the classical distribution of the general style and particular mannerism, and the breakthrough of manner. Instead of owing its existence to a more original style, a manner multiplies the original and constitutes an original multiplicity itself. And whereas a mannerism is nothing more than a reified and essentialized manner, a manner can be infinitely repeated and continuously varied upon, all the while retaining all of its originality. Our understanding of the mode of existence of mannerism is therefore inseparable from what we understand by a manner's originality.

An a-mereological understanding of originality can be found in Deleuze's concepts of singularity and *haecceitas*, borrowed from Duns Scotus, but even more in what Agamben calls 'whatever singularities' (2007, 27-9). In *The Coming Community*, Agamben discusses a third figure besides genus and species, which scholastics refer to as exemplars or *maneries*: one singularity among others that simultaneously stands for each of them. In scholastic discussions of the problem of individuation, a *manerie* defines individuality not by particular properties of a common nature, as was the case with Thomas of Aquinas, but by the singular manner in which individuation takes place and reveals itself. Besides Jean Roscelin and Gauslenus de Soissons, Agamben gives the example of 12th century scholastic philosopher Uguccione da Pisa: 'Species is called manner as when one says: grass of this species, that is, manner, grows in my garden.' The manner of the grass, its 'suchness,' is neither the property of a specific leaf of or type of grass nor of grass in general; it is 'whatever,' meaning not indifference, but that it is 'expropriated of all identity.' (2007, 11) There are individual leaves of grass, but their 'grass-ness' is inseparable from a collective *being-such*: the 'being' of the grass equates with an 'inessential commonality' and its 'such' with the self-inclusive manner of belonging. A *manerie*, then, is a paradoxical concept that precisely by referring to itself also refers to all the other members of its extension; it is always singular and universal at the same time.

Crucially, not even existence is a property of *maneries*, since this would still presuppose a relation of property with some pre-existing essence. Instead of an individual existence and a common essence, a singular manner of being knows only 'a manner of rising forth; not a being that is in this or that mode, but a being that is its mode of being, and thus, while remaining singular and not indifferent, is multiple and valid for all.' (2007, 27) As a principle of individuation, 'grass of this manner' never finishes individuating the grass and is constituted only by the infinite series of modal oscillations in which it takes place and 'shows' itself. Whatever exists in a certain manner does not exist as a given, but only more or less, that is, in coming, as a pure process of *manare*. Since *maneries* 'communicate only in the empty space of the example, without being tied by any common property, by any identity,' 'they are the exemplars of the coming community.' (2007, 11)

As a replacement for the generic (historical) and the personal, *maneries* are more adequate for an age that seems to have neither existence nor essence, and that much more than the relative homogeneity of the Renaissance and the baroque already heralds the plethora of manners of the new that was to characterize the modern. Irreducible to a historically recognized objective standard, and therefore irreducible to a subject that would be its creative drive and owner, a manner exists as the tense but relatively free use of a common heritage: the work of art as an enduring virtuoso

performance. The subject and object of art appear separately but simultaneously in the creative act as effects of a universal potential that, while not existing beyond actual differenciation, is inimical to property. While it is easy to appropriate a ready-made or reproduce a posture or an object of art history, every manner contains a power of creative continuation that is inexhaustible in principle and that forces the subject to go ahead of itself and seek immortality. Before the fetish of the subjectivity and skill of the author and the associated market dominance of the artistic original (its 'uniqueness'), it takes on a serial existence of possible reproductions and multiplications virtually of its own accord. (After all, it is only in visual art anyway that the singularity of the work tends to be conflated with the non-reproducibilility of a material body. (Egenhofer 2010, 92))

The Reversal of Platonism

The mannerist reversal of essence into manner inaugurates in the history of Western art a movement that Nietzsche would later denominate more generally as the 'reversal of Platonism.' Contrary to Heidegger's interpretation, Deleuze argues that Platonism is not just the doctrine of the Idea and its copies, but first of all a practice of selection among a multiplicity of repetitions. In order to distinguish between legitimate and illegimate images, Plato invoked the mythical ground of an original identity or model and conceived of representation as its principle of distribution: true copies participate in the Idea to the extent that they internally resemble it, whereas simulacra are judged too different to have a rightful claim to its presence. Because it takes truthful representation as its principle, however, Platonism does not allow for an adequate understanding of simulacra as original repetitions. Simulacra differ from copies not in degree but in nature. Rather than through internal resemblance and external difference, they participate in the original through internal difference and external similarity. To reverse Platonism is therefore not to overturn the hierarchy of Idea and copy (and thus remain stuck in the representational logic of original identity, including the repetition of the historical essence of Platonism itself), but to liberate repetition from the regime of representation and truthfulness to the point that resemblance itself turns out to be only displaced repetition. (Deleuze 1994, 25, 2) True repetition is not generality (repetition of the same), but, like a breath within a breath, produces an asymmetrical synthesis between past and future in the present.[8] Likewise, Nietzsche's philosophy of the eternal return of the same is not so much the content of a metaphysical doctrine (like Plato's founding myth of circular time), but a practical test in which only what differs returns. (Deleuze 1990, 263) Instead of recoining becoming as Being, it is the univocal being of all the revolutionary becomings of the modern world, in which the ground is inseparable

from a 'universal ungrounding' (Deleuze 1994, 67) and the 'creative disorder or inspired chaos' of simulation challenges the 'conservative order of representation' (Deleuze 1994, 54).

For both Nietzsche and Deleuze, the reversal of Platonism and the logic of simulation constitutes the practical essence – the mode of existence – of modern art. In replacing the ontology of essence with the generative and transformative forces of difference, it makes the original and the model – in short, the past or Being – partake in a political ontology of what can be. Even the most stable identity or the most natural style can become an object of an artistic repetition that exacerbates a difference in the pursuit of its own end or world: 'Art does not imitate, above all because it repeats; it repeats all the repetitions, by virtue of an internal power (an imitation is a copy, but art is simulation, it reverses copies into simulacra). Even the most mechanical, the most banal, the most habitual and the most stereotyped repetition finds a place in works of art, it is always displaced in relation to other repetitions, and it is subject to the condition that a difference may be extracted from it for these other repetitions. For there is no other aesthetic problem than that of the insertion of art into everyday life. ... [Art] aesthetically reproduces the illusions and mystifications which make up the real essence of this civilization, in order that Difference may at last be expressed with a force of anger which is itself repetitive and capable of introducing the strangest selection, even if this is only a contraction here and there – in other words, a freedom for the end of a world.' (Deleuze 1994, 293) In this revolutionary ambition modern art is heir to the 16th century crisis of the Renaissance and the emancipation of manners, which, precisely by repeating their own difference, shed off their representational straightjacket and become what they are about.

The paradox of style nonetheless shows that a categorical substitution of difference for resemblance is not enough to guarantee the authenticity of Art. Mannerism, seen as overtly stylized and tending towards camp, continues to appear at right angles with modernism, with its dizzying velocity of style changes driven by the paradox of non-style or the notion of a style-less, transparent style. (Sontag 2009, 16-7, 19-20) Precisely to the extent that it continues to define difference in terms of originality and truthfulness, modern art continues to put its fate in the hands of the historicist's cycle of the progression of style and its regression into mannerisms. Just like classicism, its historical mode of existence therefore seems to be inseparable from the eternally different recurrence of its accursed share.

This problem in modernism exists only from the classicist point of view, however, since from a mannerist perspective, the modern breakthrough of manners constitutes, not the historical essence of art, but its a-historical becoming, its de- and reterritorialization. If all art is false, then mannerism is falser than false. Ev-

ery time modern art produces a classical image of itself by imposing its metaphors of ruptures and breaks in the linear and unique development of style, this history is doubled with a continuous series of metamorphoses of mannerism.[9] With the absorption of classicism into its own practice, mannerism had already marked the invention of the work of art as virtual process. (Deleuze 1993, 19, 34) It conceived of art as an experience and experiment that goes beyond the actual objects to which it gives rise. Firmly rooted in the modern period, John Dewey writes: 'Art is not a noun, but an adjective adhering to a doing impinging on different materials and media.' (2005, 222) In this way he repeats the adverbial reduction of mannerism. As an 'early modern,' infinite movement, mannerism expresses what Nietzsche called the 'powers of the false.' This is why it remains a mystery in art history, having neither beginning nor end but simply occurring in various ways at various moments. Before and beyond the wrenched duality of false mannerisms and the linear sequence of true periodical styles, it gives us only a supercession of manners.

What defines the unity of the mannerist work of art is neither its material make-up, nor its historical context or the genius of its maker. Rather, the material partakes in a manner that repeats its singularity throughout the process of production and reproduction. Mannerism is not just a 'domain of second appearance' with all aesthetic criteria of métier and form suspended (Wall 2006, 9), as Jeff Wall has suggested. Instead of a spectacular mimesis of more classical practices, a manner is a latent transportation and translation of an original difference. It is precisely this pastness perpetually in the present and tending towards the future as opposed to a present that has passed. It has a durational unity that is irreducible to its present instantiations and remains in constant variation. This is why Deleuze can claim simultaneously that Francis Bacon paints in the manner of Michelangelo (2003, 160-1) and that every painter 'recapitulates' the whole history of painting in his own way. (2003, 122) Irreducible to his own psyche or the cultural codes of his time, Bacon restores the Michelangelesque *maniera* as recurrent becoming or event. Because it is singular, it cannot be appropriated and copied without undergoing a change, yet because it is universal, the practice of painting in the mode of Michelangelo can still be used as a creative potential up until today. In use, model and copy engage on a mutually inclusive relation, a double deterritorialization. In Bacon, the *maniera grande* is not subjected to a play of individuated mannerisms and readymades from the past. What binds him to Michelangelo is a transhistorical and transindividual link, a form of expression which mobilizes the past itself towards the future and which succumbs to a subjective mannerism only when its power of repetition is depleted and reduced to general objective representation. For art history, this means that art precedes science.[10] Every history of art is also an antihistory, an account of the various chronological moments – contractions 'here and there' – in which

artists have found means to create blocks of floating time or becomings that escape from it. (cf. Bogue 2003, 38)

It goes without saying, that this prevalence of manner over essence or practice over identity in use is by no means restricted to a single historical age. Neither is it restricted to the domain of art. Mannerism merely brings into experience a becoming that otherwise remains implicit, and that is therefore generally forgotten and easily denied. Instead of a historiography, Deleuze's work offers a 'cartography' of styles or manners that are constitutive of postures in sports, symptoms in diseases, modes and rhythms in music, lines and colours in painting, even of mathematics, science, philosophy, and ultimately life in general. At all times, the concept of style is a vital protest against signification and individuality. Style is not merely a new ordering of old content, but what precedes content and drags it along. The consequence of this reversal of Platonism is that being itself becomes an aesthetical phenomenon and that style is the cornerstone of the modern world. As Susan Sontag writes, art is just like the world is. There is no longer any difference between form and content, manner and style, or becoming and being: 'The hyperdevelopment of style in, for example, Mannerist painting and Art Nouveau, is an emphatic form of experiencing the world as an aesthetic phenomenon. But only a particularly emphatic form, which arises in reaction to an oppressively dogmatic style of realism. All style – that is, all art – proclaims this. And the world *is*, ultimately, an aesthetic phenomenon.' (Sontag 2009, 27-8)

The Late and the New

Yet while art is inseparable from daily life, an artistic style nonetheless distinguishes itself from other styles as a particularly strong capacity for placing our habits in a state of variation. Deleuze frequently cites Marcel Proust's claims that a literary style is like 'a foreign language within language' and that 'masterpieces are written in a kind of foreign language.' (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 98) Since literature repeats the same language as everybody else, where does its foreignness come from? Following Maiorino, it is acquired through a particularly 'mannered' use of language's potential, in the sense of a repetition of a higher – in the sense of more perverse – degree of perfection. Similarly, Agamben sees mannerism as a problem of subjectivity: 'Mannerism, in the history of art and in psychiatry, designates excessive adherence to a usage or a model (stereotype, repetition) and, at the same time, the impossibility of truly identifying oneself with it (extravagance and artifice)' (2015, 87).

In mannerism, the excessive adherence to a usage and the impossibility of truly identifying oneself with it are symptoms of one and the same problem or pathology. It marks the moment of fatigue in repetition, when subjectivity and action come

apart. (Deleuze 1994, 77) In order to explain what is at stake, Agamben returns to the old art historical distinction between style and manner as 'the two irreducible poles of the poetic gesture.' Style is the most proper use, such that subject and object enter into a zone of indistinction, whereas manner demands expropriation and non-belonging, such that the subject appears for itself: 'style is disappropriating appropriation (a sublime negligence, a forgetting oneself in the proper), manner an appropriating disappropriation (a presenting oneself or remembering oneself in the improper).' (Agamben 2015, 87) Corresponding to the categories of style and manner, Agamben sees classicism and mannerism as two extreme ways in which an artist can makes use of what has preceded him. In classicism, the poetical act consists a habitual transition from potentiality to actuality. Firmly rooted in praxis, the classical poet knows what to write and how to maintain himself as an individual writer. Subject and act – but also style and technique, manner and matter – largely coincide.[11] In mannerism, by contrast, the poetical act is a 'bipolar gesture' (Agamben 2015, 86) of appropriation of one's alienation. The mannerist poet knowingly exposes in the act of 'pro-duction,' not a lack of know-how, but a lack of know-what. He brings into presence something unknown and unreal that dwells in his work. Mannerism thus marks a destitution or disappropriation of style/technique and the invention of the inoperative work of art.

Unsurprisingly, it is not in classicism but in mannerism that Agamben sees the higher potential for (modern) art. What the classical artist misses is precisely an inner wavering or trembling in the medium of use that enables him to resist and undo the possibilities of creation that are already acquired. This suspension of technique and exposition of means can be found in the self-referential language of the late Shakespeare or in Tesauro's *concetti*. Far from being the objects of a subject who writes, they are a kind of poetry of poetry. They trigger a self-problematizing contemplation of the capacity to write, a writing with the impossibility of writing that generates a subjective potential in excess over its realization in action. For as Agamben emphasizes, it is only in a hysterical relation to his own capacity not to be (Agamben refers to this relation to impotentiality with the Aristotelian notion of *steresis,* Agamben 1999, 182; cf. van Tuinen 2016), that the poet enters a process of learning what language is capable of. To have the potential of art is for the artist also to have the potential not to act out as an artist and thus to remain an artist who seeks new possibilities of expression.

However, we may wonder whether Agamben's return to the classical dichotomy of style and manner, albeit under new dialectical conditions, doesn't risk a relapse into classical stylistics. While the categories of proper and improper express a shift from being to having, does it not come at the cost of the return of good old essentialism? Because every new mannerism remains in a way parasitic on an

older and more 'proper' style, art historians generally regard mannerism as something which necessarily comes late. Mannerism can appear only when the dominant style or technique begins to lose its authority and its doubling by manner becomes an inspiration in itself. Following Agamben, this happens in the late Plato, the late Shakespeare, the late Goethe, and the late Titian (who signed the *Annunciation* of the church of San Salvador (1559-1564) with 'Tiziano fecit fecit': Tiziano made and re-made, i.e. un-made it). In each manner, we find a poetics of inoperativity, an undoing in an established way of doing. (Agamben 2015, 87, 215; Agamben 2017) Agamben thus holds on to the classical image of growth and decay of style.

Yet while this emphasis on lateness is historically correct, it is ontologically misguided. It is true that a new manner can only exist in reaction to a preceding manner and for this reason can never completely cut itself loose. But what is special about mannerism, as we have seen, is that it renders the order of style and the chaos of manneredness practically indistinct. As a confusion that is inventive as much as it is mimetic, the problem of mannerism is not the problem of lateness with respect to an already perfected technique. It is only the Baroque that would eventually come to understand itself as a period of decay. By contrast, the problem of mannerism is that of the conditions of the new. Historical lateness, far from exhausting the question of the new in ever more unnatural and apparently superfluous repetitions, makes it all the more urgent. It is style's or manner's very redundancy that is the motor of language's becoming. If mannerism is repetitive, the nature of this repetitiveness is less that of a decline of style than a Bartlebyan recalcitrance ('I would prefer not to'). As Sontag says: 'Every style is a means of insisting on something.' (2009, 35)

Mannerism thus affords a new perspective from which old problems can be revisited. It reveals that traditional stylistics, initially as part of rhetorics and later as part of linguistics, is fundamentally essentialist. Not only does it subordinate style to content ('signification'), it relates style to the 'organic play of identity and variation' (Deleuze 2006, 298). From Aristotle to Spitzer, Riffaterre, Eco and Barthes, modern linguistics seeks to extract general rules from language. Stylistics, by contrast, has defined style by the particular way a text deviates from an invariant rule. (Meiner 1998) It is the contemplation of practical deviation. Yet precisely because insofar as it is bound to the general, it always explains practice by something else and hence subsumes a style's particularity under the extension of a wider concept or determining analogy. Because of this subsumption, classical stylistics may never have had much to do with style.

Instead, Deleuze proposes a generalized stylistics in which all languages are in immanent continuous variation. Like Agamben, he renders inoperative De Saussure's 'classic distinction' (1990, 14) of *langue* and *parole*, but instead he proposes a generalized stylistics that denies *langue* all philosophical and artistic relevance

and accepts only *paroles*: 'According to linguistics, *langue* is a system in a state of equilibrium, which can thus be an object of science. All the rest, all the variations are set aside as belonging not to *langue* but to *parole*. But a writer knows well that a language is a system of imbalance, so that there is no difference between a level of *langue* and a level of *parole*. Language is made up of all sorts of heterogeneous currents, in a state of multiple disequilibrium.'[12] (Deleuze 2004, S; translation in Lecercle 2002, 64) Around each actual determination of a linguistic relation – phonological, lexical, syntactical or grammatical, semantic, etc. – there exists a cloud of other potential determinations. Language is therefore placed in variation as soon as an atypical expression uproots it from its state as constant. In practice, this is what happens all the time. Instead of leading to a modification of language only by cumulative effect or syntagmatic mutation, style should therefore be seen as the primary feature of all language, 'the becoming of language' (Deleuze 1998, 5) as such: 'Style can be the most natural thing in the world; it is nothing other than the procedure of continuous variation.' (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 97) Instead of being an artificial ornament, style determines the very 'economy of language' (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 142), that is, its parasitical economy, since it is always 'based on an earlier style but breaking with it.' (Deleuze 1995, 131)

If a writer knowingly manipulates the potential of language, it therefore doesn't follow that other language-practitioners abide with the laws of linguistics. From the point of view of a generalized stylistics, 'the actual writer and the virtual linguistic community – both of them real – are pieces of a collective assemblage' (Deleuze & Guattari 1986, 84). Creation is certainly irreducible, but it is not *ex nihilo*. We all repeat the same language in some degree of perfection, but this repetition/perfection is by itself precisely the condition for change and the form of inventivity: 'Repetition is the power of language, and far from being explicable in negative fashion by some default on the part of nominal concepts [essence, rule, or law -svt], it implies an always excessive Idea of poetry.' (Deleuze 1994, 291) In the use of language, everyone is an artist, and in art, style precedes general rule. When Marcel Proust states that 'There are only so many rules as there are artists,' he rehearses anti-academic claims made by the great mannerist philosopher Giordano Bruno, who argued that 'Homer was not a poet who depended upon the rules, since he is the cause of the rules,' and, more importantly, that 'Poetry is not born of the rule, except by the merest chance, but that the rules derive from the poetry. For that reason there are as many genres and species of true rules as there are of true poets.' (1964, 83)

Again, what matters here is that style is not individual as opposed to collective, but a singular mode of inhabiting a particular medium such as language. Rather than an increasing inconsistency or manneredness, every manner constitutes a new consistency, a sectioning or a 'plane of composition' made up not of 'invariable or

obligatory rules, but [of] optional rules that ceaselessly vary with the variation itself, as in a game in which each move changes the rules.' (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 100) This is why it is crucial no longer to conceive of manner in terms of a sense of lateness or loss. Only when mannerism is no longer understood as the abnormal negation of classicism but as possessing its own full positivity, is the reversal of Platonism pushed to its end. Every manner is a positivity in itself, language (or any other system, medium or métier) itself being a multiplicity of manners, each manner being for all manners, *maniera tanta*.

Notes

1. In this respect, Deleuze is close to Souriau's work on *The Different Modes of Existence* (2015). As David Lapoujade explains: 'All of Souriau's thought is a philosophy of art and does not pretend to be anything else.' And if Souriau finds the model for his existential pluralism in the arts, then one can just as well invert the analogy: 'is it not the arts that derive their plurality from the diversity of manners of making exist a being, of promoting an existence or of rendering it real?' (Lapoujade 2017, 12-5)
2. As with charm or grace, Jankélévitch argues, the way of making something is both less and infinitely more than the thing made. It is at once the *presque-rien* that is a merely qualitative addition to being, like a second nature, and the *je-ne-sais-quoi* that constitutes individual beings, their intrinsic *pneuma* or 'magnetic pole'. Passing between being and becoming, manner is the vital quality (*quod*) by which a thing (*quid*) becomes what it is, by which it is differentiated from the abstract flux of time, and by which it continues to communicate with other things in a metastable state: 'the fact is nothing without the making, just as the making is nothing without the manner of making, and equally the determined manners of indeterminate being are nothing without the great determining Manner of all these manners [i.e. their univocal being -svt], and finally the being of manners is nothing without the great Manner of being which goes by the name of *Becoming*.' (Jankélévitch 1980, 29-30)
3. On the anti-modernist reception of mannerism as *entartet*, see Bredekamp. 'The exhibition *Entartete Kunst* suggested that modernism was the contemporary form of the pathological. It inherited a judgment that had been formed in the aversion against mannerism and used against the modern.' (2000, 118)
4. Marcia B. Hall, a leading art historian of the period and mentee of David Freedberg, includes an apologetic 'Note on style labels' at the beginning of her book on *Painting in Central Italy in the Sixteenth Century* and a promise to keep their use to a minimum.
5. Georges Didi-Huberman refers to the 'historian's blow' as the anti-speculative argument that contemporary categories cannot apply to past realities. Shearman, for example, has famously redefined the study of mannerism by demanding that only categories produced by the age itself are used, such that we can finally consider a period through its own eyes, whereas prominent other approaches would obstruct the original intentions of artists and patrons. (Shearman 1977, 15-6) The limitations of this approach are obvious: no less than the present, the empirical past can be a limitation, a past that screens out itself, since the true past lies outside the merely discursive. Here applies Didi-Huberman's warning: 'Art historians who gibly dismiss "theory" are actually dismissing, or rather expressing their dread of, the strange fact that questions can outlive answers.' (Didi-Huberman 2005, 33-4) More recently, Paul van den Akker has shown how changes in art criticism and aesthetic theory between Renaissance and 18th century – a formalist valuation of curved lines at the cost of illusion, and thus the necessity of legitimating the 'ugly' as art – meant that the problem

of mannerism would be dealt with in classical art history on the basis of ideas that would only appear two centuries it after had actually occurred. That this approach is has remained paradigmatic ever since is proven precisely by Shearman, who in fact does not live up to his own advice that art historians read mannerist artworks by using 'their code rather than ours,' to the extent that no 16th century art critic describes a Parmigianino by the 'curves that, like waves, flow together to climaxes, and then part again – curves so filled with their own aesthetic vitality that the illustrative meaning of the forms ... of which they are composed is partially lost' (Shearman 1967, 65). Although still deeply, albeit unconsciously, indebted to Riegl's 19th century convictions (there is an essence of a whole artistic period, this essence manifests itself in a period's style, this style is best described in terms of two-dimensional, formal features, form and content are the two weights on the artistic balance), moreover, Shearman and Smyth reduced the former's theory of style as the expression of an attitude toward life to an artistic idea about style as a manifestation of an aesthetic taste. (van den Akker 2010, 383-4)

6. Precisely to the extent that art history aims at general re-cognizable knowledge, it intrinsically tends to this reduction of manner to mannered. Not without irony, one should add that, for Hegel, manner covers those aspects of treatment and execution that are central to contemporary art history.
7. With Nancy, we could perhaps extend this 'explosion' of mannerism into contemporary art, that is art after 'the end of Art,' which is 'in default or in excess of its own concept,' insofar as art and the arts, being one and multiple, 'inter-belong to each other in a tense, extended mode of exteriority, without any resolution in interiority.' (Nancy 1996, 4)
8. 'To repeat is to behave in a certain manner, but in relation to something unique or singular which has no equal or equivalent. And perhaps this repetition at the level of external conduct echoes, for its own part, a more secret vibration which animates it, a more profound, internal repetition within the singular. This is the apparent paradox of festivals: they repeat an "unrepeatable". They do not add a second and a third time to the first, but carry the first time to the "*n*th" power. With respect to this power, repetition interiorizes and thereby reverses itself: as Péguy says, it is not Federation Day which commemorates or represents the fall of the Bastille, but the fall of the Bastille which celebrates and repeats in advance all the Federation Days; or Monet's first water lily which repeats all the others. Generality, as generality of the particular, thus stands opposed to repetition as universality of the singular.' (Deleuze 1994, 1)
9. Here I follow Frank Reijnders' similar claim about the baroque when he argues that there is no desire for true art without the utopian nostalgia, loss of subjectivity, decadent artificiality, and general falseness of the baroque, which changes along with art itself. Without distinguishing mannerism from the baroque, he argues that the true baroque is therefore the false baroque. (Reijnders 1991, 84) Deleuze mentions three modern 'manners' in which such metamorphoses take place corresponding to three arts: music, painting, and literature: 'Each art has its interrelated techniques or repetitions, the critical and revolutionary power of which may attain the highest degree and lead us from the sad repetitions of habit to the profound repetitions of memory, and then to the ultimate repetitions of death in which our freedom is played out. We simply wish to offer three examples, however diverse and disparate these may be: first, the manner in which all the repetitions coexist in modern music (such as the development of the leitmotiv in Berg's *Wozzeck*); second, the manner in which, within painting, Pop Art pushed the copy, copy of the copy, etc., to that extreme point at which it reverses and becomes a simulacrum (such as Warhol's remarkable "serial" series, in which all the repetitions of habit, memory and death are conjugated); and finally the novelistic manner in which little modifications are torn from the brute and mechanical repetitions of habit, which in turn nourish repetitions of memory and ultimately lead to repetitions in which life and death are in play, and risk reacting upon the whole and introducing into it a new selection, all these repetitions coexisting and yet being displaced in relation to one another (Butor's *La modification*; or indeed

Last Year at Marienbad, which shows the particular techniques of repetition which cinema can deploy or invent).' (Deleuze 1994, 293-4)

10. 'The repetition of a work of art is like a singularity without concept, and it is not by chance that a poem must be learned by heart. The head is the organ of exchange, but the heart is the amorous organ of repetition. (It is true that repetition also concerns the head, but precisely because it is its terror or paradox.) Pius Servien rightly distinguished two languages: the language of science, dominated by the symbol of equality, in which each term may be replaced by others; and lyrical language, in which every term is irreplaceable and can only be repeated.' (Deleuze 1994, 2)
11. As Gombrich points out: 'The problems of expressive modes are rarely disentangled from that of varying skills. Thus what looks like progress from the point of view of the mastery of a medium can also be viewed as decline into empty virtuosity.' (Gombrich 1968, 10)
12. Similarly, in *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze and Guattari hold against Chomsky that there are no universals of language that enable us to define it as a homogeneous system. Instead, all languages are in immanent continuous variation. A language is a dynamic system that is 'always far from equilibrium and in perpetual bifurcation' (Deleuze 2004, O), meaning that 'there is always another language in every language *ad infinitum*.' (Deleuze 2006, 366-7)

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Tintoretto's Michelangelo: An Artistic Diagram as the a priori of Art History

Kamini Vellodi

Deleuze and Art History?

What, if anything, does Deleuze's philosophy have to offer art history? From a philosophy notoriously critical of history, and indeed almost silent about 'art history,' can we expect to extract anything productive at all?

I believe we can, and will explore this possible contribution through a single, and still overlooked, concept in Deleuze's philosophy: the concept of the 'diagram'. I put this concept to work through a singular case-study: the practice of the 16th century Venetian painter Jacopo Tintoretto. Arguing that Tintoretto's appeal to the practice of Michelangelo gives expression to what Deleuze calls the work of art's 'diagrammatic' function, I attend to the critical implications of the diagrammatic function for art history – where art history is conceived both as a sequence of actual works as forms in historical time, and as a disciplinary thought of artworks.[1] In particular I intend to elaborate the sense of Deleuze's definition of the diagram as the '*a priori* of history,' and explore the ways in which the diagrammatic work of art may function as the *a priori* of art history. The problem implicated by Deleuze's concept of the diagram for the relation between art's work and art history as one of conditioning – a question that for Deleuze involves nothing less than the conception of thought – exposes, in my view, some of the most fruitful potentials of Deleuze's philosophy for art history as a discipline.

The challenges posed by Tintoretto's practice to the study of it offer compelling material for an examination of the philosophical critique of history and, by extension, art history (since, again, this latter is never made explicit) within Deleuze's work. Such an examination opens questions seminal to art history's ongoing disciplinary self-reflections, including the question of how the work of art may act as

the condition of art history (both the sequence of works in historical time, and the thought of art works), the question of the work of art's nature as historical, and the tensions between history and innovation and how these tensions might be thought. It is the singular viewpoint that Deleuze's philosophy brings to such questions – including, but not confined to, what he actually writes about art, artists, or art historians – that, I believe, renders his work a cogent source for art historians.

But on the subject of art history Deleuze in fact retains a stubborn silence. Whilst his work is replete with analyses of works of art, artists and art historians, 'art history' as a nomination, problematizing term or disciplinary reality never arises as an explicit concern. Three reasons might be proposed for this. There is firstly the fact of Deleuze's critique of history understood in the first instance (and we will see that there is a second...), as an empirical, positive regime, or 'state of affairs,' and his conception and practice of philosophy as the liberation of thought from such a history. Thinking is an 'experimentation,' a creation that 'is always in the process of coming about,' whereas history acts only as the set of 'negative conditions' for this creation that escapes it, grasping of the event of thought 'only its effectuation in states of affairs or in lived experience' (1994, 111; 1987, 295-6). Secondly, Deleuze conceives of the work of art not as a historical entity whose sense may be derived from an actual situation in historical time and space (that is, in an empirical state of affairs), but rather as the sensible vector of thought and experience whose creative valency and effects exceed such historical intelligibility. The work of art thinks, and in so doing it functions transhistorically (1994, 197-8). Thirdly, discipline – if understood as the formalisation of thought such that it assumes an identifiable and recognisable image that can be practised by a community – is a designation that Deleuze's philosophy insistently critiques and counters. His attention to individual artists and art historians will be for the power and singularity of their thought which, in its full transdisciplinary impact, disturbs the homogenising and levelling effects instigated by the identifying tendencies of any single discipline – not only the discipline of 'art history,' but the discipline of 'philosophy' too. Thus, his work does not support disciplinary hierarchy, or even clear distinction between philosophy and art history – as his characterisation of philosophy as 'a practice of concepts' that 'must be judged in the light of other practices with which it interferes' alerts us. (1989, 280). As such, any measure of Deleuze's contribution to Art History must dismiss any notion of beginning with the question of the 'application' of his concepts to art historical practices – since application assumes both the distinction and the hierarchy between the disciplines. The relation betweeen Philosophy and Art History will instead be recast from the perspective of the question of thought, as something these two disciplines share – the thought of art's work. My investment of Deleuze's concept of the diagram assumes this perspective.

In *Francis Bacon: Logic of Sensation*, Deleuze's only book-length text on a visual artist, and which in its 'monograph' form arguably comes closest, amongst all his works, to an approximation of the writing of an 'art history,' Deleuze indicates how such an investigation might proceed. Bacon is presented as the conveyer of a 'logic of sensation,' rather than an artist the sense of whose work can be determined by historicizing tropes of biography and context. Even in the passages where we are apparently presented with accounts of Bacon's artistic 'influences,' what is being described is not a positivist lineage or conscious retrieval of actual, past forms, but rather the disjunctive points of coexistence between practices that reveal the recurrence of a certain sensibility, event of pictorial thought, and mode of experience. Thus, the works of Giotto, Michelangelo, El Greco, Cézanne and Bacon, amongst others, testify to the 'capture of sensations' wrested from representational necessity, but Deleuze does not draw any actual line of connection between them via the historical facts that would reinscribe them within the logic of chronological succession. Similarly, Deleuze's allusions to Bacon's biography are freed from any personal narrative. The flayed meat encountered by Bacon in butcher's shops is instead attended to as the violent locus of painting's radically impersonal contamination and material obscuration of the human figure, as that which imparts 'inorganic' reality to painting, in turn newly implicating the artist's 'life'.[2]

Consistent with this, Deleuze's attraction to art historians such as Heinrich Wölfflin, Alöis Reigl and Wilhelm Worringer is driven not by the way their theories and methods relate to their disciplinary predecessors and to the actual personal and professional contexts of their work, nor for the historicising character of their methods – that is, the way their methods participate in the determination of the historicity of the meaning of works of art. Rather, the transhistorical productivity of their concepts – the 'haptic' (Riegl), the 'abstract line' (Worringer), the 'baroque' (Wölfflin) – is extracted and renewed in a de-disciplining that imparts an unrecognizability to the source through a replaying of concepts 'on a new stage' beyond historiographic propriety (1994, 83).

Nevertheless, it is important to note that Deleuze is not constructing or advocating a philosophical aesthetics detached from historical concern – that is, concern with thinking the material of the past. It is only a certain, (and for Deleuze) impoverished form of history, as positivist and empirical manifestation, that is being rejected, and concomitantly, art history as a positivist and empiricist enterprise that is being implicitly critiqued. Deleuze consistently maintains that, thinking, as experimentation, whilst not historical, needs history, for 'without history, experimentation would remain indeterminate and unconditioned' (1994, 111). Does it follow that art, as a practice of thought, needs art history, without which it too will remain

indeterminate?. In what follows, I will explore further the sense of this conditioning, beginning with an oblique demonstration.

Tintoretto and Art History?

At first, one might not think Tintoretto's relation to art history – both as the sequence of his actual artistic predecessors and successors and the disciplinary thought of his work – as particularly notable, or distinct from that of any other artist. With the accumulation and refinement of scholarship, his links to other figures of his artistic milieu have been identified and consolidated. Relations to a host of early 16th century painters – Giulio Romano, Schiavone, Titian, Pordenone – have been duly noted. Relations to a host of later 16th century painters – Palma Il Giovane, Bassano – have too been observed. As such, whilst acknowledging the painter's unorthodoxy – the excessive drama of his works, the insistent *non-finito*, the 'irrational' lighting and spatiality, the remarkable, inhuman treatment of the figure – art historians have been able to study Tintoretto as they have other artists, to treat him as yet another object for disciplinary investigation. There seems to be nothing particularly contentious in doing so.

But in the encounter with the works we find that what Tintoretto does with these sources problematizes the self-evidence of categories such as 'influence' and 'milieu'. We find an exaggeration of sources to the point of unidentifiability; a bringing into relation of traits such that the originary status of the source is rendered obscure.

Figure 1: Tintoretto, *Christ Among the Doctors.* 1542, oil on canvas 201 x 323 cm, Museo del Duomo, Milan © Fototeca Veneranda Fabbrica del Duomo di Milano.

Tintoretto's earliest dated painting, *Christ amongst the Doctors* (1542) (fig. 1) is a striking case in point.[3] We are confronted here by the force of a youthful personality declaring his arrival. The immediate sense is not one of a reverent tapestry of historical sources, but of an announcement, brash and confident, of an individual style. Closer study reveals allegiances: the acute perspective from the work of the Roman painter Giulio Romano, the figure lying prostrate on the steps from Raphael's *School of Athens* (1511) and the Old Man from Jacopo Bassano's *Christ Among the Doctors* (1539). We discern Andrea Schiavone in the sinuous, twisted oversized figures on the right, and Michelangelo in the athletic female figure on the left. Tintoretto casts all these traits into a highly idiosyncratic medley, melding them with the forceful traits of his own invention: the compressed rows of heads with their breathlessly curly locks, the setting of the scene in a sealed room with absurd prop-like architectural features, the extreme figural abbreviations, and the golden tone that cloaks the whole painting in sun-kissed yellows and buttery ochres. A panoply of starry names are thus confused in the stamping of an inimitable style.

It may be argued that Tintoretto is by no means unique in such transformation of his sources, that the 16th century in Venice is not short of indomitable personalities clambering over each other to lay claim to a signature. But the following remarks are neither made as claims for Tintoretto's incomparability, nor for his status beyond the grasp of conventional methods. Rather I invest his practice as a test-case – the features and implications of which are not necessarily exclusive to his work – for a conceptual experiment, one that allows us to grasp the art historical reaches of Deleuze's philosophy via the specific problem of how artistic practice implicates art history through its use of sources – the problem, that is, of conditioning.

Tintoretto's Michelangelo: Disegno as Art Historical

Tintoretto's appeal to Michelangelo supplies a focused point of entry.

That Tintoretto drew on the work of the Florentine master is nowhere in doubt. From his own time on, Tintoretto is hailed as the Venetian who most wholeheartedly embraced Michelangelo's work. This esteem is a discernible visual feature within many works, a feature given to our experience of them. Tintoretto's treatment of the human figure in particular seems to owe much to his predecessor: the emphatic foreshortening and twisting, the insistent declaration of musculature, the foregrounding of the body over facial expression – traits all already evident in *Christ in The Temple*. In other works we notice figures that seem to have been lifted directly from Michelangelo's paintings: the figure of the Madonna in *The Holy Family and Saints* (1540) from the Madonna of the Medici Chapel (1521–1534); the figure of Saint Mark in *The Miracle of the Slave* (1548) from Michelangelo's *The Conversion*

of Saint Paul (1542-45); the figure of Saint Roch in *Saint Roch in Glory* (1564) from Michelangelo's figure of *God Separating the Earth and Water* (1508-1512) in the Sistine chapel; countless figures across a number of paintings from the sibyls, prophets and *ignudi* of the Sistine Chapel.[4]

This visual reality of formal resemblances was first given discursive support in a statement famously made in 1642 by Tintoretto's first biographer, Carlo Ridolfi, in what is the first self-contained historical monograph on the life and work of a single painter. Ridolfi claimed that Tintoretto had pinned to his studio wall the following guiding motto for his practice: 'The *disegno* of Michelangelo and the *colorito* of Titian.'[5]

It would be hard to overstate the impact that this statement, made four centuries ago, has had on the subsequent art historical assessment of Tintoretto's works. In an example of what might be called archive mania, it has 'fixed the main outlines of Tintoretto's image for posterity' (Lepschy 1983, 34), which is to say it has fixed the outlines of a certain image of thought of him.[6] Across the scholarship on Tintoretto, from monographs to catalogue essays to critical studies, we repeatedly encounter an uncritical appeal to the terms of Ridolfi's statement.

Such disciplinary reliance is problematic. Ridolfi's statement is inscribed within and determined by a wider context than Tintoretto's works alone, and as such cannot be taken as a simple description of what he sees. For a start, Ridolfi is writing several decades after Tintoretto's death. His biography bears the status of a retrospective valuation; and in seeking to glorify the image of this artist for posterity, it is expected that he will use terms of appraisal to this end.[7] Since Michelangelo and Titian are, in Tintoretto's time, living embodiments of two of the most lauded ideals of painting – *disegno* and *colorito* – in making the analogy that he does, Ridolfi secures this appraisal. [8]

Indeed, by the mid 1500s, *disegno* had for some time been held as a supreme value of the visual arts, referring both – according to the definition given it by Vasari – to the idea of design as the mental conception, or 'idea,' of the work and to the manual activity of drawing through line by which the hand expresses the idea. (Vasari 1960, 205) Through 'the study and practice of many years,' the artist acquires the knowledge of his objects, and can come to abstract from the matter of particular objects to realise the idea. (Puttfarken 2000, 175) For Vasari, the undisputed masters of *disegno* are the Florentines. The Venetians, including Tintoretto, trail behind.[9] It is no surprise then that in the battle over the relative strengths of the Florentine/Central Italian and Venetian schools that resounded through the early 16th century and in whose long afterlight Ridolfi is writing, *disegno* as a critical term of appraisal is appropriated by the Venetians – in order to argue that Venetian painters can indeed compare with, and perhaps even excel, the Florentines on their own terms. The

presence of the term *disegno* in all the major 16th Venetian treatises and discourses on painting testify to this combative stance.[10]

Thus we see the term *disegno* inscribed within a discursive space independent of Tintoretto's works. The fact that Ridolfi's formulation of the ideal synthesis of Titian and Michelangelo had already been suggested decades earlier (by Paolo Pino in 1548 and Raffaelo Borghini in 1584), is yet another indicator of this independence. (Lepschy 1983, 19, 27).

A rift is thus exposed between discourse and the reality of practice, one that poses a problem for modes of investigation that draw upon their presumed correspondence in order to secure the intelligibility of a particular historical formation.

We can be even more specific. Ridolfi claims that it is *Michelangelo's disegno* that Tintoretto inherits and affirms. But how did Michelangelo himself understand this term? His statement, as recorded by his 16th century biographer Francesco de Hollanda, that 'drawing, the following of contour or whatever we might wish to call it, constitutes the source and substance of painting, of sculpture, of architecture and of all the other kinds of art, and is the root of all the sciences,' indicates that, like Vasari, he saw *disegno* both as the grounding principle of all the arts (and indeed, the sciences too), and as the practice of inscribing outline, and therefore delineating form. (Summers 1981, 258) From his other, much celebrated, statements on artistic practice we also know that for Michelangelo *disegno* was intricately bound to the Neoplatonic understanding of artistic production as the realisation of the idea (the *concetto*), a position that Vasari, again, in his linking of practice and conception, affirms.[11]

Even a cursory glance at Tintoretto's work indicates the problems with Ridolfi's assignation. Tintoretto is a painter who works only in the medium of painting, and who as such does not evidently share Michelangelo's pretensions to master the other arts; the sense of *disegno* as a foundational and unifying principle of the arts is not one that obviously informs his work. Furthermore, the practice of delineation undergoes a major reform in Tintoretto's work such that we are often left without outline altogether.[12] Indeed, according to an anecdote told by the 18th century writer Giambatista Verci, by *disegno*, Tintoretto himself did not mean the drawing of a figure, but rather 'the spirit of invention and movement'.[13] Many of the drawings show motile figures under the pressure of violent forces that distort their shapes into inhuman poses. Lumps of muscle protrude like bubbles on the surfaces of flayed skin; limbs strain and backs twist to reach invisible objects.

Again, beyond the question of the 'factual' status of such observations and remarks, what concerns us are the assumptions involved and limitations entailed in applying the formulation '*Michelangelo's disegno*' to the reality of Tintoretto's practice. In problematizing this application what is in turn challenged is, firstly, any

articulation of a historical relation between two practices as a relation of analogy, secondly, the presumed supremacy of discursive frames, and thirdly the very presumptions of intelligibility as such – all of which are persistant characteristics of the art historical study of this artist.[14] To grasp precisely how this challenge is posed, we must inspect the works more closely.

Tintoretto's Michelangelo: drawing as Trans-Historical

Tintoretto 'studies Michelangelo, [...]
not in order to idealize his Venetian style of form,
but to [...] give it new force'
(Burckhardt 1873, 206-7).

Whilst Tintoretto's paintings supply us with many instances of figures lifted directly from Michelangelo's paintings, encouraging an analysis of the visible resemblances of forms, Tintoretto's drawings 'after' Michelangelo's sculptures expose to us a very different relation. Made on rough paper, often with a blue or buff tinge, and with the soft and brittle materials of charcoal or chalk – materials that allowed for suggestion rather than definition, and for the quick dissolution of forms half-rendered – the drawings give the impression that 'the artist sought to capture a fleeting vision at great speed,' rather any close and revered study of the form of the model. (Whittaker 1997, 180)

Indeed, it was Michelangelo's sculptures rather than his paintings that were crucial to Tintoretto's working methods, which is to say, to the material and ideational genesis of his works.[15] Tintoretto acquired, at a substantial cost, a group of small sculptural sketches by Michelangelo and a set of models made after Michelangelo's sculptures (possibly by his pupil and longtime friend, Daniele da Volterra), and he and his workshop set about making copious drawings after these models and sketches (Ridolfi 1924, 3, see also Borghini 2006, 261; Whitaker 1997, 179). It is unlikely that Tintoretto ever travelled to Florence and Rome and saw these sculptures for himself.[16] Rather, and as was common practice at the time, he would have worked solely from the models, and perhaps prints made after Michelangelo's works. This point is important insofar as, firstly, it indicates that Tintoretto's relation to Michelangelo, and to Michelangelo's *disegno*, was not grounded in an immediate experience of the latter's works – a fact that will acquire importance when we come to consider how this experience implicates 'history' and 'art history' (Nichols 2009, 55-6). Secondly, it reveals that, like its discursive 'counterpart,' *disegno* as a visual expression was heterogeneous, encompassing many different and non-unifying manifestations.

Figure 2: Michelangelo, *Crepuscolo.* 1524*,* Marble, 155x170 cm, Medici Chapel, Florence © The Warburg Institute.

Let us consider two of the works of which Tintoretto made repeated studies, both of which show the bodily contortion that so preoccupied him. First, the formidable *Crepuscolo* (*Dusk*) (fig. 2) that sits atop the sarcophagus of Lorenzo d' Medici in the celebrated Medici Chapel. Reclining languidly, a man supports himself on a bent elbow and crosses his right over his left leg. With an indistinct face, his drooping head turns to look over his left shoulder. His body is at once relaxed and taut; the musculature of his torso and limbs is precisely modelled yet showing the beginnings of flaccidity. Here we find *disegno* functioning, consistent with Michelangelo's own statements, as a principle of outlining the form of a human figure, and as an organising principle of connecting the sculpted figure to the architectural surrounds of the tomb. The work was widely known at the time through a terracotta model made by the artist Nicolo Il Tribolo, whom Michelangelo had hired to work with him in the Medici Chapel, and it has been suggested that it may have been a copy of this model that Tintoretto owned and drew from. (Ilchman and Saywell 2007, 404; Wiles 1932)

Figure 3: Michelangelo, *Hercules Slaying Cacus*, 1525, clay, h. 41cm., Casa de Buonarotti, Florence © The Warburg Institute.

A second work that seems to preoccupy Tintoretto is the famous group of *Samson and the Philistines* that Michelangelo had planned to serve as a pendant to his *David* in Florence's Piazza della Signoria. The final work was never executed and no surviving original model is known. Instead, the composition is preserved in small bronzes and a small clay *bozetto*, also known as *Hercules Slaying Cacus* (fig. 3). Designed for a public space, and to be seen from all sides, it is a remarkably dynamic composition, based on a powerful serpentine spiralling movement. Samson/Hercules engages Cacus/a philistine in fierce combat, twisting around his subordinated

figure. By the mid 1500s, copies – based we must presume on these models, or of now-lost drawings – had begun to multiply in drawings, paintings and bronze statuettes. Some dozen sculptural versions date from the 16th century, including sets attributed to Volterra in 1557. Ridolfi tells us that Tintoretto owned a set made by Volterra in clay or wax, and it is these that were his source. (Ridolfi 1924, 3) That Tintoretto worked from wax or clay models rather than bronze is suggested by the presence of sticks supporting the figures in some versions of the drawings. Comparing the version in bronze that has been variously attributed to Volterra (but which is now anonymously attributed) (fig. 4) to the *Hercules and Cacus* model, we can see how the intense compression of Michelangelo's figures has been relaxed to leave more space between the figures and a clearer line, and that the three figures (Samson crushes a second figure underfoot) are distinctly articulated, in contrast to the charged massing of Michelangelo's *bozetto*. What these differences expose is, again, that the visible expression of *disegno* that Tintoretto was apparently in thrall to was itself heterogeneous, encompassing the diverse figures of others (such as Daniella da Volterra and Il Tribolo, in addition to Michelangelo).

Figure 4: Anonymous Florentine after Michelangelo, *Samson Fighting the Philistines*, 1557, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence © Photographic department of the Uffizi Galleries.

Figure 5: Tintoretto, *Study of Michelangelo's Crepusculo*, charcoal and chalk on light blue paper, 272 x 371 mm, Florence, Uffizi © Photographic department of the Uffizi Galleries.

Figures 6 and 7: Tintoretto, *Study after Samson and the Philistines*, 1545-50, 452 x 273 mm. Samuel Courtauld Trust © The Warburg Institute.

Tintoretto made numerous drawings after these two models, expressing with these and his prolific output of other drawings a degree of commitment to drawing unusual for Venetian painters of the time.[17] With their preoccupation with force and dynamism, and the depiction of the figure in often extreme action, they are quite unlike Venetian drawings of the early to mid 16th century, characterised by their soft strokes and atmospheric *sfumato*.[18] With their rapid and powerful abbreviations, 'typified by scallop-shaped half-circles which rarely cohere,' Tintoretto's drawings are also quite unlike 'the careful, anatomically correct studies after sculpture carried out by contemporary artists in Florence and Rome' (Nichols 2009, 54, 56). This is a practice of drawing that announces its difference from the two major outlying traditions of its historical time. Indeed, the great Austrian art historian Max Dvořák saw them as 'utterly different from any other artistic product of the renaissance… containing [the artist's] impassioned protest against the old conception of art.' (Dvořák 1984, 103)

Michelangelo's smoothly muscular forms are relentlessly subjected to violent contortions, deformations, and explosions. In the *Study of Michelangelo's Statue of Twilight* (fig. 5), one of four known studies that have survived, vigorous patches of light and shadow eschew modelling and delineation, 'rejecting any Michelangesque isolation from their surrounding context' (Nichols 2009, 56). We are confronted by a hulking, abstract mass with barely any outline left. Repetition of vigorous tonal patches overwhelm contour. Limbs sprout from a dense cluster of marks, and the figure looks more like a growth of material than the shape of a body. A clump of indistinct articulations, the neckless head merges into the torso. Only the finely rendered lines of the arms and the right leg remind us that we are looking at a human body. The model is viewed from above, which accentuates its contortion, creating an effect of deformation that a viewer in the Medici chapel gazing at Michelangelo's sculpture from below could not have experienced. That is, in Tintoretto's drawing we experience Michelangelo as we could not have experienced him in the Chapel. Artistic construction makes us experience history again, differently.

The many studies after *Samson and the Philistines* (fig. 6, 7) – Tintoretto made no less than 30 – are equally striking in the relentless violence they do to their source. Angles and tonal contrasts are exaggerated, and strange viewpoints are assumed; the figures are reduced to brief articulations and the contour is obscured, often destroyed altogether. We experience each variation not simply as a new point of view on a single, self-same model, but as a singular extraction of new relations of contrast, marks and texture from a heterogeneous source, shown to be differing from itself.[19]

Confronted by these works, it becomes difficult to say that Tintoretto was studying Michelangelo for his *disegno*, either as a discursive term or as a visible expression. Something more is taking place, a subterranean experiment with matter. Tintoretto

constructs Michelangelo, under the intensity of an experience that is not direct, and that nothing to do with 'just looking'. His drawings expose the fallibility of the presumption – projected by Ridolfi's statement and upheld by an art history that uncritically reiterates the terms of this statement – firstly, of a correspondence between the term *disegno* and the visible forms said to express it, and secondly the use of this correspondence to ground the historical continuity between Michelangelo and Tintoretto. Through his statement, Ridolfi seeks to place Tintoretto in a certain history of painting, an illustrious lineage projected from what is seen and what is said of his predecessor – but Tintoretto's works disrupt this placement. Instead we are newly made aware of *disegno* as a fractured entity, and called upon to rethink in new terms the nature of the relation between Michelangelo and Tintoretto.

Towards Deleuze: The Diagram

At this point, we are brought to Deleuze.

Tintoretto's operation of exposing, through the material work of his practice, the differences within the historical formation to which he is said to belong, presents a problem to certain conventions of art historical thought. His drawings after Michelangelo reveal a divergence between art's work and what the art historical appeal to discourse risks. In this, we find his work giving an oblique, and perhaps unexpected, expression to one of Deleuze's most intriguing concepts – the concept of the diagram.

Deleuze borrows the concept from Foucault. In *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault presents a notion of history as a succession of strata or historical formations, each of which comprises two forms: that which is seen and that which is said.[20] These two forms do not correspond: what is seen does not consist in what is said, and we cannot say what we see. (Deleuze 2006, 247) Thus every historical formation is fractured. In this formulation, and the precise concretization which he gives to it in his historical studies, Foucault claims to 'rediscover difference' within history, and dissociate it 'from the reassuring form of the identical'.[21]

And yet, there must nevertheless be something that accounts for the simultaneous and reciprocal emergence of these two forms of the strata. It is this that Foucault will call a diagram. Foucault uses the term, almost in passing, in *Discipline and Punish* to describe the 19th century philosopher Jeremy Bentham's model of the panopticon – Bentham's model for a new form of surveillance, which operates between the 'prison' (a non-discursive form of content, or visibility) and 'punishment' (a discursive form of expression, or statement) (Foucault 1991, 205-8).

Extending beyond Foucault's analysis, in part through a reading of the Danish semiologist Louis Hjemslev, Deleuze characterises the historical formation or strata as comprised of two forms with no common form, and thus 'irreducible to relations of correspondence' or causality, but rather in 'reciprocal presupposition'. Developing Foucault's cursory remarks, Deleuze conceives of the diagram as the genetic element of these two heterogeneous forms, a 'non-unifying, immanent cause,' an agent that has no substance or form, and which plays a 'piloting function' through a 'preliminary distribution' of forces. [22]

Kant/Deleuze: Schema/Diagram

We see here an ontologisation of Foucault's historical categories that returns us to Deleuze's reading of Kant. Indeed, Deleuze will explicitly compare the diagram to Kant's schema: '"Diagrammatism" will play a role similar to Kant's schematism but in a completely different way: the receptive spontaneity of forces accounts for the receptivity of visible forms, the spontaneity of utterable statements and their correlation.' (Deleuze 2006a, 251) To grasp the sense of this comparison, we must remind ourselves of Kant's conception of the schema.

In the first *Critique*, schematism is the synthetic operation crucial to the act of cognition, where cognition is the representation of an object by consciousness to itself. Schematism is the process by which the pure *a priori* concepts of the understanding – those concepts with no empirical content at all – 'meet' the intuitions of the sensibility. There is a power of synthesis in the understanding itself that permits this combination: that is, the understanding 'spontaneously' furnishes the form of the sensible (as appearance) *a priori*, and 'receives' the matter of sensation, which is intuited *a posteriori*.[23] In this way the genesis of cognition is legitimated by the power of the understanding in advance of experience, supplying the ground for all possible experience.

But Deleuze and Guattari argue that 'nothing positive is done, nothing at all, in the domains of either criticism or history, when we are content to brandish ready-made old concepts like skeletons intended to intimate any creation' (1994, 83) (which is why, to reiterate an earlier remark, any measure of the value of Deleuze's philosophy for art history that proceeds with respect to the applicability of his concepts is antithetical to the ethos of his work). Thus Deleuze critiques and rejects the Kantian conception of cognition as proceeding on the appeal to 'ready-made' *a priori* concepts – an appeal that reduces experience to what can be received of it. Deleuze further asks, rhetorically, how it is possible that *a priori* concepts of the understanding can be applied to empirical (*a posteriori*) intuitions of sensible objects, when these two forms are heterogeneous, coming from different sources.[24] That is,

how can the schema account not only for what is logically possible based on the spontaneous combination of the understanding, but also for the 'real' matter of experience that extends beyond the forms by which it is presented to the understanding? It cannot. *A priori* concepts are simply, he claims, 'too large or general' for the real experience they regulate. What is needed instead, what a new transcendental philosophy needs, is an account of the genesis of these two forms – a transcendental philosophy that accounts for real experience.

The diagram is an answer to this demand. Diagrammatism supplies the 'genetic method' that schematism does not. In place of the transcendental schema of the two forms of concept and intuition as the ground for possible experience, Deleuze projects the diagram as the immanent synthesis of 'matter-forces' as the genesis of real experience. In place of the subject's unifying, spontaneous synthesis of the two heterogeneous forms of cognition (concept and intuition), the diagram instigates a conjunction of matter-forces, at once receptive and spontaneous. Thus we see how the loose parallel Deleuze makes between the Kantian duality of concepts and intuitions and the Foucauldian pairing of forms of expression and forms of content, functions to underscore the move away from Kant's unifying, transcendental synthesis to a Foucauldian disjunctive generative synthesis: from schema to diagram.[25]

Both transcendental and immanent to the reality it constructs, the diagram functions on the level of forces that are neither 'fully' given nor transcendent to real experience. These forces are not encountered in 'ordinary' experience (where they are concealed by the forms through which they appear). They can be experienced only under 'exceptional' conditions, conditions that a work of art – as the expression of matter-forces, as a capture of difference in its differing, as a being of sensation – can supply. Tintoretto's drawings confront us with forces – of contortion, elongation, compression, expansion – in the matter of painting's work. The forces that the figure is subject to are made palpable, released from the bounds of figurative forms that would usually provide their mediation. The experience of such work is what Deleuze calls a 'transcendental empiricism,' an empiricism that is distinguished from ordinary empiricism insofar as it does not remain with sensible givens, but rather concerns the registration of the intensive passage of forces, and, specifically, concerns this passage as an increase or decrease in power (Deleuze 2006b, 384). This differentiation, and discrimination, of force furnishes the conditions under which something new is produced (since it involves the 'overpowering' of an existing state of affairs) – conditions that are no wider than the real but which are not given in actual experience (Deleuze 2002, vii).

Thus the diagram may be understood as the synthesiser – transcendental, yet material; abstract, yet real – of a transcendental empiricism; 'a thought synthesiser to make thought travel' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 343), dislodging it from its

ground, and reciprocally determining both sensible qualities and the transcendent exercise within thought. At this point we are able to acknowledge the post-Kantian sense of Deleuze and Guattari's statement in *A Thousand Plateaus* that the diagram is neither 'an infrastructure that is determining in the last instance nor a transcendental Idea that is determining in the supreme instance'. Drawing does not preexist the act of drawing (as the principle of *disegno* arguably does)[26]. Drawing as diagram 'does not function to represent, even something real, but rather constructs a real that is yet to come, a new type of reality.' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 142). What remains to be asked is how this diagrammatic conception of art's work newly implicates the task of art history.

Diagram as the a priori of History

We have seen that Deleuze goes beyond Foucault's conception of the diagram, re-ontologising what had been a historical phenomenon, and integrating the element of the transcendental into the idea of genesis. Deleuze does not depart from history altogether – only from a certain positivist and empiricist conception of history as a state of affairs given to experience. Infact, diagrammatics is a problem of and for history too, insofar as this 'history' emerges in Deleuze's reading of Foucault in the terms of a historicisation of thought, as a schematic and representational enterprise. And this is the second sense of 'history' with which we are presented – and which returns us to the dual sense of history invoked at the opening of this chapter: history as an actual state of affairs, and history as the thought of this state of affairs. That is, through the Kantian reconstruction the idea of history shifts from a merely empirical and positivist question – the domain of the 'historian' – to a question of thought and its representational proclivities – the domain of the 'philosopher'.[27] Which is to say, history is now seen to involve the representational thought of the past. It follows, at least according to this diagnosis, that art history as a disciplinary thought of artworks faces two problems: on the one hand, the historicisation of thought, whereby thought itself becomes historical, reduced to a given state of affairs, proceeding in an established, fossilized image of itself; on the other hand, the thought of artworks in their historicity, which, as we have seen in the case of Tintoretto, risks reducing the work to discursive and visible givens that exceed its material reality.

The pernicious impact of this dual sense of 'history' on thought, and thought's collusion with or resistance to this impact, is a preoccupation we find not only in Deleuze's texts on Foucault, but in the other texts in which the diagram makes a sustained appearance, namely *A Thousand Plateaus* and *Logic of Sensation*. It is in the latter that we are made aware of how art history might be implicated by paint-

ing's thought. Francis Bacon's diagram of painting, an event of pictorial thought, is not 'anti-historical,' but in fact initiates a 'recapitulation' of the 'history' of painting – here understood primarily as the sequence of actual works in historical (that is, linear and chronological) time. The question of how we are to think Bacon's works emerges only indirectly, and through the unorthodox way the text is written, both on the level of its style and on the level of its content.[28] The diagrammatic set 'of asignifying and non-representative lines and zones, line-strokes and color-patches' (Deleuze 2004, 101) on the canvas will be the agency and site for the destruction of the, primarily visual, clichés that face the painter before he begins work, the *a priori's* born to him from a history of painting, and upon which the intelligibility of this history has been grounded.[29]

The work Bacon does on the canvas is a work *against* a history of painting given to him as a sequence of stratified forms in historical time (a sequence that legitimizes the historical complicity of painting with the visual) and *for* a new trans-historical logic of sensation, that projects possibilities for a painting 'to come' – where this future involves not only the painting that will chronologically succeed Bacon, but which also involves the paintings that have already preceded him (Giotto, Michelangelo, Velásquez, Cézanne). And it is as such that the practice of painting as the diagrammatic genesis of the painter's thought 'does not stand outside history,' but can instead be said to function as the '*a priori*' of history' (Deleuze 1999, 36, 35): painting functions as the *a priori* of a new, retroactively constructed history of painting.

The Historical a priori

The notion of a 'historical *a priori*' is also taken from Foucault. Foucault had used it in his *Archaeology* to refer to the 'system of rules' that condition the appearance of the groups of statements in any historical formation or strata, stressing the distinction of this historical *a priori* from the Kantian 'formal' *a priori*. The historical *a priori*, he writes, applies to the conditions of reality, of a 'history that is given,' of things 'actually said,' rather than the transcendental condition of possibility. It is 'a condition of reality for statements, not a condition of validity for judgments,' and as such, is immanent and 'purely empirical,' a 'group of rules…caught up in the very things that they connect' and subject to modification or transformation with them (1999, 143-4). As such it is no longer *a priori* in the Kantian sense – but, as Deleuze notes, *a posteriori*, deduced through the 'archaeological' 'description of discursive events' (Deleuze 2005, 245).[30] From Kant to Foucault, we move from the *a priori* synthesis of the schema to the *a posteriori* synthesis of the strata.

Now whilst, like Deleuze, Foucault wishes to account for real and not just possible experience, in the *Archaeology* this real experience appears indistinguishable from the positive character of an empirically given history. Deleuze, as we have seen, departs from this orientation. For it is not only real experience as that which is given under certain historical conditions that concerns him, but, more crucially, the exceptional experiences that traverse these conditions and retroactively expose the differences within them. As such the element of time is introduced in an intriguing way: for, as the chapter on Bacon's recapitulation of art history indicates, the diagram is not chronologically before the things it conditions. There are two further limitations that Deleuze ascribes to archaeology: firstly, its retention within the dimension of discourse and 'negative' characterisation of non-discursive formations (1999, 49)[31] – in contrast to which Deleuze and Guattari will understand the diagrammatic function to operate within heterogeneous 'regimes of signs,' coextensive with the whole social field (Deleuze 1999, 34). And secondly, its epistemological focus.[32] Whilst Foucault claims that his objective is 'to learn to what extent the effort to think one's own history can free thought from what it silently thinks and so enable it to think differently,' by retaining an epistemological 'image of thought' in advance of the process of archaeological investigation, the implication that we encounter in Deleuze's analyses is that Foucault only partially meets this aim.[33] For Deleuze, the fulfilment of this objective, which he himself shares, will have to wait till *Discipline and Punish*, when the concern with the form of knowledge is replaced by the new axis of power, and the archaeological method is displaced by genealogy – a method that supplies a genetic account of history, thus explicitly bringing the question of the diagrammatic to the question of history.

Diagrammatics and Genealogy

For Deleuze, the critical project of genealogy – as introduced by Nietzsche in *The Genealogy of Morals* as a search for the forces that determine the emergence of values and sense, and developed by the later Foucault – displaces the epistemological focus and descriptive character of archaeology. The distinction between archaeology and genealogy is thus expressed in terms of a distinction between knowledge (forms) and power (relations of forces). The terms of this displacement underscore Deleuze's continuation of the Kantian project of critique into a Nietzschean 'total' critique, in the latter's search for the 'differential element of values,' from which the 'value of value' derives.[34] Critique is no longer, in its Kantian sense, that which bears on the claims of knowledge, truth and morality, on transcendental principles as conditioning, content with 'producing inventories of existing values or with criticizing things in the name of established values' (Deleuze 1983, 2). Rather it is that which bears

on the forces that constitute these values themselves, that which examines their internal principle of genesis. Thus for Nietzsche 'principles are never transcendental' and they are 'never simple conditions for so-called facts'; they are, rather genetic and plastic, giving an account of the 'sense and value of beliefs, interpretations and evaluations' (1983, 93)

Within this critical nexus, the diagram plays a crucial role. It pertains to the genetic differentiation of forces 'that make power relations function,' the *a priori* of the formed contents and expressions on the empirical strata to which knowledge attends. The empirical 'facts' of the strata have their source in the 'possibilities of fact' generated in the informal and intensive element of the diagram. But these strata include the history that chronologically predates the diagram. Thus, Bacon's diagram retroactively constructs a new *genealogy* of painting, displacing the established values of a history (the traditional optical values of painting) with an affirmation of a previously imperceptible logic of sensation, which will in turn illuminate a new path for a chronologically futural practice. And Tintoretto's diagram of Michelangelo rejects a (Kantian) upholding of the established and given value of *disegno*. In an 'exceptional experience,' or encounter with Michelangelo's works, Tintoretto's drawings traverse the historical conditions of the given, retroactively exposing the difference within these conditions and constructing a new reality of artistic practice.

Thus we can begin to see how the diagrammatic sheds further light on the operation Tintoretto undertakes on Michelangelo.

Tintoretto's Drawings as Diagrammatic

Tintoretto's drawings undermine the character of *disegno* as a historical formation. As such, they problematize the conception of the historical relation between Michelangelo and Tintoretto. This is their challenge to art history understood as a sequence of actual works in historical time: it is no longer possible to say that Tintoretto succeeds Michelangelo, via the transmission of the given terms of a historical formation.

We have shown that as a historical formation, *disegno* consists in both a visible and a discursive component. On the one hand, there are the heterogeneous visible expressions of *disegno*, in actual art forms that include not only Michelangelo, but Il Tribolo, and Daniele da Volterra. On the other, there are the heterogeneous statements of *disegno*, in writers from Vasari to Ridolfi. Ridolfi, and those who have recycled the form of his evaluation, hastily assume a correspondence between the two forms of the discursive and the visible. In the case of Michelangelo – where his own statements on *disegno* can be seen to correspond to his actual works – such a correspondence might be argued for, with some justification. But in the case of Tintoretto, who issues no such statement, it is not so evident.

Tintoretto diagrammatises Michelangelo. The materials of art's work, the materials of drawing – chalk, charcoal, paper – are put to work in an experimentation with no prescribed function. Only traits of the original givens of Michelangelo's *disegno* are retained – traits of outline, of form – but they are conjured to produce something unrecognisable.

Look again at the *Crepuscolo*, Look at its frenzied patches and scatterings of charcoal and chalk, at the explosion of matter that breaks free from the determination of organisational function. Consider once more the drawings of *Samson and the Philistines*. Why did Tintoretto make so many? For one art historian, 'their conspicuous abundance and odd repetitiousness have never been satisfactorily explained,' and 'it is inconceivable that Tintoretto should have repeated himself so often and so closely' (Eitner 1993, p16).[35] What is inconceivable to the analyst searching for determinate causes and determined ends is the apparent aimlessness of the experiment. For here, drawing is made to work diagrammatically, as 'pure matter-function'. Tintoretto unmakes the preceding, and already fractured, reality of *disegno*, and through his diagrammatic work constitutes 'points of emergence or creativity' that will give rise to a new artistic reality, and to the becoming of Michelangelo.[36]

Within this operation the notion of the *a priori* is to be newly understood. Clearly, it is no longer simply a system of rules conditioning what is given of Tintoretto's work (*the a posteriori* sense of the historical '*a priori*' that Foucault alerts us to in his *Archaeology*). Neither is it the transcendental conditioning of the forms of *disegno* pre-existing Tintoretto's experience of Michelangelo's works (the Kantian sense of the *a priori*). Contrary to Ridolfi's anecdote, *disegno* does not exist for Tintoretto as an ideal to be mastered or negated. His working methods, the genesis of his work, testify to this: a working in matter from which emerges a Michelangelo as never before seen and which bears no immediate allegiance to established ideals. Michelangelo finds expression in Tintoretto's works not in the actual or ideal forms that he was, but as a difference –a difference that might be said to consist in (but cannot be identified with) an inhuman expression of the body, and a violence of action outside narrative logic (two features that are not bound by the term *disegno*). In Tintoretto's works it is a Michelangelo that was never given that is recapitulated. Michelangelo conditions Tintoretto's works not as a set of transcendent signifiers, nor as a purely empirical reality, not as a pure positivity, nor as something to be negated and overcome – but as a difference to be affirmed. Michelangelo's work is *a priori* for Tintoretto, neither schematically nor archivally, but diagrammatically.

Thus we see how the diagrammatic work of art (which operates between Michelangelo and Tintoretto) conditions a new art history, one that is not chronologically 'after' the diagram's work. The real 'yet to come' is not just a chronolog-

ical future. Michelangelo emerges anew, as the bearer of values that the positivist realities of the inscription of historical formation (namely the value of *disegno*) concealed.

A new register of experience is announced. It is not the Kantian sense of experience as regulated by transcendent *a priori* concepts held by the artist before he begins his work. Neither is it a naïve experience, where Tintoretto beholds and transfers what he sees directly before him. In a transcendental empiricism, Tintoretto encounters Michelangelo as a heterogeneous source differing from itself, extracting from the visible and discursive givens of Michelangelo that which is not given – the 'new,' 'remarkable,' and the 'interesting' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 111). His work testifies to a becoming of thought which traverses historical formations, revealing the transhistorical sense of an aesthetic deformation. Thus when Deleuze and Guattari describe the diagram as a synthesisor 'to make thought travel,' we experience this travel both backwards and forwards – a shooting star of thought, impacting history from outside the bondages of historical time.

We who experience these drawings are in turn confronted by something unintelligible, and thought is forced, no longer as 'the innate exercise of a faculty' or reliant on 'readymade concepts'. On the one hand there is an inadequacy in any pure reliance on the visual or discursive givens of Tintoretto's drawings, on any 'evident' resemblance between Tintoretto and Michelangelo that can be discerned through observation or description. On the other hand there is an inadequacy in any (Kantian) appeal to *disegno* as an established *a priori* for analysis – for here, as we have seen, we risk appealing to a term that is 'too large' and 'general' for the real matter it applies to. Not content to remain a disciplinary 'object' for an image of thought drawn up in advance, Tintoretto's work conditions the thought of it where thinking is no longer 'the innate exercise of a faculty but must happen to thought'. It is at this point that a genealogical approach may be called upon, a critical art history retroactively attentive to the differential element of new values exposed through art's diagrammatic function.

Closing remarks

Tintoretto's attitude towards his artistic sources invites a reassessment of the way art's work conditions art history, and by implication a reassessment of art history's image of thought – a question rarely directly or explicitly attended to. His use of Michelangelo provides a compelling case-study. Conventionally attended to under the terms of an inheritance of *disegno*, this relation demands to be thought differently. The idiosyncratic drawings Tintoretto makes after Michelangelo's sculptures raise this challenge, confronting the apparent self-sufficiency of the term *disegno*, as

both a visible and a discursive reality, and in turn confronting the investment of this term as a means of thinking the relations between these two practices.

I have explored how Tintoretto's drawings function diagrammatically, where a diagram is, as defined by Deleuze, a pure matter-function that works to conjugate relations of forces. This case-study has allowed us to extract and detail some of the critical manoeuvres at work in Deleuze's philosophy with respect to the relations between diagrammatics, art, art history, genealogy, thought, schematism, transcendental empiricism, and time, relations that we have here approached specifically through Deleuze's post-Kantian reading of Foucault. In his drawings, Tintoretto exposes the fracture within the presumed correspondence, presented by Ridolfi's assessment of the artist, between the term *disegno* and its visible expression, liberating drawing as a real experience of matter, with no designated function. He diagrammatises Michelangelo, subjecting his work to an intensive deformation, and forcing to our experience a new, deformed, dissembled Michelangelo that bypasses the inheritance of historical form, and the chronological sense of historical time in which this inheritance is conducted.

The concept of experience signaled here rejects both idealist submissions of experience to pre-existing conceptual determinations, and the domain of the given (what is observed, what is said). Instead it reinstates difference – the trans historical, asignifying and imperceptible element of artwork – as its material.

The diagrammatic thus poses certain methodological questions. Faced by a situation where the work of art conditions the thought of art, the (Kantian) assumption of art as an object presented to a disciplinary image of thought whose 'principles' are given *a priori*, is called into question. And the dual senses of art history, both as a sequence of art objects in historical time and as a discipline of thought, are challenged – as art's work is seen to reconstruct lineages by extracting differences from the past, whilst thought is unmoored from its *a priori* hinges.

Announced here then, by this singular case-study, is one possible avenue for a redress of art history's neo-Kantian dependencies – a new way of integrating critique and the transcendental into art historical thought, as a move from transcendental conditioning to the conditions of the real, as demanded by the peculiar and non-generalisable exigencies of artistic practice.[37] A diagrammatic thought of artistic diagrams would not remain content with old images of thought brandishing recycled concepts upon new material. It would instead concern the genesis of thought beyond discipline as occasioned by the real experience of artworks. Deleuze's philosophy of the diagram thus imparts a rigorous sense to the old, but rarely theorized, adage that it is art's practice that constructs art history – whilst bringing this insight to the crucial question of how we are to think this reality, beyond representation, and beyond the inclinations to know. Thus the

outlines of a methodological critique are erected from the intuition of an artist's eccentricity.

Notes

1. But not as the historiography of art history, for reasons that will become clear through the text. I use the nominations 'art history' and the 'history of art' interchangeably. The conception of art history both as actual artistic practices of the past and the accounts of those practices corresponds to the acknowledged division of 'history' into *res gestae* (past events) and the accounts of those events (*historiae rerum gestarum*) (Borchert 2006, 396). Throughout the text the term 'actual' refers to that which has perceptible reality.
2. Deleuze's remarks on Gérard Fromanger are also revealing in this regard. What is revolutionary about his painting is it's 'radical absence of bitterness, traffic grief, and anguish – all that annoying crap in the pseudo-great painters who are supposedly the witnesses of their times. All those fascist and sadistic fantasies that make a painter seem like an incisive critic of the modern world, when in fact he is only revelling in his own resentment and complacency…'. This analysis of painting casts light on Deleuze's particular take on modern painting as a radically impersonal and non-representational activity, and juxtaposing this analysis against Deleuze's analysis of Bacon reveals the impetus of the latter away from the many accounts of Bacon that have, precisely, foregrounded the painter's emotional world. (Deleuze 2004b, 250)
3. The early works reveal the synthesizing of traits, 'in the manner of a collage' that would mark his oeuvre. (Krischel 2000, 134)
4. See Ilchman and Saywell (2007) for a comprehensive account of Tintoretto's quotations of Michelangelo
5. As a response to having been cast out of Titian's studio, Ridofi tells us, the young Tintoretto 'instead of letting himself be carried away by anger, pondered how he might become a painter by studying from Titian's works and from the reliefs of Michelangelo, the acclaimed father of draughtsmanship. Thus escorted by these two divine luminaries, who have made Painting and sculpture so illustrious in modern times, he proceeded towards the desire goal.' (Ridolfi 1924, 2).
6. We will list a selection of such reiterations of Ridolfi's formulation from the art historical scholarship. In the most recent English monograph, Tom Nichols tells us that Tintoretto's 'awareness of the particular significance ascribed to artistic tradition in his day' is 'indicated by the report that he pinned a notice over the door of his studio reading 'Michelangelo's design [*disegno*] and Titian's colouring [*colorito*]'; and that, whilst 'it is unlikely that such a notice ever existed,' 'it does seem that the young painter saw himself as an heir to the great traditions of Renaissance art embodied in the still-living (but already God-like) figures of Michelangelo (d.1564) and Titian (d.1576)' (Nichols 2015, 14). David Rosand refers, with respect to Tintoretto's painting of *The Miracle of The Slave*, to 'the synthesis of *disegno* and *colorito*, an aesthetic ideal proclaimed in these very years, that would serve as the foundation as well as the hallmark of the creations of Tintoretto's full maturity' (Rosand 1982,183). Rosand reiterates this position in a second text, written for a symposium given to accompany the 2006 Tintoretto retrospective at the Prado, where speaking of the same painting, he states that 'whether or not he actually inscribed the formula above the door to his studio, Tintoretto had indeed combined the *colorito* of Titian and the *disegno* of Michelangelo' (Rosand 2009, 73). Tintoretto's style is 'clearly indebted to Michelangelo and incorporate(s) frequent quotations of his sculptures and paintings' (Echols 2009, 387). Fredrich Ilchman and Echols: 'it was Tintoretto who was most firmly committed to the Central Italian principle of *disegno*.' (Ilchman and Echols 2009, 112) Eric Newton thinks that *The Miracle* is 'perhaps the only Tintoretto in which one detects a full-scale attempt to combine Michelangelo's sculptural

drawing with Titian's surface-glow'. Sydney Freedberg writes of the work's 'Romanist plasticities and ostentation of foreshortenings with its Venetian shuttling of lights and colours' (Freedberg 1993, 523). For Robert Echols, *The Miracle* is a painting that can be described in 'precisely' the terms of Ridolfi's motto, adding, in a recent catalogue that '...it was Tintoretto who was most firmly committed to the Central Italian principle of *disegno* and, indeed, sought to present himself as achieving the ideal combination of *disegno* and *colorito*'. (Echols 2009, 225.) Detlev Von Hadlen states that Tintoretto 'proceeds to achieve the synthesis of Venetian colouring and Tuscan plastic form,' 'Early Works by Tintoretto II,' Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs, 41:237, Dec 1922, 287. Hans Tietze also refers to 'a fruitful union between opposing elements' in a 'synthesis of form and colour' that generally characterises the artist's work. Hans Tietze: In his 'youthful period,' he began 'to supplement his training in the school of Titian by the study of Michelangelo's form'. (1948, 14, 42)

7. 'In his enthusiastic appreciation of the essential greatness and originality of his subject [Ridolfi's Life] testifies to the high esteem in which Tintoretto was held in the 17th Century' (Von Hadeln in Ridolfi, 1924, 3).n Ridolfi describes his task as follows : 'in telling of the doings of the great Tintoretto to make known by the account of his works, how he attained the strenuous summit of his profession, and how with brushes he brought greater perfection to the images that he painted and how he enriched his painting with the most choice and rare inventions, so that Nature which sometimes remains imperfect, in his hands attained to grace and splendour.' 2. Lepschy also draws attention to Ridolfi's aim as to provide a Venetian equivalent – and answer – to Vasari's *Vite*.... In it Tintoretto is placed in a position analogous to that occupied by Michelangelo in Vasari'. He is primarily concerned with 'claiming for Tintoretto the qualities which his critics extolled in other artists but found lacking in him' (1983, 34).
8. This formulation was coined by the painter Paolo Pino in 1548. In his *Dialogo di Pittura*, a Venetian, Lauro, in his defence of Venetian painting, argues that if 'Titian and Michelangelo were a single person, if the drawing of Michelangelo were added to the colour of Titian, then we would have the supreme god of painting.' (Quoted in Lepschy 1983, 19)
9. Vasari's most explicit statement of this viewpoint is in his 'Life of Titian' where he comments that many Venentian painters, including Giorgione, Palma Vecchio, Pordenone 'who had never seen Rome or any completely perfect works of art' had to conceal 'under the charm of colouring a lack of knowledge of how to draw.' (Quoted in Faietti 2016, 39)
10. Thus, in his 1548 *Dialogues*, Paolo Pino designates *disegno* as the first category of the art of painting. And in his *Dialogues*, Ludovico Dolce has Pietro Aretino (his mouthpiece) praise *disegno*, which he defines as 'the form imparted by the painter to the things he sets about imitating,' praising Michelangelo as its 'unsurpassed' master. In his *Il Disegno*, Anton Franscesco Doni, a friend of Tintoretto, concluded that 'sculpture was the greatest art and Michelangelo the greatest artist' (quoted in Roskill 1968, 25, 131, 171). Von Hadeln claims that 'Vasari's Lives were the model for [Ridolfi's Life of Tintoretto] in all respects.' (in: Ridolfi 1924, 1). For an overview of the debate see Freedberg 1980. On the increasing importance of *disegno* in 16th century Venetian art theory see Rosand 1970.
11. This subject is beyond the scope of this current chapter. Michelangelo's famous claims that; 'Not the best artist has in himself any concept that a single marble does not enclose in itself with its excess; and to this [idea] attains only the hand that obeys the intellect' is its most famous indication. (Quoted in Panofsky 1968, 117)
12. Of course, Tintoretto is not the only Venetian to whom these characterisations pertain. But since he is the Venetian who is credited above all his contemporaries for his debt to Michelangelo, the characterization in his case demand special consideration.
13. I quote the anecdote in full: Palma and Renieri were quite right to say: 'Tintoretto's disegno, Bassano's colorito'. Indeed, on this subject, in his manuscript 'Dialogue on Painting' Giambatista Volpa-

to tells that one days when Tintoretto was at dinner with this great friend Bassano, after discussing at length the virtues and the works of Raphael, Michelangelo, Correggio, Titian, and other excellent painters of their age, he [Tintoretto] added: 'I would say, Giacomo if I had your *colorito* and you my *disegno*, I would not wish the Titians, Correggios, Raphaels or any others to stand comparison with us.' This might have implied that Giacomo was not very skilled in drawing. But Volpato continued by arguing that 'When Tintoretto spoke of *disegno*, since *disegno* embraces many things, he did not mean the drawing of a figure, because in another way it is certain that Bassano was one of the most careful and diligent masters of the perfect composition of a body.... But he wished to say the spirit of invention and movement; because if the sketches, if this term can be used, especially of Tintoretto, had been finished by Bassano, they would certainly have been unrivalled, because in inventions Bassano was poor of spirit....' And here he is quite right.' (Quoted in Faiettii 2016, 47)

14. Even in scholarship that attempts to cast Tintoretto in a more unorthodox light, these tendencies persist. For example, whilst Maria Loh critiques Ridolfi's assessment, she substitutes another correspondence – between Tintoretto's works and the evaluation of the 17th century writer Marco Boschini (Loh 2009, 191-5).
15. It was by then acknowledged practice for artists to set about copying casts taken from life, or antique statues – an aspect of practice that complicated the *paragone* debate – the debate on the relative strengths of painting and sculpture. Alberti had insisted that it was better to study a mediocre sculpture than an excellent painting (Alberti 1977, 94-5). Vasari believed that artists should copy statues rather than nature with all her imperfections. In this vein, Ilchman notes that Tintoretto 'must have believed that the best way to acquire skill in *disegno* was to study idealised works, like sculptures, rather than objects in nature with their inherent imperfections' but adds that his rendering is 'imperfect" (Ilchman 2009, 391).
16. This has been debated. Virgil Mocanu cites Nicholas Pevsner and Roberto Paullucchini who both think that Tintoretto journeyed to Rome in 1545 or 1546 (Mocanu 1977, 7). On the availability of Michelangelo prints and casts in the 16th century see Amerson Jr. and LeBrooy.
17. For an analysis of this point and an excellent survey of Tintoretto's drawings, see Tietze and Tietze-Conrat.
18. Tintoretto's drawings 'distinguish [Tintoretto], a very Venetian artist, from the splendidly developing Venetian tradition, begun a century before his time.' (Delogu 1969, 1) In style, they are perhaps closest to Titian – but Titian, with rare exception, does not submit his figures to the deformations that Tintoretto achieves.
19. Note Tietze's observation that whereas Titan's atelier 'the pupils made replicas which were merely repetitions of a model with few variations, in Tintoretto's workshop such repetitions were almost entirely lacking. Instead of them we have remodellings and enlargements' (Tietze 1944, 57).
20. This conception displaces the notion of history as a continuity of events. The history of thought as an uninterrupted continuity 'provides privileged shelter for the sovereignty of consciousness' and the 'founding function of the subject.' (Foucault, 2002, 13) Foucault presents his own outlook against the backdrop of what he describes to be a shift in the study of history, and in the history of ideas more broadly – away from the traditional analyses of causal successions, continuity, and the links between disparate events, from 'vast unities like 'periods' or 'centuries,' to the phenomena of rupture, of discontinuity' (Foucault, 2002, 4-5).
21. Foucault, 2002, 13 Although this 'rediscovery of difference' seems to be compromised by Foucault's view that uncovering a set of statements "allows us to say that all its authors were talking about the same thing" (Foucault, 2002, 142).
22. Hjemslev is the only linguist who has 'actually broken with the signifier and the signified' through a conception of the sign as made up of binary forms of content and expression linked by thought-purport' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 523, n29; Deleuze 1999, 37, 47, 83).

23. 'I call that in the appearance which corresponds to sensation its matter, but that which allows the manifold of appearance to be intuited as ordered in certain relations I call the form of appearance. Since that within which the sensations can alone be ordered and placed in a certain form cannot itself be in turn sensation, the matter of all appearance is only given to us *a posteriori*, but its form must lie ready for it in the mind *a priori*, and can therefore be considered separately from all sensation.' Kant, 1998, A20/B34.
24. The term 'heterogeneous' is, of course, Deleuze's, not Kant's. For Kant space and time provide the homogeneous ground for the schematism between two faculties.
25. In effect, this replaces the diagram, which is usually associated by commentators with Deleuze's period of work with Guattari, within the context of Deleuze's early philosophy.
26. Even if *disegno* is instantiated in its material expression, and cannot be understood apart from this expression, as a principle, nomination and a value it pre-exists practice.
27. This recalls Foucault's statement that his studies, whilst of 'history,' are not the work of a 'historian,' but rather 'a philosophical exercise' whose object was 'to learn to what extent the effort to think one's own history can free thought from what it silently thinks, and so enable it to think differently' (1992, 9).
28. Alain Badiou and Barbara Cassin intimate this concern with thought in their brief Preface: 'One can certainly think painting, but one can also paint thought, including the exhilarating and violent form of thought that is painting.' (Deleuze 2004, viii)
29. In particular, Bacon's diagram will remove painting 'from the optical organization that was already reigning over it and rendering it figurative in advance' (Deleuze 2004, 101).
30. The 'research into conditions constitutes a kind of neo-Kantianism in Foucault – but with two differences...: 1. The conditions are those of real experience and not of possible experience, thus being on the side of the "object" not on the side of a universal "subject"; and 2. They have to do with historical formations or strata as a posteriori syntheses, and not with the a prior synthesis of all possible experience.' Deleuze identifies archaeological strata as 'both empirical and positive' (1999, 47). Foucault states that the keyword of archaeology is 'description' (Foucault 2002, 170).
31. Furthermore, Deleuze thinks 'if we forget the theory of visibilities we distort Foucault's conception of history, and thought, making it into a variant of contemporary analytical philosophy with which he had little in common.' (1999, 50)
32. For the archaeological Foucault, it is 'the field of historical knowledge' that is his concern; a discourse is a 'corpus of knowledge' (Foucault 2002, 17, 36).
33. By 'image' Deleuze refers 'to a whole organization which effectively trains thought to operate according to the norms of an established order or power, and moreover, installs in it an apparatus of power, sets it up as an apparatus of power itself.' (2002, 23)
34. As a search for 'the origin [*Herkunft*] of our moral prejudices' and a critique of these moral values whereby the value of these values must be called into question (Nietzsche 2008, 3).
35. Lucy Whittaker makes a similar point with respect to Tintoretto's drawings after another (classical) model : 'the head of Vitellius appears far less frequently and prominently in Tintoretto's paintings than one would expect, especially considering the number of times he drew it.' (Whittaker 1997, 182).
36. Delogu's remark on the temporality of the drawings – that 'it is barely possible to order chronologically the drawings from the forty years of his activity because of the near homogeneity of the use of chiaroscuro and because of the occurrence of the same techniques throughout,' and because 'there seems to be no evolution in the forms and in the style of his drawings as there is in his paintings' is intriguing in this regard. (Delogu 1969, 2)
37. In this way Deleuze's remarks on the transcendental *a priori* have much to offer the debates on the status of the *a priori* in art historical methodology foregrounded by Wölfflin and Panofsky but still relevant today. In his essay on 'The Relation between Art history and Art Theory' Panofsky wishes

to construct a 'fundamental system of concepts for a science of art that is valid *a priori*, that is, as a subject of thought that belongs not to reality' but at the same time he believes that these concepts have 'their beginning in experience' (2008, 55). This apparent conflict between empiricism and the transcendental is something that Deleuze's transcendental empiricism challenges. I consider this at length in Vellodi 2017.

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Painting Machines, "Metallic Suicide" and Raw Objects: Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* in the context of French Post-War Art

Ann-Cathrin Drews

This chapter looks at some of the artistic references in *Anti-Oedipus* (1972) in order to elucidate the book's indebtedness to French visual art of the time.[1] Written in the aftermath of May 1968 the importance of this specific cultural environment in Paris to the book is crucial. (Wilson 2006, 436) With *Anti-Oedipus* Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari broke with psychoanalytical concepts of desire and the unconscious. Their schizoanalysis described the unconscious as a machine in order to subvert a psychoanalytical conception of desire in terms of oedipal and associated family structures. The oedipal regime is considered to be connected to the limitations of representation and its characteristics such as linearity and causality, projection and idealism.[2] For Deleuze and Guattari, by contrast, 'desiring machines [...] break down as they function, and their break-down is constantly fed back into their functioning.' (Bogue 2007, 145-6) They also understand the schizo as a productive figure that escapes the oedipal through its 'breakthrough' rather than its 'breakdown,' 'causing the flows of desire to circulate.' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 362) They view the identification of the schizophrenic as a 'mad' person and a repressed 'entity' as a result of the signifying processes of Capitalist society. (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 5, 135) The associated practices of psychoanalysis and psychiatry rid this figure of its potentialities, of the schizophrenic creative experience as a process of production associated with a boundless life and vitality.

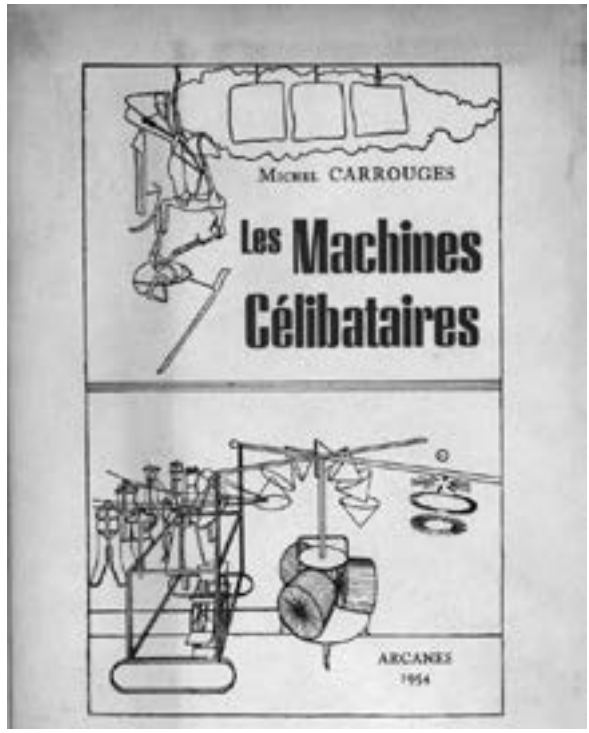

Figure 1: Michel Carrouges, *Les machines célibataires* (Paris: Arcanes, 1954). Cover with a schematic drawing by Roger Aujame based on photographs of Marcel Duchamp's *The Bride Stripped bare by her Bachelors, Even* (1915-1923). © The Estate of Marcel Duchamp/VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2017.

To Deleuze and Guattari artists make visible desiring machines. (Deleuze and Guattari 1977, 129) Already on the very first pages of the book they give a series of literary and artistic examples to underline the schizo's creative potential, its 'connective tissue' in contrast to the 'oedipal tissue.' The vagabonds of Samuel Beckett, for example, dissolve their identities in the processes of speaking as 'circles traced.' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 20) The two authors mention the 'literary machines' of Antonin Artaud, Henri Michaux and Michel Carrouges' groundbreaking 1954 publication *Les Machines célibataires* that discusses the 'great machinists' Marcel Duchamp, Franz Kafka, Raymond Roussel, Jules Verne and Alfred Jarry. The cover of Carrouges' book shows a graphic design based on Marcel Duchamp's *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even (The Large Glass)* (1915-1923) (fig. 1), a work also discussed in *Anti-Oedipus*. The interconnectedness of schizoanalysis and modernist art is explored beginning with references to Art Brut's journal *Companie d'Art Brut* published in Paris between 1964 and 1974 under the auspices of Jean Dubuf-

fet, and including reproductions of Adolf Wölfli's ornamental oversized drawings and Robert Gie's depictions of bodies connected to machines in circuits. (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 23-4; cf. Wilson 2014, 57-76) Deleuze and Guattari discuss Richard Lindner's painting *Boy with a machine* (1954) (fig. 2) and mention Surrealist Salvador Dali and *Nouveaux Realists* Arman and César. (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 31) They also make allusions to John Cage's experimental artistic work, the performances of Jean-Jacques Lebel, and the cut-up technique of William Burroughs. All of these artists were very present in the French Art scene at the time. This contemporary artistic subtext and its role as a visual fundament for Deleuze and Guattari's aesthetics of machine thinking is furthermore very apparent in the French edition's 'Appendice bilan-programme pour machines désirantes' (lacking in the English edition of 1983). Here the authors discussed Dadaist and Neo-Dadaist machines in more detail, in particular the artist-constructor Jean Tinguely, and alluded to 'machinic painters' such as Man Ray, Marcel Duchamp, Francis Picabia and Fernand Léger. (Deleuze and Guattari 1977, 121)

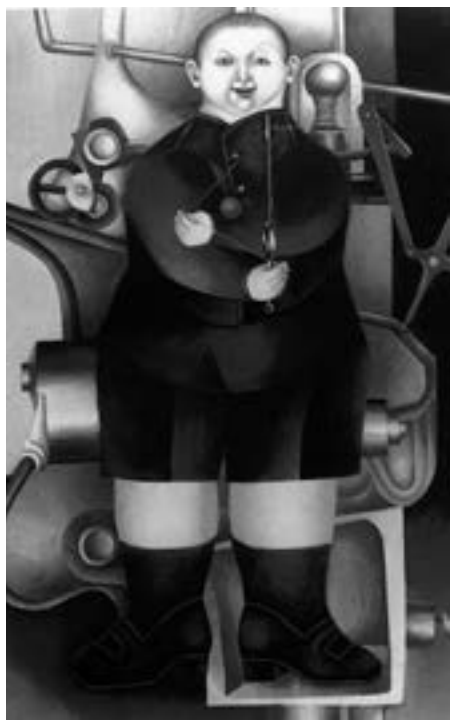

Figure 2: Richard Lindner, *Boy with a Machine*, 1954, oil on canvas, 127 x 76.4 cm. Ellen and Max Palevsky Collection. In W. Spies (ed., 1999), *Richard Lindner. Catalogue raisonné*, (Munich: Prestel), 58. © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2017.

These references link the authors' thought to contemporary French art as it was visible in exhibitions, journals and the streets at the time. And much like anti-oedipal machines, the artworks executed at this time in Paris adopted and increased the impulses of the first avant-gardes to break with art's representational traditions. The shift from images to objects, functions and processes led to an undoing and rethinking of the status of the image. Artists such as Jean Fautrier or Alberto Giacometti had stressed a materiality in painting and sculpture that still paid respects to existentialism but also announced a friction with signification by stressing its processual and haptic qualities. This break with "the" image pronounced a rawness that would keep being explored during the following decades in happenings or performances. During the 1950s and 60s many French artworks further breached the border of the figurative and abstract, testifying to the political battles of bodies at the existential limits and stressing the apparent contradictions between individual freedom and society in Post-War Europe. Many French artistic projects dissolved the vanguard belief in artistic leadership and the role of an individual subject into a rhizomatic field of continuous and vibrant production and collaborations. Opposing more homogenous art scenes such as that in the US at the time, French artists kept regrouping themselves around programs or announcing schools such as the GRAV (*Groupe de recherche d'art visuel*), *Support Surface* and BMPT (*Buren-Mosset-Parmentier-Toroni*).[3] (Cueff 1996, 159) In Paris as capital of arts an artistic radicalism of desiring machines was filling the streets before May '68. The resulting cultural field pointed to a specific heterogeneity not to be found anywhere outside France. (Cueff 1996, 166) This energy was carried over into artistic manifestos and artworks of the 1960s and 1970s. It is thus striking that one finds three very precise – and to Deleuze and Guattari contemporary – art historical moments accentuated in *Anti-Oedipus*: Art Brut, Dada and subsequently Neo-Dada, as well as Nouveau Realisme.

Images and Machines: Ray, Duchamp, Picabia

In the 'Balance Sheet' Deleuze and Guattari write:

> Such approximations of desiring-machines are not furnished by surrealist objects, theatrical epiphanies, or oedipal gadgets, which function only by reintroducing associations – in point of fact, Surrealism was a vast enterprise of oedipalization of the movements that preceded it. But they will be found rather in certain Dadaist machines, in the drawing of Julius Goldberg, or, more recently, in the machines of Tinguely. How does one obtain a functional ensemble, while shattering all the associations? (What is meant by "bound by the absence of any tie"?) (Deleuze and Guattari 1977, 125)

Contrasting Surrealism and Dada, and introducing Nouveau Realisme via Jean Tinguely, *Anti-Oedipus* is situated at the moment when artists such as Tinguely started to build real machines, for example the *Rotozaza*. Even though Dada had been at the source of Surrealism, its vitality, destructive activity and uncompromising agency resurfaced forcefully in Post-War France. Laurence Bertrand Dorleac has emphasized the impact of Tristan Tzara's writing and his first Manifest of 1918 on the artists of the 1950s and 60s. Tzara's 'archi-critique, archi-inquiète et archi-énergique' (Bertrand Dorleac 2004, 9, 20) was explicitly recognized when the Nouveaux Realistes around Pierre Restany called one of their first exhibitions in 1961 *40 degrees au dessous Dada*. (Cueff 1996, 161) According to Bertrand Dorleac the forceful artistic activities in Paris in 1968 would not have been possible without the works that were executed directly after the war. (Bertrand Dorleac 2004, 8) Here, a shift from image to object and towards violent exchanges, actions and interactions with the real world was instituted. The 1960s also saw a series of exhibitions and publications that reintroduced Dada into French artistic and intellectual circles.[4]

In their appendix Deleuze and Guattari refer to *Dancer-Danger* (1917-1920) (fig. 3) by Man Ray, *Tu m'* (1918) by Duchamp and *Girl Born Without a Mother* (1914-1915) by Francis Picabia (fig. 4). They also note Kurt Schwitter's *Merzbau*. The Dada artworks of Ray, Duchamp and Picabia were created at the beginning of the century, but they also shaped trajectories that received renewed interest in the 1950s and 60s. These artists had important exhibitions in Paris during this time and featured in a series of new publications and finally the retrospective *DADA* at the *Musée national d'art moderne* in 1966-67. Man Ray and Marcel Duchamp were introducing parts of mechanical objects into their works, and Deleuze and Guattari stress their non-representational character as inherent, non-causal image-apparatuses that nevertheless still partially rely on representational mechanisms. The works function according to the particular relation that their part-objects have not only to each other, but to the images in which they are embedded *as* pictorial parts. It is precisely this relation that Deleuze and Guattari had in mind when differentiating the desiring machines from technical or psychoanalytical machines in their discussions of gadgets and phantasies in 'Balance Sheet'. (Deleuze and Guattari 1977, 117) In contrast 'the absurdity' of desiring machines comes from either the 'indeterminate character of the motor or energy source, through the physical impossibility of the organization of the working parts, or through the logical impossibility of the mechanism of transmission.' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977, 117)

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moteur ou de la source d'énergie, soit par impossibilité physique de l'organisation des pièces travailleuses, soit par impossibilité logique du mécanisme de transmission. Par exemple le *Dancer-Danger* de Man Ray, sous-titré « l'impossibilité », présente deux degrés d'absurdité : les groupes de roues dentées ne peuvent pas fonctionner, pas plus que la grande roue de transmission. Dans la mesure où cette machine est censée représenter le tournoiement d'un danseur espagnol, on peut dire : elle traduit mécaniquement, par l'absurde, l'impossibilité pour une machine d'effectuer elle-même un tel mouvement (le danseur n'est pas une machine). Mais on peut dire aussi : là il doit y avoir un danseur comme pièce de machine ; cette pièce de machine ne peut être qu'un danseur ; voici la machine dont le danseur est une pièce. Il ne s'agit plus de confronter l'homme et la machine pour évaluer les correspondances, les prolongements, les substitutions possibles ou impossibles de l'un et l'autre, mais de les faire communiquer tous deux pour montrer comment l'homme *fait pièce avec* la machine, ou fait pièce avec autre chose pour constituer une machine. L'autre chose peut être un outil, ou même un animal, ou d'autres hommes. Ce n'est pourtant pas par métaphore qu'on parle de machine : l'homme *fait machine* dès que ce caractère est communiqué par récurrence à l'ensemble dont il fait partie dans des conditions bien déterminées. L'ensemble homme-cheval-arc forme une machine guerrière nomade dans les conditions de la steppe. Les hommes forment une machine de travail dans les conditions bureaucratiques des grands empires. Le fantassin grec fait machine avec ses armes dans les conditions de la phalange. Le danseur fait machine avec la piste dans les conditions périlleuses de l'amour et de la mort... Nous partons non pas d'un emploi métaphorique du mot machine, mais d'une hypothèse (confuse) sur l'origine : la manière dont des éléments quelconques sont déterminés à faire machine *par récurrence et communication* ; l'existence d'un « phylum machinique ». L'ergonomie s'approche de ce point de vue lorsqu'elle pose le problème général, non plus en termes d'adaptation ou de substitution — adaptation de l'homme à la machine, et de la machine à l'homme —, mais en termes de communication récurrente

Man Ray — Dancer/Danger (L'impossibilité.)

Figure 3: Man Ray, *Dancer-Danger (L'impossibilité)*, 1917-1920, mixed media, 60.8 x 35.2 x 2 cm, Centre Pompidou. © Man Ray Trust, Paris / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2017. As printed in: Giles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Capitalisme et schizophrénie 1: L'Anti-Œdipe*, 464-465 © 1972-1973 by Les Editions de Minuit.

In Man Ray's *Danger / Dancer (L'impossibilité)*[5] (fig. 3), for example, the wheels cannot work and nor can the transmission. While the "Spanish dancer" Ray was referring to (ie., the machine) is absurd, and cannot move like the dancer does, the dancer is nevertheless a necessary piece of it. As Deleuze and Guattari put it:

> The object is no longer to compare man and the machine in order to evaluate the correspondences, the extensions, the possible or impossible substitutions of one for the other, but to bring them into communication in order to show how man *is a component part* of the machine, or combines with something else to constitute a machine. (Deleuze and Guattari 1977, 117-8)

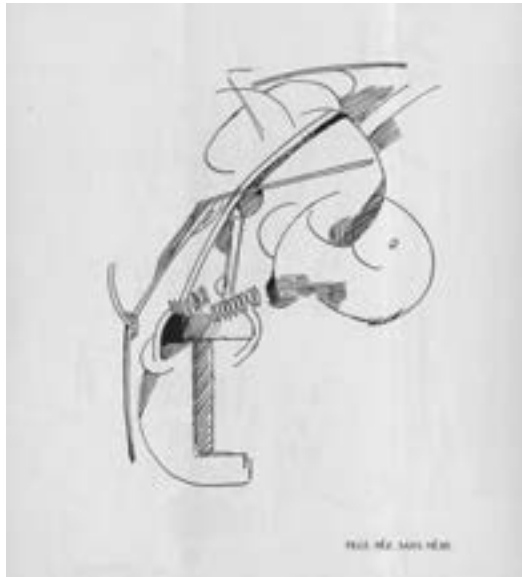

Figure 4: Francis Picabia, *La fille née sans mère*, 1914-1915, Gouache and metallic paint on printed paper, 50 x 65 cm. Ink on paper, 26.7 x 21.6 cm. Published in *291* 4 (June 1915). International Dada Archive, Special Collections, University of Iowa Libraries. © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2017.

Francis Picabia's *œuvre* is of particular interest here as the artist insisted on including painting even in his most abstract and mechanical works. Picabia's *La fille née sans mère* (fig. 4) is proposed in the 'Balance sheet' as one of those 'absurd' machines in opposition to the oedipal machines. And to Deleuze and Guattari Picabia's title 'sans mère' was so overt, that it appears as a self-sufficient statement in their text. But it is worth noticing in detail what kind of work they here refer to. The early sketch-like drawing was one of the mechanical pictures, or *mechanomorphoses* that Picabia made between 1915 and 1923 in New York – a time-span that corresponds directly to Duchamp's work on *La verre*. Some of these mechanomorphs were included in Michel Sanouillet's new edition of Picabia's review *391* in 1960 (for example, *Peigne* (*Comb*) from 1917 or *Américaine* were originally published as the review's covers). (Baker 2007, 202, 204)[6] *La fille née sans mère*'s relatively coherent – if unrecognizable – mechanical model consists of two coiled springs enveloped by round half circle forms, partly shaded so as to give the impression of Futurist or Cubist collages, or of a strange mechanical organism. The title was written at the bottom right of the page.

Picabia based these mechanomorphs on 'models,' a term that here has to be understood as diagrams, drawings or photographs of machines. The artist only traced

parts of these, thus presenting representation and abstraction in a strange deadlock. Whilst referencing their real objects as sources, the relation between artwork and model is not mimetic. Nor, however, is Picabia's specific understanding of (Dada-) abstraction solely based on a conception of modernist autonomy negating mimesis. Instead they were 'a shattering of that model (of the model) from within, mimesis and the copy dedicated to failure. They were, indeed, a form of Dada abstraction: failed reproductions, violent abortions of resemblance, a stubborn procession of deviations.' (Baker 2007, 250) Picabia thus employs a simulacral relation to the original (Baker 2007, 224) which stands in distinct contrast to the often mechanical or even photographic character of these works. The images can therefore be seen to contain a trace of the former (arguably still mimetic) link in order to show its destruction or irrelevance at the same time. (Baker 2007, 250) Picabia thus constructs an 'image-machine' that is not arrested by its "fixated" image, and a conflicting and multiplying image-process in pictorial representation. In Deleuze and Guattari's words:

> The machinic painters stressed the following: that they did not paint machines as substitutes for still lives or nudes; the machine is not a represented object any more than the drawing of it is a representation. The aim is to introduce an element of a machine, so that it combines with something else on the full body of the canvas, be it with the painting itself, with the result that it is precisely the ensemble of the painting that functions as a desiring-machine. The induced machine is always other than the one that appears to be represented. It will be seen that the machine proceeds by means of an "uncoupling" of this nature, and ensures the deterritorialization that is characteristic of machines. (Deleuze and Guattari 1977, 121)

Picabia's abstraction was, in relation to its depicted forms, a disfigurement of the real, a disfigurement that is to some extent still visible in Picabia's drawings: 'It sometimes happens, as in Picabia, that the discovery of the abstract leads to the machinic elements, while at other times, as in the example of many a Futurist, the opposite road is travelled.' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977, 122) Within Picabia's image a machinic 'fissure' is introduced into the mimetic relation, turning the copy into a 'process of destruction.' (Baker 2007, 250-1) Picabia's very own and specific abstraction is precisely one of the machines Deleuze and Guattari were setting into play in *Anti-Oedipus*. 'The machine stands apart from all representation (although one can always represent it, copy it, in a manner however that is completely devoid of interest), and it stands apart because it is pure Abstraction; it is non-figurative and non-projective.' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977, 122) For Deleuze and Guattari

the remainder of reality within representation would remain very important within such a machinic image: on the level of the critique of oedipal machines this artistic machine functions as an absurd machine precisely because it continues to feed back into the machine its breaks, establishing a continuous circuit between its different levels: representation, abstraction, configuration/transformation, representation, and so on. In this way, it is "the ensemble of the painting that functions as a desiring-machine." The friction between oedipal representation and flattened, processual, machinic, image-activity is, so to speak, the visual ground for the conception of desiring-machines. Looking at these pictorial circuits by Ray or Picabia, for instance, it becomes very clear – on a pictorial as much as a theoretical level – why Deleuze and Guattari invoke artworks that continuously feed reality into the image-machine:

> Oedipus is the entropy of the desiring-machine, its tendency to external abolition. It is the image or the representation slipped into the machine, the stereotype that stops the connections, exhausts the flows, puts death in desire, and substitutes a kind of plaster for the cracks – it is the Interruptrice (the psychoanalysts as the saboteurs of desire). (Deleuze and Guattari 1977, 122)

The machine, in order to accomplish any critique of representative imagery, has to work first of all with "reality". Only then can it distinguish its 'affective' procedures from representation (Deleuze and Guattari 1977, 122), and from the oedipal subject Deleuze and Guattari see fixated in and by the image.

This connection also occurs within art-historical and art-theoretical debates. Art history has commonly connected 'projection' or 'representation' with linearity and signification within (narrative) pictorial regimes. In this context perspective, for instance, was a formal and mathematical but also philosophical organisation of space that divided background from foreground, figure from ground. This is subverted in modern painting, particularly in 19th century French painting when artists began to stress the surface of the picture plane and the materiality of paint and support. That Deleuze and Guattari were aware of this discussion of modernity in relation to painting and its reformulations of space, picture plane, pictorial depth and representation is made clear with their reference to William Turner. (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 132) Deleuze will also speak of Turner's anticipation of Impressionism in his later work *Logic of Sensation* on Francis Bacon. (Deleuze 2003, 105) The concept of the 'figural' that he elaborates there follows in many ways the artistic examples in *Anti-Oedipus*. It, too, emerges from a continuous friction between figuration and abstraction in which "Not all the figurative givens have to disappear." (Deleuze 2003, 110)

Deleuze and Guattari's references to "la fille née sans mère" introduce Picabia's complex play of pictorial relations into their thinking of desiring-machines. Art historically speaking, the motherlessness Picabia refers to describes the core of the artist's abstraction.[7] It also opposes Dada's attack on paternal signification, carried out through its continuous displacement of signifiers creating a flux that has been associated with a maternal signifier. The mechanomorphs *sans mère* install a distance to this maternal signifier, a distance that has been read as both a renewed regrouping of the works under the 'general equivalent' of the paternal signifier, but also – as George Baker argues with reference to Michel de Certeau's writing on the bachelor machine – as a continuous *sui generis* activity upsetting both paternal and maternal systems that only allows the machine (as abstraction) to come forth. (Baker 2007, 257) The mechanomorphs' formal depiction – often as isolated parts distanced from the frames, as if in a kind of 'self-enclosure' (Baker 2007, 254) further stresses this self-generating activity without source. The model as mother is destroyed from within and the demonstration of this *being* motherless (i.e., having had a model) becomes the core of abstraction. With Picabia the image machine found its artistic and 'motherless' *raison d'être*. The continuous *sui generis* activity in these drawings finally overcomes and disfigures both paternal and maternal systems letting only the machine (as abstraction) come forth in the images: 'The apparatus shines like a blade.'[8] (de Certeau 1986, 166)

Richard Lindner's Imagery Circuits: Figure, Space, Surface

Deleuze and Guattari prominently discuss the work of Richard Lindner in the first chapter of *Anti-Oedipus* on desiring machines. The American artist was working in Paris at the time and befriended artists such as Arroyo and others from the Narrative Figuration group. (Wilson 2010, 136) Deleuze personally knew – at least – the painter Gérard Fromanger who was closely associated with this artistic circle, and Lindner's composition and painterly execution was also influenced by other contemporary artists mentioned by Deleuze and Guattari. They write of his painting *Boy with a Machine* (fig. 2):

> The rule of continually producing production, of grafting producing onto the product, is a characteristic of desiring-machines or of primary production: the production of production. A painting by Richard Lindner, "Boy with Machine," shows a huge, pudgy, bloated boy working one of his little desiring-machines, after having hooked it up to a vast technical social machine—which, as we shall see, is what even the very young child does. Producing, a product: a producing/product identity. It is this identity that con-

> stitutes a third term in the linear series: an enormous undifferentiated object. (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 7, cf. 44, 358)

Both Lindner's 'huge, pudgy, bloated boy' and his canvas form such an 'enormous undifferentiated object,' and become the 'third term in the linear series'. The whole of Lindner's painting consists of 'pudgy' or 'bloated' forms in an arrangement too large ("huge") for the size of the canvas. German art historian Ingrid Hägele has shown that Lindner sketched this motif throughout summer 1964, during which he began to separate the boy from the machinic background.[9] (Hägele 2003, 183) As she remarks, however, the boy is bound to the surrounding mechanism without any apparent explanation or real depiction of its function – in this 'absurd' machine it remains unclear what influences what: boy and machines, foreground and background. (Hägele 2003, 183) Considering the following quotation in the *Balance Sheet* (already discussed above) it is surprising the authors didn't explicitly refer back to their earlier discussion of Lindner's *Boy with a Machine*:

> The aim is to introduce an element of a machine, so that it combines with something else on the full body of the canvas, be it with painting itself, with the result that it is precisely the ensemble of the painting that functions as a desiring-machine. The induced machine is always other than the one that appears to be represented. (Deleuze and Guattari 1977, 121)

This quote elucidates how the formal composition of Lindner's painting elaborated a circuit between depicted items (objects, part of machines and the depiction of the boy's body) on the level of content *and* machinic connections that go beyond representation. Lindner achieves this primarily through the spatial-perspectival order of the depiction being not logically coherent. (Hägele 2003, 183) For example, at the bottom of the canvas where the two feet of the boy are shown it is hard to distinguish which spatial level is located precisely where, with the right foot of the boy meandering in a strange spatial non-zone, being painted without shadow and thus without depth. The pictorial flatness establishes the formal link on the painterly surface between the pictorial background – in which the boy is apparently located on the right side – and the bottom part of the machine, represented through that strange box into which Lindner has painted the left foot without shading or depth of field. Lindner's bloated, spot-lit, dimensionless forms appear to connect to each other across their figurative boundaries of forms (that make them – at first sight – 'represent' these objects as separate parts). But by way of their flat and monochromatic character they also establish an 'undifferentiated' flatness of forms parallel to the picture plane gliding on non-locatable levels. The singular, largely monochrome

surfaces painted without much shading further stress the connective organisation of machinic compositions: As Deleuze and Guattari point out: 'Functioning as a component part in conjunction with other parts is very different from being an extension or a projection.' (1977, 118) This flatness levels out both the narrative and representational differences and creates pictorial connections between boy and machine, foreground and background, bottom and top parts of the image (making one think, too, of Duchamp's division and connection in the *Bachelor Machine*). 'Lindner's *Boy with Machine* is equally involved in the mechanics of a small toy gadgetry, as much as in the complicated, mysterious system of a large machine.' (Hägele 2003, 189) In view of this interconnectedness Lindner's canvas offers a pictorial equivalent or trajectory of the desiring machines' continuous and interdependent plane of inscription and consumption. It is void of narration but populated by machines, objects and a body as an inherent working structure rather than a representation – all these are strangely connected and strangely separate, inviting once again de Certeau's comment: "The apparatus shines like a blade." One could thus read: the connectivity on the level of machinic forms, the disjunctions introduced by the boy's new machine, and the conjunctions on the level of the overall painterly image – joining the circuit of forms, machines and pictorial surface. It is inhabited by forms that are gliding on a glossy surface (image-surface) as if constituting a full body without organs whose center remains outside any organisation achieved by an ordering subject. Deleuze and Guattari describe such a decentering of signification:

> The points of disjunction on the body without organs form circles that converge on the desiring-machines; then the subject – produced as a residuum alongside the machine, as an appendix, or as a spare part adjacent to the machine – passes through all the degrees of the circle, and passes from one circle to another. This subject itself is not at the center, which is occupied by the machine, but on the periphery, with no fixed identity, forever decentered, defined by the states through which it passes. (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 20)

Lindner's working procedure is related to a range of artistic developments at the time. The artist had emigrated from Germany to the US in 1941, after living in Paris from 1933 to 1941, painting his first *Wunderkind* in 1950. (Hägele 2003, 173) Paris became his second home from 1950 on. In 1963 a small newspaper article published in *Le Monde*, titled "Américains de A à Z," introduced his work to a larger reading public.[10] He showed work in Paris throughout the 1960s, such as in the Gallery Claude Bernard in 1965 – where Jean Dubuffet in 1964, Alberto Giacometti in 1968, and later Francis Bacon in 1976 were also exhibited – a show that was accompanied by a catalogue.

The American art historian Dore Ashton wrote her monograph on Richard Lindner in 1969 with an extended catalogue of his paintings. Interestingly, Ashton observed that the Prinzhorn collection was a possible reference for the bloated wonder-kids. (Ashton 1969, 34) Hägele has also demonstrated Lindner's indebtedness to Art Brut, which he would have encountered during several visits to the Prinzhorn collection, as well as in exhibitions during the 1930s in Paris. She also shows how the toys and the circuits established in Lindner's paintings recall the machines that the artists of Art Brut were drawing or building. (Hägele 2003, 178) The overblown and dense visuality of Lindner's works formally pays respect to Art Brut's flatness and the way in which the levels of exchange within the motive become linked. In Lindner, too, the circuits both constitute the motif's content but also the formal composition, so that the boy appears as a part of a desiring machine's surface of inscription as much as the object of consumption. In this context it can be noted that in 1964 Dubuffet had shown his famous *Hourloupe* series (fig. 5) at the Jeanne Bucher gallery. These drawings were understood by the artist as a language outside signification. As figure and background become connected in an all-over net of lines any hierarchical or representational differences between them are levelled out. This interconnectedness was also a feature of Art Brut's endless drawings, a fact mentioned by Deleuze and Guattari. In these insides and outsides often became connected as if to suggest a flattening of all differences between states of consciousness and their bodily containers.

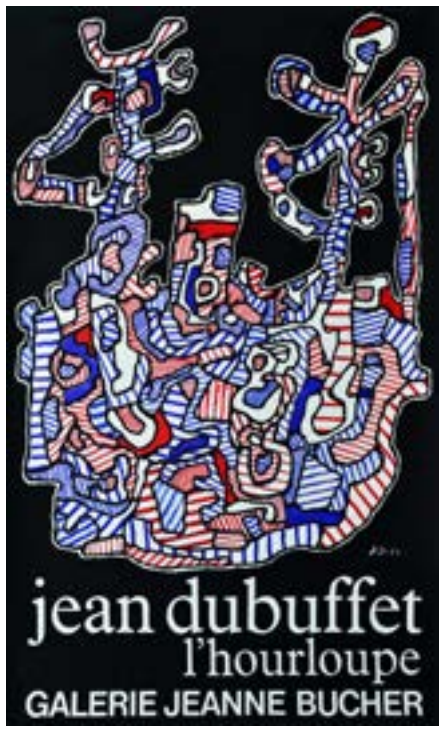

Figure 5: Poster for the exhibition Jean Dubuffet, *L'hourloupe*, Galerie Jeanne Bucher, Paris, 1964. © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2017 (Repro: Barbara Herrenkind).

Ashton also points out the 'auto-erotic' and *sui generis* character of Picabia's works as a reference point for Lindner (Ashton 1969, 40) and to the figures of Fernand Léger, which appear as if stopped in a moment. (Ashton 1969, 39) When Deleuze and Guattari view Lindner's painting as a kind of 'stopping point' in the processes of desiring machines this also corresponds to the art historical reception of Légers figures as 'frozen' (Pias 1999). Again a link can be made to

Deleuze' and Guattari's observations in *Anti-Oedipus* where they mention Léger, too, as a machinist painter: 'Léger demonstrated convincingly that the machine did not represent anything, itself least of all, because it was in itself the production of organized intensive states: neither form nor extension, neither representation nor projection, but pure and recurrent intensities.' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977, 122) Further, the remaining impression of separateness between the singular colored forms is due to Lindner's collage-like working procedure, (Hägele 2003, 168) while the pictorial flatness of Lindner's image-machine references American painting of the time.[11] Lindner's machinic atmospheres derive from a certain matter-of-factness, strategically neutral or artificial *mise-en-scènes* void of actual narratives, which contrast the surreal dream-character of his motives. A secretive atmosphere is painted in a bold manner and lit frontally, as if crossing Pop-Art or Hyperrealism with Surrealism, or even psychoanalysis, or as if wishing to re-introduce the secretive into the limelight of painterly schizoanalytic production, perhaps recalling the mechanisms of certain bachelor machines: 'laying bare' and yet always affirming those distances between the various parts in the established triangle that the schizo-image glides through. Through this net of art historical references Lindner's canvases can be seen to connect the artistic and pictorial propositions made by Dubuffet, Art Brut, Picabia and contemporary Pop Art. And Deleuze and Guattari's discussion of *Boy with a Machine* introduces these current artistic developments to the pages of *Anti-Oedipus*' machine-thinking.

"Metallic Suicide" and Raw Objects

This dissolution of representational links between objects, figures and space into a play of ambiguous surfaces and pictorial parts invigorates the way Deleuze and Guattari think about objects in *Anti-Oedipus*. They propose a concept of 'partial objects' in the context of desiring machines or circuits that differs from Melanie Klein's understanding. The American psychoanalyst had viewed them as fragments of a whole, while Deleuze and Guattari propose that partial objects are inherently linked to production and thus always in relation to evolving circuits. These partial objects constitute a transitory state within production, producing themselves or engendering production. (Deleuze and Guattari 1984, 43-4) This reflection on the status of the object, in relation to images, machines or in relation to themselves as productive parts, was extremely acute in the arts of the time – and in particular with the founding of *Nouveau Realisme* by Pierre Restany in 1960. At this time a shift from image to object was noticeable in the arts. Real objects were now replacing imaginary partial objects lending the object 'an importance it never had for Duchamp' whilst it lost all its 'symbolic significance.' (Cueff 1996,

162) Similarly, Restany suggested in '40 degrees above Dada' how contemporary artists were taking up Duchamp's readymades to lend them new positivity, in a sense re-activating them. (Restany 1968, 42) The arts newspapers *Opus International* and *Chroniques de l'Art Vivant* (fig. 6-7) dedicated issues to the status of the object in April 1969 and April 1971, and the gallery Breteau introduced the topic as the first part of three reflections in exhibition format on the status of current art, *Réhabilitation de l'objet* in November 1965, for example (fig. 8). While this reflection sprang from a discussion of Pop Art it took on increased significance in France, where objects were being dismantled, destroyed or completed anew. Objects were real things, but objects now also became landscapes of actions showing the processes by which they had been constituted – through series of conjunctions and disconnections – or as Deleuze and Guattari put it: "Dadaist-machines [...] obtain a functional ensemble, while shattering all the associations." (Deleuze and Guattari 1977, 125)

Figure 6: Roman Cieslewicz, Cover of *Opus International*, no. 10/11, April 1969. © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2017.

Figure 7: Cover of *Chroniques de l'art vivant*, no. 19, April 1971.

Figure 8: Poster for the exhibition *Réhabilitation de l'objet* at the Galerie Breteau, Paris, Nov. 1965 in the brochure of the gallery, June 1966. Fonds Galerie Breteau/IMEC © The Estate of Marcel Duchamp/ VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2017.

In the 'Balance Sheet' Deleuze and Guattari call such a 'set of really distinct parts that operate in combination as being really distinct (bound together by the absence of any tie)' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977, 125) 'desiring-machines' – and they contextualize this through the art historical shift from Surrealism to Dada. They situate the former in terms of its 'fantastic subjugation, its narcissism, and its superego' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977, 125) in an oedipal terrain:[12]

Such approximations of desiring-machines are not furnished by surrealist objects, theatrical epiphanies, or oedipal gadgets, which function only by re-introducing associations – in point of fact, Surrealism was a vast enterprise of oedipalization of the movements that preceded it. But they will be found rather in certain Dadaist machines, in the drawings of Julius Goldberg, or, more recently, in the machines of Tinguely. How does one obtain a functional ensemble, while shattering all the associations? (What is meant by "bound by the absence of any tie"?)[13] (Deleuze and Guattari 1977, 125)

Figure 9: Poster for the exhibition *Machines de Tinguely* at the Centre national d'art contemporain, Paris, 1971, showing the activation of Jean Tinguely's *Cyclograveur*, 1961 © DR – Archives du Centre Pompidou / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2017. Photo: Lennart Olson.

The Swiss artist Tinguely began constructing his machines in the beginning of the 1950s, and introduced the first of his *Méta Matics* machines in 1955. These were painting machines that questioned the role of the artist. He exhibited widely in the

1960s in Paris, his exhibition *Meta*, for example, was shown at Galerie Alexandre Iolas in 1964. The exhibition *Machines de Tinguely* at the *Centre national d'art contemporain* from May to July 1971 and its accompanying catalogue would have introduced his works to a larger public in Paris. Tinguely's early kinetic works increased in size and shifted towards a raw industrial aesthetic using debris. The *Rotozaza* consisted of a turbine-like construction for throwing balls – inserted by spectators – into the gallery space, and was first exhibited at the gallery Alexander Iolas in Paris in 1967. (fig. 9) This work proposes an intermediary object, a trajectory, into which something is introduced, then processed, expelled, and potentially taken up by the spectators again in order to be reintroduced into the machine.[14] This initiated circuit recalls Lindner's *Boy with a Machine*, and also embeds the human figure (as with Lindner's boy or the dancer in Man Ray) into the action and so into the machine-circuit-image.

The difference between this and earlier artistic machines was outlined by Eric Michaud in his 1971 article on Tinguely stating that here the machine was not a represented beautiful object detached from its former industrial context and its function in production (as in a Futurist picture, for example). (Michaud 1971, 6) Instead, Tinguely's works were precisely constituted by the machine's production and accordingly its (social) reality. Already in his 1960 *Homage to New York* Tinguely had introduced this production as a comment on objecthood within the art world, and siding with the auto-destructive art of London-based Gustav Metzger.[15] Curator Peter Selz' press announcement of Tinguely's famous machine performance at MoMA titled *A self-constructing and self-destroying work of art conceived and built by Jean Tinguely* emphasises the creative potential of the circuit:

> Jean Tinguely's experiments are works of art in which time, movement and gesture are demonstrated – not merely evoked. [...] His is a world in flux and constant self-transformation. Being very much part of his time, Tinguely uses machines to show movement, but he is fully aware that machines are no more permanent than life itself. Their time runs out, they destroy themselves. [...] Here he brings the motor into an ironic situation, which controverts its function. Rendered helpless, it no longer operates in its normal way. It destroys itself more quickly because it performs more intensely. [...] Its dynamic energy as well as its final self-destruction – are they not artistic equivalents for our own culture? He has conceived and built this sculpture and is eager to witness its loss so that we may witness its choreography. (Selz 1982, 111)

Selz' observations on the contemporaneity of Tinguely's work mirrors how Deleuze and Guattari stress its reverberations within schizo-capitalist-society:

In Tinguely, the art of real distinction is obtained by means of a kind of uncoupling used as a method of recurrence. A machine brings into play several simultaneous structures, which it pervades. The first structure includes at least one element that is not operational in relation to it, but only in relation to a second structure. It is this interplay, which Tinguely presents as being essentially joyful, that ensures the process of deterritorialization of the machine, as well as the position of the mechanic as the most deterritorialized part of the machine. The grandmother who pedals inside the automobile under the wonder-struck gaze of the child – a non-oedipal child whose eye is itself a part of the machine – does not cause the car to move forward, but, through her pedalling, activates a second structure which is sawing wood. (Deleuze and Guattari 1977, 127)

Figure 10: Cover of *Chroniques de l'art vivant*, no. 7, Jan. 1970. © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2017.

The grandmother pedalling under the eyes of a 'non-oedipal' child refers to a photograph by Lenart Olsson that was taken during a 1960 performance of the painting-machine *Cyclograveur*. The image was later used in 1970 as a poster to announce the Tinguely exhibition in Paris and also reappeared in an abstracted version (without the child) on the cover of the 1970 January issue of *Chroniques*. (fig. 10) This example might therefore serve to demonstrate the notice Deleuze and Guattari took of the art world, and of the communication of artistic events and artworks around them. The circuit between machine, actual production and the image can be understood as an operation similar to the processes in Picabia's *fille née sans mère*. Deleuze and Guattari abstract from the real event a structural relation that operates within and beyond the image as a regime of representation: The boy's *l'oeil émerveillé* inscribes him as a partial-object/figure of the machine.

What the American curator Selz calls the 'choreography' that appears after the loss of the machine-sculpture equals Picabia's internal image operation – 'the apparatus shines like a razor blade' – through and beyond the pictorial depiction. Tinguely animates the pictorial elements of his machines, constituting them as productive partial objects getting close to the skeleton of that structure which Deleuze and Guattari suggested as a machine continuously feeding its own breaks, the anti-oedipal machine. And of course, Tinguely's machines are absurd anti-machines, opposing any rationalized thought that may be orientated towards an end.[16] Tinguely himself was very outspoken about his indebtedness to Dada, understanding his own work as a continuation of their concerns. (Lütgens 2000, 90-1) The connection between creation and destruction that lies at the heart of Tinguely's works has been discussed by art historian and critic Michel Sanouillet in relation to Dada. He emphasized that Dada's inherent affirmative pole accomplished its destructive impulse. Instead of a nihilist subtext, Dada's negation had an inbuilt creative effect, linking negation with affirmation, destruction with construction:

> Tzara pulverizes the words and a poem is created; Picabia cracks a bottle of ink and a painting is born; in our days César destroys a car and out comes a sculpture. Duchamp, pointing towards the total destruction of the creative act, stops to paint and to express himself and brings a myth into existence. Nothing is destroyed, everything is transformed. (Sanouillet 1965, 428, my translation)

Sanouillet associates this oscillation with electrical circuits: 'In every activity of the human mind, the poles "positive" and "negative" are as inseperable as in an electrical circuit.' (Sanouillet 1965, 428) The Neo-Dadaists realised Dada's 'electrical circuit' with their actual machines. They lent machinic images further material significance

as image machines. Deleuze and Guattari described such an artistic and desiring activity in 1972 as machines that create their own breakdown in order to continue their production.

Notes

1. The quote in the title comes from Marcel Duchamp's statement in the catalogue to Jean Tinguely's exhibition *Homage à New York* in 1960. (Cf. Selz 1982, 111)
2. Throughout the book the oedipal is understood in terms of a (fixed) 'image' as representation further suggesting a 'fixed subject.' (E.g. Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 5, 8, 26, 244) Under the title 'Territorial Representation' Deleuze and Guattari write: 'representation is always a social and psychic repression of desiring-production.' (184)
3. For a discussion of artists' groups in Paris at the time and their future impact see Claire Bishop (2012, 77-104).
4. 'Sept manifestes Dada' of Tristan Tzara had been reedited and accompanied with drawings by Francis Picabia (Paris: Pauvert, 1967). Michel Sanouillet published several monographs during the 1960s: the reedition of the Dadaist journal *391* founded by Francis Picabia in 1917 (published between 1917-1924) in 1960; a monograph on *Picabia* (Paris: L'Œil du Temps, 1964); the fundamental monograph on the reception and activities of Dada in France: *Dada à Paris* (1965); and later *Dada Surréalisme* (Paris: Rive-Gauche, 1981) togther with Surrealist expert Patrick Waldberg and well known art critic Robert Lebel, father of Jean-Jacques Lebel who studied with Deleuze at Vincennes and collaborated with Guattari in the 'schizo events' at the psychiatric clinic La Borde and in the Paris streets during 1968.
5. Deleuze and Guattari refer to the work as *Dancer-Danger*.
6. *Peigne* was shown on the cover of *391*, no. 2, February 10, 1917. The titel *mechanomorphs* has been applied to these drawings by George Baker, but also to several paintings.
7. Baker has outlined that the source for Picabia's *sans mère* was in fact a dictionary in which *sans mère* was defined as 'without model.' (Cf. Baker 2007, 244)
8. Both Duchamp and Picabia were together with Dubuffet and also *nouveau realist* Arman, Dutch painter Asgar Jorn (who was a founding member of COBRA), and Daniel Spoerri, members of the Pataphysical Society in Paris. Based on Alfred Jarry's pataphysics that was also instructive for Deleuze' subversion of metaphysics, pataphysical exhibitions took place, for example, in Milan in 1964 in the gallery of Arturo Schwarz. A poster announcing this exhibition can be seen in *Jarry et la patafisica. Arte letteratura, spettacolo*, exh. cat., Milan: Gruppo Editoriale Fabbri, 1983, 169.
9. I would like to thank Ingrid Hägele for providing a PDF version of the document.
10. Michel Conil-Lacoste in *Le Monde*, 24.05.1963.
11. The Moma presented Lindner in *Americans 1963* together with James Rosenquist and Claes Oldenburg, while other tendencies of American painting were covered in publications of the time in Paris.
12. In the main text of *Anti-Oedipus* they take Surrealism as an example of how a formerly revolutionary attitude (with openness and flows) is 'subjugated' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 349).
13. They are referring to the American cartoonist Rube Goldberg, as can be seen in the captions of the cartoons printed in the French edition from 1972, 476.
14. The cover of the January issue of *Chroniques de l'art vivant* in 1970 showed one of Tinguely's machines. An article on the demonstration of various machines in Zurich was titled 'L'art est révolte,' in *Chroniques de l'art vivant*, no. 7, January 1970, 20-3.

15. Metzger founded his Auto-Destructive Art in 1959, the year of Jean Tinguely's *Cyclomatic Event* and conference paper 'Art, machines et mouvement, une conference de Jean Tinguely,' Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA), London.
16. The planned auto-destruction in New York did not go according to plan, instead breaking into fire. Cf. Violand-Hobi 1995, 40.

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The Buren Times

Éric Alliez with the collaboration
of Jean-Claude Bonne

At first glance, and perhaps in spite of the artist's intentions, Daniel Buren's oeuvre, considered over the full course of its development (for which 'painting' is by no means a foreign matter) could be seen as a way of pushing to its limit the break with the Painting-Form and its expression in the visible accomplished by Matisse's cut-outs. As Buren himself insists, these cut-outs, which 'already appeared like fireworks in the context of the art of his time [...] are literally explosive compared with the works of today,' works he denounces as having adopted the 'orthodoxy of systematic chromatic reduction' as if there were an 'antagonism [...] between thinking and color'. Against this new minimal-conceptual academicism of purity, Buren asserts the 'principle that color itself is thinking'. Looking back over the evolution of his work from this perspective, he emphasizes that 'this preoccupation with color was always a feature of [my] work and was already apparent from the beginning [i.e. in the mid-sixties], even though it was '"buried" under critical discourse' (Buren 1998, 176-77) – buried also, no doubt, under the intractable structural rigour demanded by the will to make an 'epistemological' break with the pictorial image of the painting, and the need for a complete deconstruction of what he calls 'the history of art (of forms)' (Buren 1974, 22, 48). So that, as he says, 'if one rediscovers any durable and indispensable criteria, they must be used not as a release from the need to imitate or to sublimate, but as a "truth" [...] which, although already "discovered", would have to be challenged and therefore created' (Buren 1999 [1969], 155 [translation modified]). A 'truth' that will swiftly be corrected by Buren, replaced in the third version of 'Mise en garde [Beware]' by '*reality*'. Which explains why the anti-formalism and anti-expressionism that lie at the origin of Buren's whole enterprise, and which might immediately associate him with Matisse, counter to the standard French reception of his work (which places him 'on the side of painting-painting' [Buren 2012, 1146]),[1] will be driven to their most quantitative limit through the principle of the repetition of alternating white and coloured 8.7cm wide vertical stripes – a device that Buren calls a 'visual tool'. The repetition of these

stripes, designed 'to divest [them] of all emotional or anecdotal import' (Buren 1999, 149), will succeed in giving an 'objectively *different* aspect' to each of their actualisations across different 'sites': as he explains, 'it is a repetition with differences [...] which make the repetition' (Buren 1999, 151).[2] The formal neutrality of the 'visual tool,' the differential *in situ* declination of its impersonality, in preventing it from being reduced to a 'pure concept,' *signals* [*fait signe*] a device that we must call *postconceptual*, in a radical displacement of the antinomy between modernism and Duchampian antimodernism. Now, this postconceptual operation on (and underneath) painting (and its context) seems to us to be a key to *Buren's work as a whole*, in terms of the at once inclusive and exclusive critique of conceptual art that it implied for him from the time of the foundational text 'Beware' (written for the October 1969 exhibition *Konzeption/conception*), of which he produced numerous versions.[3] That the question goes beyond what is normally understood as a 'rhetorical deconstruction of painting' is confirmed – via Matisse – by two works, one from 1973/4, the other from 1976, reprised in 1983.

According to Buren's own remarks in his 'Interview with Jérôme Sans,' the first work appeared in an exhibition of minimal and conceptual art at Cologne Kunstverein (*On Art: Kunst über Kunst*, April 1974). It consisted in covering the concrete beams of the gallery with long, vertical stripes of identical width (8.7cm), alternating between white and bright colours, with the two outer white stripes overpainted in white. Varying from one beam to the other, the colours 'were installed according to the alphabetical order of the colours in German' (Buren 1998, 175) – the language spoken in the place where the work was to be seen – and from left to right in relation to visitors' entrance into the space, which was thus aligned with the direction of reading. The colours *of which we speak* (in Duchampian parlance) are thus referred to the arbitrariness of the 'unsayable' colours (to speak like Buren) *that we see*, detached from their over-simple retinal effects—colours that 'overfly' the whole exhibition like 'a sort of Bastille Day party,' given the 'violent' and tasteless contrast between their bright colours and what he calls 'the *camaieu* effect (a cubist reference), ranging from white to black, of all the other pieces shown below' (Buren 1998, 175). Thus the relation to Matisse's 'fireworks' is reintroduced by the back door *via the stripe*, by bringing into view the illusionistic reifying limit of the conceptual process that would reduce the concept itself to a colourless object: 'to set an idea down in black and white leads, almost literally, towards not introducing colour' (Buren 1998, 17). Color – a readymade play with colours which are no less readymade *and which have not been chosen*[4] – thus becomes the vector of a *postconceptual 'painting'* that theoretically deconstructs the practice of painting by confronting it with the destruction of its *concept* when placed in relation to all of its constitutive 'limits': its difference from house painting, decoration, and the decorative, and its

status as transportable and exchangeable goods integrated into the free circulation of commodities.[5]

Here we should recall that Buren had already objected to this free commercial circulation in 1968–69, with the 'Certificate of Acquisition Having to Accompany Each Work in Circulation,' where he warns that it is 'undeniable that the latter [the artist, namely Buren himself] must retain control of the use of his name' and of his work; that it is forbidden to reproduce it 'or allow it to be reproduced by any means'; and that all 'public exhibition of the work' is equally prohibited. The buyer must accept this whole set of constraints, recognising that '[t]he (possible) value attributed to the work [...] will result from a compliance with the present notice by the owner of the work and is totally foreign to the work itself' (Buren 2006, 105). From which it also follows that the certificate *can in no way be substituted for the work*, a work which, moreover, '[n]o dealer, middleman or any third person has ever been or will be entitled to certify the authenticity of' (Buren 2006, 104). Here we can gauge the critical difference of Buren's project from a conceptual art which, through the linguistic dematerialisation of the object and the reduction of its visuality to a *gray matter*, had claimed to escape its commodity status and form of distribution (if not the circuit of distribution itself). (But what about the dematerialisation of money, asks Buren [Buren 2006, 98]). As he writes, the 'succession-of-simulated-ruptures' to which 'Duchamp's descendants' consign themselves in 'carrying art back [...] to a stage well antecedent to where they find it' (Buren 1973, 40 [translation modified]) shows well enough that it is not enough simply to eliminate the painting/support by way of a '*regressive censure*' (Buren 1973, 40) in order to be acquitted of the problems of the work of art crystallised in the painting – the most specific case of art as a *taking out of context* (which is the only *generic* definition of art).[6] Hence the necessity of coming back *to* painting *in order to get out* [*sortir*] *of it, pulling through* [*s'en sortant*] by virtue of what Buren calls 'a practice of art as question, involving the question itself of (the impossibility of) art' (Buren 2012, 159 n.10)[7] – a practice that has to be envisaged *theoretically*, since 'THE ONLY THEORY OR THEORETIC PRACTICE IS THE RESULT PRESENTED/THE PAINTING' (Buren 1999, 156).[8] A post-conceptual 'painting,' then, that will have begun, as Buren writes, by investing the 'positive/open pole' of 'the impetus given by Cézanne' (Buren 1973, 41) which 'attempts to neutralise the painted "touch"'; a 'mechanisation' which, through its 'emphasis on the surface in its totality' at the expense of the 'composition,' the 'picture,' and 'the support on which the "message" is inscribed i.e., a flat surface' (Buren 1973, 30), precipitates the calling into question of the 'tools of painting'. Even if color is not named as such in these 'Standpoints,' we need only register their Matissean resonance in order to put aside any modernist reframing of them, and instead to confirm their announcement of 'the possibility [...] of a *real and permanent rupture*'

– a rupture which Buren says the 'negative/regressive pole' signified by Duchamp, by the 'Duchamp myth,' 'prevents, by burning the steps and trying to accomplish a forced rupture without analysing the indispensable conditions' (Buren 1973, 40). It is Matisse's cut-outs, then, that seem to harbour the greatest promise of a widening of the 'fissure' introduced by Cézanne into the history of art; they appear as the first fruit, albeit still too 'empirical' and 'partial,' of the constant oscillation between the 'two poles symbolized by Cézanne and Duchamp' which preside over 'the history of contemporary art' (Buren 1974, 40).[9]

The second work in question was made in response to, and installed directly facing, Matisse's great gouache cut-out *La Perruche et la sirène* [*The Parrakeet and the Mermaid*] (1952), which takes pride of place in the permanent collection of the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. Buren used Matisse's cut-out *as a palette* for his on-site intervention, having decomposed it into its constituent colours and determined the frequency of their appearance. Thus reduced to pure samples (or *stoppages*), the seven colours were transcribed onto striped pieces integrated into an architectonic element peculiar to the Stedelijk: the two triangles with curved hypotenuses that frame the arched doorways and the bays of the white wall which, in turn, frame Matisse's tableaux. The colours were 'distributed symmetrically and in descending order' so that 'as in a mirror [they] respond[ed] to each other in relation to the central axis of the museum, on one side or the other of the grand staircase' (Buren 1998, 178). But since the two triangles enclosing each bay were of different colours, the device introduced a dissymmetry into the symmetry that it laid bare.[10] (Not for nothing would the work be reprised in 1983, in the same Amsterdam museum, under the title *Kaleidoscope*). Here, the way in which the museum is framed/frames itself and exhibits works—for 'the museum reassembles [...] in order to better distinguish' (Buren, 1998 162)[11] and to distinguish itself, a framing that ultimately produces 'the exhibition of an exhibition,' the artwork par excellence – is itself exhibited, exposed, and turned against the museum by the critical *de-framing* function of Buren's visual device. It is this operation he will return to, as if clinically, in an *after-Matisse* topography, when in 1983 he projects 'decoratively' onto the walls of the museum these same 'Matisse-colours,' deterritorialized into what he calls 'partial objects, polyvocal, molecular, unceasingly divided or multiplied, thus escaping hierarchy, contrary to the entire object (the painting par excellence) that implies it – and at the same time is subjected to it – in the illusion of an harmonious and finished whole' (Buren 2012, 500). In taking the decorative to the letter of the least exalted, most commonplace spatial usage, the calculated anonymity of the striped 'visual tool' denounces, by contrast, 'the aesthetic role of the Museum' as a 'single viewpoint (cultural and visual) from which works can be considered' (Buren 1973, 59), and more generally as the essentially *conservative* '*common revelator*'

(Buren 1973, 47) of every form of art, or that which the museum ratifies as art, at a point when any painting, non-painting (Matisse), or readymade object (Duchamp) can be employed as the 'decoration' of a *support* whose presence invisibly operates its 'idealist' capture of any transportable or 'transported object' and 'any discourse [...] inscribed in the site Museum' (Buren 1974, 60).

This site with no Outside, which is not solely physical (or, if so, pertains to a *social physics*) and which Buren calls 'Museum/Gallery,' must be confronted in order to 'destabilise the system of art' (Buren 2012, 797) and to expose the hidden permanence that lies beneath all of the formal changes it welcomes and celebrates. Buren's project involves a neutralisation, by means of the 'visual tool,' of a painting which, *in situ*, is only painting in relation to *something else* which signifies, as he says, 'the enlargement of the visual field [...] such that – for the first time – that which is well and truly directly questioned, is all of painting itself – nothing less – as a reduction of art' (Buren 2012, 798). The quite apparent direct relation to Matisse, and in particular to certain of his cut-outs, which can now also be seen to participate in an absolute 'reduction' of painting (and in an *expansion* that no longer lies within the jurisdiction of the latter) is doubled by a non-relation pertaining to the *study of the context*, as opposed to the environment – a non-relation opened up by the *concept* of the 'non-autonomy of the artwork' and by the way in which Buren deconstructs the system of art by turning it into a '*political critique* of [its] milieu' (Buren 2012, 1277). It is here that we discover the knotting-point of the *in situ* works (documented by his 'photos-souvenirs') and the writings that allow us to 'discern the field in which the painted work [...] gets inscribed' (Buren 1974, 7) and *from which it speaks* – to the detriment of any *in-itself* of the work.

This will have been the primary function of the 'visual tool': to reduce the form of the in-itself of painting to the most neutral and impersonal *déjà vu*, as it is cut back to alternating vertical bands (to accentuate the visuality of the 'tool')[12] whose two edges have long been covered with white matte paint so as to distinguish the striped canvas fabric bought at the Saint-Pierre Market or the industrially produced paper from a readymade ('unaided,' *already made*). If there is a specific aim here, it is to associate the critique of the readymade with the VISUALITY[13] of this *reduction of painting to its degree zero and to the degree zero of the author-form of the artist*. The artist is referred back to his 'ideological status,' to which is opposed, on the didactic plane of a 'common ground' involving both the impersonal universality of the striped fabric and a 'collective sensibility' bearing the hallmark of May '68, the '*made by whoever* [*n'importe qui*]' – instead of the *whatever* [*n'importe quoi*] left to the choice/non-choice of the artist. As Buren will state, the artist 'IS NO LONGER THE OWNER OF HIS WORK. Furthermore, it is not HIS work, but A work' (Buren 1999, 153). Thus, to the Duchampian question 'how (not) to make a work that

would not be of art?,' the response now becomes: *by making VISIBLE a non-work that would be only a means, a 'working tool' that extends the field of the question of art to include the conditions of ontologico-political reality of its most pragmatic 'placing in situation' and 'on view'*. The critique of the Museum/Gallery system, whose visibility as 'the great new tableau/support,' as Buren must 'recognise,' we owe to Duchamp and to his urinal become museum artwork ('thanks to Duchamp, let us recognize,' he writes [Buren 1974, 38]) – therefore goes hand-in-hand with a complementary critique of 'the function of the studio,' the studio as 'a *stationary* place where *portable* objects are produced' that is 'also a boutique where we find ready-to-wear art [that is] manipulable if possible, by whoever'. This critique of the studio loops back to the museum/gallery where works come to be *installed* and then *exhibited* ('In fact, isn't what is installed close to being established?,' he asks); and with its 'extinction' the promoters-heirs of the Duchamp Myth are also swept away.[14] Now, if all of Buren's work 'proceeds' from the extinction of the studio,[15] and from the abolition of the illusory caesura between the 'real world' of the site/the closed frame of the world-of-the-artist and the art-world ('paradoxically even more enclosing' [Buren 2012, 189 (translation modified)]), it is because the non-work is *really* engendered as such by definitively projecting the reference to the insignificant recognizable sign (the object-stripes regarded as *bringing to the fore* the reduction of painting to its degree = 0) toward that 'thing other than itself' which it gives to be seen and which is its *placeholder*, its *lieu-tenant*. The 'sign-tool' does not merely render visible the site within which it is deployed (*site specificity*) and/or produce a critique of it (*institutional critique*); it renders it *opaque*: for the basis of this 'sign-tool' is the passage from insignificance (that of the object-sign) to the asignifiance of the sign voided of its last remaining signification = *the 0 of painting* by a visual matter that is sufficiently detached from the latter to present, to whoever wants to see them, *all of the circumstances* involved in its placing-on-view. We can easily anticipate how, in this passage from one sign to the other, the dialectic, *placed* between the visual tool and its *situation*, which becomes accidental in relation to the site (in all its component parts) will grasp the accident, pragmatically considered, as the very 'proposition' of the *in situ*, and will be animated by a diagrammatic tension producing effects that will overflow the edges of the 'colours' of the reprised project, promptly rendering it more *unpredictable* in clinical terms – and less immediately *legible* from a critical perspective.

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Buren's first and most significant intervention in a museum, *Peinture/Sculpture* (*Painting/Sculpture*), was devised in 1971 for the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York. This project for the Sixth Guggenheim International Exhibition, duly accepted by the museum, consisted in suspending from the glass cupola, down

through the entire height of the great central space which lends its both plastic and spatial determination to Frank Lloyd Wright's singular building, a twenty-metre-high, ten-metre-wide double-sided piece of fabric, visible recto/verso, striped blue and white, with the two outermost stripes covered with acrylic paint of the same color. This intervention sought to manifest, on the scale of the museum itself, the metacritical stakes involved in Buren's work, as the visual tool, exercising its most immediately critical function, opened up the possibility of a 'new stage of potential constructive efficacy' (Buchloh 1992, 70) with the most *clinical* consequences (a *clinic of the site*), consequences that can only be drawn by an art capable of sensibly and conceptually measuring up to the architecture of the exhibition site without being captured by it. The visual tool-canvas was cut to measure so as to take *across* and *abeam* the great helical ramp around which the building unfolds, 'animated by a centripetal force that always leads he who descends or ascends back to the centre' (Buren 1998, 97). The power-structure of this central void – which is none other than that of the museum-institution, so dynamically and spectacularly inscribed in the architecture of the Guggenheim – is dialectically unveiled as it is *cut off* from its function of exhibiting works – an operation that effectively dismantles the dispositif that '"glues" [works] to the periphery' (Buren 1998, 98) of the internal spiral space 'unfold[ing] simultaneously before our eyes/under our feet' (Buren 2012, 198) at the behest of a movement that encompasses art history and its conception of the development of forms. But in the street adjacent to the museum, a similar piece of fabric, 1.5 metres high and 10 metres wide, was to be stretched between two buildings and *oriented perpendicularly* to the first piece: a double *coupaison* (to use Duchamp's word) into Inside and Inside/Outside. 'Was to be,' because in fact hardly had this first piece been put up than it was taken down again under pressure from 'some participating artists led by Dan Flavin,' who had 'threatened to withdraw their works from the exhibition a day before the opening' (see Buren 2012, 195). It must be said that the title of the interior 'proposition,'[16] *Painting/Sculpture*, with its at once classical and paradoxical resonance, confirmed the intentional affront to the minimalist *and* conceptual works presented in the same exhibition – an exhibition populated largely by 'artists who, considering the museum purely as a repository, had bent to its orders' (Lelong 2001, 42). For what is Minimalism in its *conceptual* trajectory if not the transubstantiation of painting, brought to the point of no return of 'objectal' self-referentiality by Frank Stella, into a phenomenally sculptural object (an object/relief situated in space) which is introduced by explaining that it is *neither painting nor sculpture*, but a *specific object*,[17] only for it to end up being *sublimated* in the generic category of art which recuperates solely for its own ends, in the mode of an 'analytical proposition,' an in-principle self-referentiality converted into conceptual art's art of the concept. Thus Joseph Kosuth's famous formula: 'All

art (after Duchamp) is conceptual (in nature) because art exists only conceptually' (Kosuth 1991, 18), or Donald Judd's 'If someone calls it art, it's art' (Judd 1991, 18), repeatedly cited in Kosuth's manifesto-text 'Art after Philosophy,' published in 1969 (Kosuth 1991, 15).[18] Similarly, Ad Reinhardt, invoked for his variation on the theme, 'Art is art-as-art and everything else is everything else' (Kosuth 1991, 15), may – this time with Buren's ironic assent – give us a first key (to the devastating consequences) for conceptual art by producing its museal consequence: 'The one place for art-as-art is the museum of fine art [...]. A museum is a treasure house and a tomb, not a counting-house or amusement center. [...] Any disturbance of a true museum's soundlessness, timelessness, airlessness, and lifelessness is a disrespect' (Reinhardt 1991, 54). And indeed, as Kosuth continues, if 'works of art are analytical propositions,' it is indeed because there is nowhere to go where one might 'get out of the context of art for verification': 'Art indeed exists for its own sake' (Kosuth 1991, 21, 24). This *a priori* proof could not be more decisive for Buren's stance in regard to a conceptual art which, in Kosuth's words once more, maintains that 'a work of art is a sort of *proposition* presented in the context of art as a commentary on art' (Kosuth 1991, 19-20) and through which art inscribes the 'linguistic character' of its in-itself. By subtracting the notion of *proposition* from the dematerialised logic of the concept, and by interrogating the 'context of art' using a visual tool of minimally geometric nature that invests the physico-social architecture of the museum, Buren arrives at a performative counter-effectuation of this 'proof' so total that it cannot but appear as what it is: *making a postconceptual child behind the back of Minimalism*! The confrontation with Dan Flavin and Donald Judd was all the more inevitable in that the latter numbered among those artists who had responded the most favourably with their works to the request of the exhibition's commissioner: 'To take the spectacular space of the museum as a starting point for their own *conception*'.[19] The exhibition having been openly placed under the sign of the New York minimalist avant-garde, they would have no difficulty in persuading the museum, which had every interest in agreeing, to take down Buren's 'canvas,' and this despite the petition organised by Buren, which only five artists (Kosuth among them) refused to sign. Proof, were it needed, that 'in the artistic field, the system is the artist' (Buren 2012, 196) *that makes the Museum stand up on its own*. Buren could thus rightly insist in the heat of the moment that the taking-down of his work 'was part of the piece,'[20] only confirming its status as 'an accident in relation to the site where it is presented' (Buren 2012, 197) and which it re-presents in all its modalities, artistic production included.

The first characteristic of *Painting/Sculpture* in its virtual-real *in situ* is that, in gluing itself onto the site, it captures the attention that accrues to the site itself. The suspended canvas functions like a surface of continual revolution around the

infra-thin of whose 'sculptural' profile the plane of 'painting' pivots, in a *Painting/Sculpture* produced by the wandering of the visitor as he follows the generative curve of the internal volume of the museum. The work *describes and mimics* the functioning of the museum by relating it to the *objective universality* of its device of 'forced' education. Thus invested and revisited, the sculptural aspect of the Guggenheim Museum's architecture makes it quite evident that the supposed neutrality of the White Cube was a purely 'ideological' denial fostered by artists so that they could exhibit their works out of context. And by integrating this architecture into its proposition, Buren's canvas denounces the auto-exhibition of the power of the museum – and those who lend themselves to it as 'guard dogs of the avant-gardist tradition of mystificatory art' (Buren 2012, 201) – at the very moment when, materialising the most significant void of this power, it 'fills it up' without 'filling it,' and *asignificates* it, in the same blow posing diagrammatically, beyond the critical veiling-unveiling of the site, the clinical question of a *décor/decorum* by exceeding all institutional coordinates, in a somewhat nonstandard *Aufhebung*. As Benjamin Buchloh rightly says,

> the sheer beauty of the appearance of this giant piece of fabric could hardly be conceived without the theoretical analysis that underlay it. Without the dialectical rigour of Buren's thinking on the historical foundations of the museum, it would have been simply unimaginable to see such a formal and delicate beauty (Buchloh 1992, 74).

And yet it would be oversimplifying things to believe that the dialectical critique can or should afford protection from the aesthetic, an aesthetic whose subjective object it declares categorically void, and which it practically manipulates for the sake of détournement. This would be to further sanction a divorce between practice and theory that Buren, as a sophisticated Althusserian, has always avoided. Aesthetics must not be its own object-subject, but must apprehend itself as the most (ontologically) problematic sensible condition of a pragmatic apprehension of the site/non-site—which brings us back to the question of the decorative, in a kaleidoscopic dérive of the 'visual sign' that renews the terms of both one and the other.

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Buren's new intervention in the Guggenheim Museum in 2005 consisted principally in raising the plane of the cut of *Painting/Sculpture* to a cubic power – making it into a *Peinture/Sculpture/Architecture* (*Painting/Sculpture/Architecture*) that gave new impetus to the question of the relations between these three terms – and this on a monumental scale. Buren's cube, monumentally raising the power of the site to its own degree of force, penetrates into it like a street corner, with a high angular

wall covered with mirrors entitled *Around the Corner*. Its edge coincides critically with the axis of the spiral that defines *The Eye of the Storm* – the general title of the intervention throughout the whole museum. The tower of mirrors opposes itself to the museum's auto-exhibition, which it dismantles by ensnaring the circularity of the spiral in reflections that shatter and multiply it into fragmentary, unstable images, yet hold them virtually together in the perpetual, unpredictable reassembly of a grandiose catastrophe held just this side of complete breakdown. Its 'spectacular' character (Buren never uses the word unreservedly) is coextensive with the *critical proposition*, itself rendered *co-intensive* with the architectural heart of the building. An intensive *and at all points critical* beauty – which therefore, in context, demands to be interrogated, even though the spectator can do little more than move blindly, caught up in the proliferation of reflections, in a becoming where he must accept the loss of any mastery over the shifting mirror-images. Swept up in the optical play of a simulacra of the museum, or of the museum's simulacra, the spectator's eye loses sight of the site-refuge, and turns in on itself to take the measure of an excessive site beyond measure whose transformative forces mobilise its perpetual critical and clinical reserve, in a double deterritorialization where each function relaunches the other, in a process without end.

Before exploring this proposition further, let us note that it takes as given the displacement of the 'critical limits' of the museum between 1971 and 2005. For it is perhaps also the change in the angle of attack that opens up new clinical perspectives to this *enterprise* which holds the museum in its clutches. Buren considers that, during this period, the proliferation of contemporary art museums – 'a kind of technical revolution'[21] – has considerably weakened the aesthetic authority of museums, and should encourage artists to profit from the (solely 'technical') liberation of the conditions of the exhibition that this entails. Not so as to install themselves there as animators of the *artistic tendency* of a (so-called) 'immaterial' capitalism which seeks only to augment the digestive power of the new museal industry, but, on the contrary, so as to counter-effectuate the museal site's perfect adaptation to a society of consumption that has broken the 'mirror of production' and learned the superior dialectical game of the society of the spectacle. This 'revolution' places artists before 'a new territory' that extends to include the whole museum *and which, reciprocally,* since Minimalism and the redefinition of the museum space that it stimulated, has seen the museum extend into all the new territories of contemporary art. Whence the extreme difficulty (along with the attendant risk) of intervening in a museum such as the Guggenheim, whose architecture, in advance of the new cultural economy of world-cities but lagging behind the new spaces invested/reaffected by museums, is among the most spectacular.

The principal device of *The Eye of the Storm* is a cube half of which physically intersects the interior, the other half the exterior (virtually – it was not executed for reasons of security). If the interior architecture, by virtue of the mirror, enters into a becoming-decorative *of itself*, this brutally contrasts, *just around the corner*, with the '*ordinary scaffolding*,'[22] extraordinarily blind in this context, against which the reflecting wall leans. As soon as they enter, visitors find themselves confronted by the vertiginous skeleton of its metal poles spanning the full height of the spiral ramps, and by a blind wall of planks resting on the scaffolding. This barrier prohibits any direct view of the museum, while simultaneously overturning its 'civilising' idea. On the other side of the scaffolding, the décor is just as invasive, but this time as a surface-support offering itself to the spectator's gaze. The immense angular wall covered in mirrors operates an anamorphosis of the entire internal volume of the museum, penetrating to the very heart of it, redeploying it by shifting it, fold by fold, through its entire height. The dislocation of the ramps, as if hit by an earthquake, dramatizes the instability of the building; an effect emphasised even more by the punctuation of a narrow band of fluorescent green stripes applied to the flank of the parapet. This avatar of the 'visual tool' functions as a *critical revelator* of the architecture, strategically marking its lines of force with a decorative effect that deconstructs its economy. The unity of the defocalised building is totally virtualized; it becomes impossible to connect one 'view' to another, except by way of this virtuality that makes the spiral continuously implode into itself. Walking around is no longer a continuous architectural journey; the visitor is beset by dislocations and sudden collapses, with dark passages cut through by the scaffolding which brutally breaks down, stage by stage, the other side of the décor and external reality, with unexpected connections where one no longer knows whether one is seeing the building or its internal/external reflection. Buren exploits the spectacular monumentality of the building in a re-architecturing of the façade the aesthetic of which is only an effect *adopted from the building itself and delivered back to it or against it, turned into an optical play of broken appearances, subtracting it, via saturation, from its museal essentiality*. At this stage, a certain aestheticism may indeed become evident: that of the quasi-theatrical placing into representation of the transcendence of the mirage, freeing architecture from its corporeality by upsetting the aesthetic positivism of its spatial and discursive structure, as played out in the museum by the channelling of the visitor-spectator's trajectory.

The immense spiralling volume of the Guggenheim is capped by a glass dome of purified modernist geometry, which posed a delicate problem for Buren. The chosen formula, whose name resonates like a cathedral motif – *The Rose Window* – is a wheel of staggered magenta rectangles which casts only patches of color (complementary with the green punctuation of the railing). The chosen device,

although its geometrism plays on a certain postmodernism, renders the museum and its supposed function of exhibition *uneven* by *colouring* the neutral, zenithal light destined not so much for the works (which are lit by electric lights) as for the architecture, which it 'illuminates' with its ideality. After much hesitation, Buren decided to accept the aesthetic effect, given the anti-purist benefit it afforded him;[23] and in this way a decisive blow was delivered to the modern and/or contemporary museum-of-art through its dialectical transfiguration into a decorative-site, a *space rendered over to the public*.

Although there are no longer any paintings shown in *and to* the *spiral of the museum*, the vacant picture-rails reveal well enough how they have been stripped by the cyclone. But 'paintings' are shown in one room, the 'High Gallery,' which Wright reserved for exceptional works. There Buren erected, from floor to ceiling, a *Wall of paintings*, the name given to an assemblage of twenty of his striped canvases of different colours (six, plus white) of highly variable dimensions and dating from 1966 to 1977.[24] This arrangement evokes, in Buren's words, that of the 'tableaux' of museums and salons of ages past (up until the twentieth century), where the close hanging of paintings made them into 'the "décor" of a wall [...] of a place for which they were never thought nor conceived. These works thus became decorative in the most pejorative sense of the term.'[25] But how can Buren overturn this state of affairs by mimicking it? And why would he use these 'historical' canvases whose stripes have become his 'signature' to make a decorative wall 'of paintings,' when this was not their original proposition?[26] It is a matter of his extracting something *new* from the original postconceptual process, revisiting, in a dialectical process broadened and intensified in difference and repetition, all of its properties (anonymity, a-signifiance, non-compositional aspect, flatness...), projecting them onto the two outermost white stripes covered in acrylic paint of the same color which at once affirm 'painting' by measuring themselves against it, and clinically illimit its 'critical limits' in a series of non-specific paintings exceeded by the virtual-real expansion of non-tableaux. Thus arranged in a movement which is not that of an ensemble but that of a multiplicity of relations, the stripes(-signatures) of each painting are placed in variation in relation to the *series* of the other paintings' stripes. Far from producing effects of syntheses between heterogeneous elements, the differences of and between each painting (format, color, spacing) are *mobilised* by their cuts, now become aleatory, so that they repetitively *lack in their place*, and are placed in relation to the aleatory cuts of the *wall of paintings which affirms itself, as such, in this dis-placement of each one in relation to all the others*. This unprecedented serialisation thus confirms the new decorative force of the 'visual tool'. As for the critical function of these 'paintings,' far from disappearing, it is now taken over by their *decorative assemblage*, which 'takes possession of the space' (according to a Matis-

sean expression [Matisse 1972, 138]) of the museum, replacing the function of the exhibition of 'tableaux' for which it was conceived.

The Eye of the Storm also utilises the coloured and strongly rhythmic decorative friezes made of *a-specific* geometrical figures and thus more directly amenable to being extended to the peripheral surfaces and available volumes in the Thannhauser Galleries. Vertical mirrors, 8.7cm-wide, cut out mobile fragments of one of the friezes as a function of the movement of the visitors and the external light, which, coloured by the screens, randomly projects, stretches, and displaces the colours-forms across the floor, walls, and ceiling. The multiplicative decorative investment of the galleries qua space of passage – of visitors, of light, of motifs in constant metamorphosis, not forgetting the transversal views afforded by the architecture or those which, at night, can be seen from the street (see Cross, 1A4) – functions like a complex kaleidoscopic machine with quasi-hallucinatory psychedelic effects. In these galleries, all of the coloured forms taking hold of and doing battle with the architecture are projected into a becoming-virtual of the moving spectator's field of vision that is all the more inclusive and expansive in that they simultaneously echo and reassemble many elements of other décors (stripes, mobile reflections, coloured glass...). *Thus the mystical body of the Museum is revealed, in a total work of art* that subverts its role in the aesthetic sacralisation of art and of the artist. Counter-effectuating the increasingly sophisticated positivism of the museal spectacle, Buren's various decorative propositions can only be apprehended by way of the assemblages and crossovers produced *in sitibus* by the visitor-spectator, in a plural variation of diagrammatism that develops transversally to the contrasting optical totality of *The Eye of the Storm*.

Although not entirely foreign to the very principle of the 'visual tool,' this new *transversality* will become determinative at all points for the 'proposition' – and for the evaluation of Buren's evolution *or involution* (the supposedly regressive character of the new work). Failing to take into account the *proposition of transversality*, in the reading of certain critics the 'decorative' will be cut from all strategic function vis-à-vis an aesthetic which it would supposedly legitimate by synchronising it with the culture industry. So, does Buren's 'decorative turn' participate actively in the laboratory of that new smooth and fluid capitalism that the new museums have become, with the fusing of content and container? Let us observe first of all that ultimately our appreciation of a work as singular as *The Eye of the Storm*, with the relation it implies to the 1971 intervention *so as to deliberately complicate it* (given a purely 'critical' reading of the historical piece *and of Buren*) poses this question and depends precisely upon it. In fact, to formulate this question against Buren would imply a singular blindness on the part of he who socially interrogates the museal support through a critical stripping-bare of the Painting/Architecture re-

lation. A singular blindness indeed, given that Buren, who ceaselessly problematized the question of the decorative through the *in situ* deployment of his visual tool as a part of the critique-in-act that he prosecuted against the autonomy of the art object; and who, as an attentive spectator of the use of critique by the institution, invested the decorative all the more *clinically* and *environmentally in parallel with that museal revolution* ('as important as the invention of oil painting' [Buren 2005]) that necessitates the displacement of critique, 'its object being itself transformed' (Buren 1998, 117), by implicating within it as never before the contribution made by the visitor. Not only is the opticality of the architecture of the museum and of the visual work that invests it and subverts it made metamorphically dependent upon the body-in-movement that critically discovers all the operations to which it is subject, while already adding new operations of which it is the most physical agent, to the detriment of the *authorial intentions* of the artist (*Painting/Sculpture* vs *neither-painting-nor-sculpture*); since Buren refuses to define in advance 'where the points of view are [...] such as in a canvas or a sculpture,' and multiplies them, favouring the emergence of a 'multiple view' on which one might have been able to inflict a 'divergent'[27] or 'explosive'[28] 'squint' (Buren 1998, 105), it is *opticality as such that is deterritorialized, in a 'project'* which is ultimately not so much a matter of the broadening of vision as one of the environmental intensification of the effects of the transversality of a thinking set in motion by the movement of the visitor in the space. Stimulated by the visual confusion of the exhibition space and the exhibition of space, our walk around the Guggenheim becomes the animating principle of a baroque theatre whose visitor becomes the actor, pursuing a trajectory in which he can neither lose himself nor lose sight of the spectacle of the world in the mirror of the museum, all the effects of which, consequently, are *détourned* – beginning with the scaffolding, which materialises the other side of the décor of the idealisation of art out of context, with no outside. The décor becomes the decorum of a fragmented real whose reflections pass through the troubled disorganisation of our perception, which in turn no longer recognises the scission between interior and exterior proper to the museum-cathedral.

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And yet do we not touch here on the *in situ* limit of the demonstration at the Guggenheim Museum of New York, which remains the flagship project of a time which is certainly not that of the revolution of proliferating museums and of the commercialisation of artworks as portable goods? The Centre Pompidou is the most contemporary pilot of this institutional and 'technical' revolution, with its avowed intention to 'rethink the notion of the museum' by opening it up 'to everyday life,' to that 'sensibility [...] that appeared in the full light of day in May 1968,' and which goes hand-in-hand with the renunciation of the 'architectural gesture,'[29] but which

nonetheless proposes to 'endow Paris with an architectural and urban ensemble which brands our epoch'?[30] This building, designed by Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers and conceived 'so as to evolve according to needs,' with its vast platforms allowing for a maximal flexibility of internal spaces,[31] Buren will be able to invest it all the more decisively in so far as 'his work is absolutely contemporaneous with the Project of the Centre both regarding its maturation and conceptual elaboration' (Blistène 2010, 18). The result will be *Le Musée qui n'existait pas* (*The Museum Which Does Not Exist*, 2002) where, as part of a retrospective at the Musée national d'art moderne, Buren imposes 'an unprecedented spatial and temporal paradigm' (Blistène 2010, 11) upon the entirety of the recently remodelled (1997-2000) Centre. The museal scenario will not, as at the Guggenheim, be that of the baroque theatralisation of art in the face of the commodity; but that of the progressive functional redistribution of art into the avant-garde of a hypercommodity within the total signaletic universe in which contemporary art actively participates by feeding, from the inside, the integrated/integrating circuit of the financialisation of the socius.... It is therefore the subordination of the museum to the social space of the Centre that will be interrogated, right from the entry hall of the building, through the détournement or occultation of all of the *signaletics of the museum*, upon which Buren imposes and superposes large white frames bordered by the 'visual tool,' this time in the form of pink-red and white (emergency?) stripes. The urgency of '*signing towards*' (according to the title given to this part of the work: *Faire signe*) *to the commodities-signs of cultural consumption* – and of the 'society of consumption' tout court[32] – *in order to drive them to the point of asignifiance* by simultaneously plunging the signaletic orientation of the public, the indexing of the museum in the Centre, and the museal protocol of the exhibition, into a *mise en abyme*. At this level – that of the hall of the foyer – the visitor's disorientation becomes all the greater when she notices that the lower level has been transformed into a parking lot, with white continuous and discontinuous lines on the floor marking out spots occupied by brand new Renaults. But the visitor finds herself confronted by another type of *grid*, infinitely more complex because of the real abstraction that it mobilises, in Gallery 2 of level 6 of the Pompidou – the space initially assigned for the exhibition – where Buren, in what was also a social boardgame [*jeu de société*], played with something that was not merely the scenographic idea of a temporary exhibition, but the diagrammatic principle of a project whose 'machinic' force would extend, *in situ* and *in vivo*, to the entirety of the recently remodelled surface of level 6, including the adjoining library space and the restaurant, the terraces, and the external structures of the Centre.

The new layout of the temporary exhibition space obeys a model of rigidly linear formatting which contradicts the notion of the 'plateau,' with the building of an im-

mense barrier-rail that makes the exhibition surface into a sanctuary, following the convention of the pictorial model. So that upon the striation of an already 'mobile' space Buren *superposes a systematic gridding of the entire exhibition surface*. Indexing the throughway corridor which abuts the longest barrier-rail of the Centre, he *exposes/exhibits the whole space* to its division/construction into identical squares (seventy-one boxes or *blocks*) of thirty square meters each, whose adjoining corners were left open in order to transform them into 'zones of passage and circulation' in a labyrinth whose coloured lines of flight and infinitely multiple connections were in continuous variation. On this twofold condition of a *gridding obliquely open to the displacements of a body perpetually deported from the spaces that it traverses*, Buren was able to cross over the wall of the retrospective exhibition (the trap that had been set for him in the site of his own contemporaneity), reversing it into a critical and clinical *introspective* of the (most reactionarily contemporary) functioning of the Centre Pompidou's exhibition space. A critique of the involution of its architecture, and a clinical study of the possibilities of its initial structure, which can only be rebooted in the present by precipitating it into a *rhizome-procedure* that alone would be able to extract a new smooth space from the current conditions of the striated space – 'not without a correlation between the two, a recapitulation of one in the other, a furtherance of one through the other. Yet the complex difference persists' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 526).

The visitor passes from module to singular module, each without any autonomous identity; the perspectival connections established and broken down as one walks through them create ever new openings onto the most arbitrary chromatic variations. So that difference can and must become, at Beaubourg, the result of the *dérive* of a visitor projected into a *critically constructed situation* and projecting themselves into a *construction of clinical situations* that implies the return of the 'situationist game' in a space and a time mobilised by the Monument of the Contemporary – and by everything that might be summed up as *The Beaubourg Effect*. Buren thus revisits situationism as the first and last truth of the *in situ*, by way of 'the construction of situations, that is to say, the concrete construction of momentary ambiences of life and their transformation into a superior passional quality' as the finality of '[i]ntegral art, which has been talked about so much [...] at the level of urbanism,' but which 'can no longer correspond to any of the traditional aesthetic categories' (Debord 2006, 27). The categories of an aesthetic to which Buren can oppose – along with Debord, who would also eventually détourn his initial Althusserianism towards 'the material décor of life' – 'a noncontinuous conception of life' calling for 'the *derive*: the practice of a passional journey out of the ordinary through a rapid changing of ambiences' (Debord 2006, 25, 27). Namely, the dérive of the visitor, engaged, without any overall plan, in a becoming-multiple of the space such that

he cannot but lose himself in it *non-stop* (with no contemplation possible), in so far as each module is an architectonic modulation that is absolutely singular but is *exploded/exposed/imposed/imploded* by all of its prismatic openings, which relaunch in so many fragmented lines of flight the kaleidoscope and the seventy-one cases of its starred trajectory. Thus in the room of *Toit transparent rouge* [*Transparent Red Roof*] (room 27), infused with coloured light, a row of black boxes like dentils serve at once as decorative frieze and as delimitation between the awning and the high walls, whereas elsewhere, on the contrary, a striped surface together with mirrors makes the floor fly to infinity (*Le plancher à l'infini* [*The Floor to Infinity*]) (room 55). An extraordinary versatility induces the disappearance of the visual tool into a 'decorative' which is the 'historical' name of the repressed which returns as Buren incorporates into it the indistinction of container and content, which he extends and intensifies as never before so as to invalidate the model of the 'retrospective exhibition' at the Beaubourg. The Musée national d'art moderne which is installed here will be transformed into a *Museum that did not exist*, whose works have themselves disappeared, and whose rhizomatic construction of rooms *interferes with the external structure of the building* in the form of the scaffolding of *L'Île flottante* [*Floating Island*] (room 7), upon which a part of the device rests, culminating above the void, visible only from outside.

It cannot be denied that here (and, in truth, throughout the exhibition) we have a consummate art of the spectacle whose distance from the 'construction of situations' can immediately be gauged. Situationism 'begins beyond the ruins of the modern spectacle' and its alienating principle of 'nonintervention,' so that to escape it, it would suffice to 'draw [spectators] into activity by provoking their capacities to revolutionize their own lives [...] while [the part] played by those who cannot be called actors, but rather, in a new sense of the term, "those who live [*viveurs*]," must steadily increase' (Debord 2006, 29 [translation modified]). Far from opposing to the spectacle of 'preserved art [...] the organisation of the directly lived moment' leading to 'total participation' (Anonymous 1960), here we must insist, along with Buren, on the necessity of a critical reactivation of situationism on the basis of the question of the *détournement of the spectacle of the museum*. For as the spectacle, spectacle-culture, the cultural spectacle, enters the Museum, art participates so actively in the extension of the becoming-commodity of the world that the very idea of a 'participation' subtended by a 'lived time' that would be phenomenologically foreign to it is undone, and one must definitively reconcile oneself to *being lost* amid the stage machinery of an Ice Palace with cut-out planes which *dérives* the museification of the spectacle as ultimate stage of the everyday commoditisation of our existence. Without renouncing all possibility of intervention in the city, this effectively contradicts any 'outside' that would not be a moving gameboard that acts

as critique and clinic of the autonomy of the site (and) of art in the 'construction of situations' and the bodies that move within them.

Translated by Claudia Mongini and Stephen Zepke. Revised by Robin Mackay.

Notes

1. To the French reception, Buren opposed 'foreigners [who], on the contrary, see in Matisse's work elements revealing an idea, *a thought*' (italics added). We might also add that our work *La Pensée-Matisse* (Alliez and Bonne 2004) constitutes another exception proving this 'rule'.
2. The convergence with Deleuzian thought as expressed in *Difference and Repetition*, published in 1968, is evident.
3. 'The very intelligent question [...] of so-called conceptual art [...] concerns the re-questioning of the object [but] I think that this procedure of re-questioning should be done by means of the object and certainly not through its disappearance' (Buren 2012, 1734).
4. 'Daniel Buren Takes His Colours Without Choosing' was the title of the first published article on Buren's work. Written in 1965 by Sarane Alexandrian, it placed Buren's work *Les Écrits* (Buren 2012, 15-16) under the sign of the arbitrary, and of an exclusion of taste allowing for the most 'objective' possible use of colours without eliminating their relations to one other.
5. Observe, even in relation to this latter point, the *exceptional* status of Matisse's large paper cut-outs.
6. Buren writes: 'all works of art are basically nothing but skilfulness, the talent to take a thing – the word "thing" used here in the widest sense—out of its original context. That is to expose/exhibit it.' (Buren 1974, 35) [Translator's note]
7. This note is not included in the English translation. [Translator's note]
8. Or, according to Althusser's definition: 'Theory: a specific form of practice' (Buren 1999, 156).
9. In this passage Buren mentions Matisse along with Mondrian, Pollock, Newman, Stella..., i.e. those who were able to prise open further the Cezannian 'fissure'. For our part in *Défaire l'image. De l'art contemporain* (the book from which the present text is excerpted) we have produced an archaeology of contemporary art by departing from the duo Matisse/Duchamp.
10. 'Dissymmetry' is a rupture of symmetry, and should not be confused with 'asymmetry,' indicating its absence. *La Siréne et la perruche* is an open and profoundly dissymmetrical construction.
11. The notion of the 'exhibition of the exhibition as artwork' had been fully formulated by Buren by 1972 (see 'Exposition d'une Exposition' [Buren 2012, 257]).
12. 'A horizontal line upon a vertical wall,' Buren explains, 'is already a discourse' (Buren 2012, 1503).
13. Buren writes the word in capitals in his texts from the end of the 60s and the beginning of the 70s.
14. Daniel Buren, 'Function of the Studio,' in Buren 2012 [1971].
15. These are Buren's last words regarding the 'function of the studio': 'All my work proceeds from its extinction' (Buren 2012, 194). From the abolition of the studio follows 'ninety-nine times out of a hundred' the destruction of the *in situ* work. (Buren 2012, 1483).
16. 'The proposition is the whole (the arrangement/position of the working tool in relation to the specific space that is utilised)' (Buren 2012, 741).
17. In relation to its environment *or not*, as with any manufactured object—and as such 'closer to painting'. See Judd 2002 [1965].
18. This 'someone' must be the artist, in so far as only 'the intention of the artist' counts, as Kosuth points out (Kosuth 1991, 23). As he claims, his work is '[n]either painting nor sculpture,' but, in the end, is *mainly not sculpture*: 'Everything sculpture has, my work doesn't' (Kosuth 1991, 18).
19. According to Diane Waldman's 'proposition,' as reported by Grace Glueck in his *New York Times* article following the *preview* of the exhibition, reprinted as 'Guggenheim International 1971,' in

Buren 2005a, 1B-5. The term '*conceptions*' was supposed to echo the intent of the exhibition itself, summarised a few lines earlier as: 'the exhibition bravely proceeds on the assumption that the notion of art as a finite object has been displaced by that of *art as idea or concept*' (italics added).

20. In *Art News*, March 1971, passage reproduced in Buren 2005a, 1B-3.
21. On this and the following point, see Buren 2005b. This hypothesis had already been formulated in the conversation between Buren and Susanne Pagé regarding the exhibition *Points de vue* held at the Musée d'art moderne de la ville de Paris in 1983 (Buren 2012, 942).
22. Daniel Buren, 'Along the Way(s): From Plans to Realization,' in Buren 2005a, 1A-7.
23. 'Even if I'm mistaken, I decided not to be a purist' (Buren 2005a, 1A-7).
24. The confrontation with Matisse could be taken further here, given that these canvases, before coming to New York, had already been arranged (since 1995) in a similar way at the Musée d'art moderne de la ville de Paris, but distributed over two facing walls of the large gallery which, otherwise empty, was occupied by the *Danse de Paris* (1931–1933), alone, on the end wall. In 2006, after being shown at the Guggenheim, the canvases returned to the same gallery, but according to the New York arrangement.
25. Buren 2001; cited in Buren 2002, D 02.
26. Even if they were conceived in relation to the question of the decorative, they were not a 'work about the decorative'.
27. In reference to the work realised in 1991 at CAPC, Bordeaux, where Buren placed in the great hall an enormous inclined plane covered by mirrors.
28. Since 1984, in the *Cabanes éclatées* where the vertical walls are cut into skylights and doors projected or *blown up* onto peripheral walls. We will come back to this.
29. This is how Claude Mollard, the first General Secretary of the Centre, recalls it in his programmatic text *L'Enjeu du Centre Georges Pompidou* (Mollard 1976, 21, 15). The Centre opens one year later in 1977, with the big Duchamp retrospective, soberly entitled *The Work of Marcel Duchamp*.
30. Cited in Mollard 1976, 20.
31. See the Jury report of the international competition for the construction of the Centre Beaubourg (1971), in Mollard 1976, 36. We will see what has happened.
32. Inasmuch as consumption 'defines precisely the stage where the commodity is immediately produced as a sign, as sign value, and where signs (culture) are produced as commodities' (Baudrillard 1981, 147).

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'A work of art does not contain the least bit of information': Deleuze and Guattari and Contemporary Art

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Any attempt to understand Deleuze and Guattari's relation to Contemporary artistic practices is immediately confronted with the highly variegated and dispersed field of contemporary art.[1] Nevertheless, there are three aspects of contemporary art that Deleuze and Guattari (both together and alone) directly respond to: 1) the central position of photography, both conceptually and practically; 2) the unavoidable ubiquity of digital technology; 3) Duchamp's readymade and the 'conceptual turn,' or what is also known as postconceptual practice. By following, and sometimes anticipating Deleuze and Guattari's response to these axioms we will be able to draw some conclusions as to what they might have thought about art today. Additionally, this will allow us to begin to construct some alternative art histories accounting for these aspects of contemporary artistic practices, genealogies that while often beginning in familiar places (photography, Duchamp, Benjamin) develop these in unexpected directions that often sit uncomfortably with our usual understandings of contemporary art. We set off, in other words, towards a *minor* contemporary art.

In *Logic of Sensation* Deleuze claims that too many people mistake a photograph for a work of art because a photograph cannot – *by definition* – be art. To think that a photograph is a work of art is not, in other words, a question of taste, it is an ontological mistake. As Deleuze explains, 'the photograph tends to reduce sensation to a single level, and is unable to include within the sensation the difference between constitutive levels' (2003, 91). The single level is that of representation, which imposes on sensation its conditions of possible experience, the a prioris of space and time, subject and object, and human consciousness. It is in this sense that the photograph is a cliché, and a particularly virulent and ubiquitous one, because photographs are 'not only ways of seeing' Deleuze writes, with reference to John Berger perhaps, but '*they are what is seen, until finally one sees nothing else*' (2003, 91).[2] Photography's ways of seeing are figurative and narrative, and as what is seen

photography is the most contemporary form of the representational 'convention,' or 'code' (2003, 91) that gives our conditions of possible experience in the first place. We not only see photographs, but rather photography imposes the cliché of the representational image of thought upon us. As a result, 'photography' becomes a kind of short-hand for Deleuze and Guattari, indicating the negative affects of the representational image of thought, and is used as a general term of abuse. Psychoanalysis is condemned for taking 'photos' of the unconscious, as linguistics does of language (1987, 13), Cuvier's 'discontinuous photographs' of morphogenesis are rejected (1987, 48), ethnologists are abused who 'take snapshots of their primitives' (1987, 429), and the limits of science are described as the 'freeze-frame' it applies to movement (1994, 118). All of these examples derive from Deleuze's association (following Bergson) of photography with science's spatialization of time, a philosophical homogenization of any ontology of difference. In this way, photography reveals its political implications because, Deleuze claims, by removing any vital force from the image it 'forces upon us' a 'truth' that is both 'implausible' and 'doctored' (2003, 91), thereby establishing and enforcing our 'civilization of the cliché' (1989, 21). As a cliché then, the problem with photography is cognitive, political and ontological before it is artistic, and as such Deleuze's criticisms of photography form part of a wide-ranging political analysis of our age of mechanical reproduction that will encompass, as we will see, both the rejection of Conceptual art in *What Is Philosophy?*, and the significant reservations regarding the 'electronic-image' expressed in *Cinema 2*.[3]

In arguing that the photographic cliché epitomizes the representational image of thought, Deleuze not only attacks photography as a medium, but highlights the dangers of art employing strategies that are ontologically complicit. Art doing so is of course a historical fact, and is implicit in not only the emergence of photography, but the adoption of new digital mediums and the turn to the concept. In all these cases art abandons its medium specificity (Deleuze is especially committed to painting and cinema) and utilizes image-making technologies that are widespread in what we could call the realm of 'non-art'. Deleuze and Guattari's 'Modernism' in this respect makes a medium's ontological potential a condition of its political effectiveness, and means that many artistic attempts at political intervention are counter-productive as long as they share the representational conditions of possibility of what they critique. In this way the ubiquitous strategies of irony and parody are complicit, Deleuze claims, because 'even the reactions against clichés are creating clichés' (2003, 89). Photography, Conceptual art, the nascent digital culture Deleuze saw in the 'electronic-image' (as we shall see), post-modern irony and critical political art all share this fundamental problem, they remain on the level of representation and so are, he says, 'too intellectual' (2003, 87). A quick look at a recent account of

contemporary art by Peter Osborne perhaps provides an explanation of this strange comment. Contemporary art is 'postconceptual,' Osborne claims, because since the conceptual turn of the late-60s all art is conceptually determined, and so makes use of a 'post-aesthetic poetics' (2013, 33). Contemporary art is defined, Osborne argues, by: 1) its ongoing conceptual and critical antagonism towards its aesthetic heritage; 2) its break with art's historical mediums epitomized by photography; 3) its integration of the avant-garde into the culture industry; 4) its spatio-temporally distributed unity enabled by digital technology; 5) its ability to transcend locality through the transnational circuits of commodity exchange. Together these aspects have led to what Osborne calls the 'ontological mutation' of postconceptual art, which has 'exposed the aesthetic misrecognition of the art work as an ideological fraud' (2013, 50). Osborne considers postconceptual art's immanence with the cognitive and technological conditions defining our present as the condition of possibility for its political resistance. But this is precisely what Deleuze and Guattari reject, seeing the way art has adopted our contemporary image of thought as complicity and compliance. This is why Deleuze condemns contemporary artistic practices for being 'too intellectual,' while he does want art to be immanent in contemporary life, he does so only as its outside, as its undetermined aesthetic excess, as – and its a nice phrase that comes from Osborne – as its 'ruptural futurity'. We'll see what this means soon enough, but it will certainly involve re-thinking the role of 'thought' in contemporary art, and as is already obvious this will run very much against how contemporary art has developed over the last 50 years.

At the core of this disconnect between Deleuze and Guattari and contemporary art is their insistence on Kant's discovery in the third Critique that aesthetic experience – and more exactly the sublime – escapes the limits placed upon it by the concepts of the understanding and directly expresses transcendental and differential Ideas. Deleuze bases his own aesthetics on this moment, which rips apart the veil of representation in an explosion of the real. Indeed, Deleuze and Guattari's descriptions of art often culminate in such an explosion; Turner's canvases in *Anti-Oedipus*, the homemade atomic bomb of the artisan-artist in *A Thousand Plateaus*, the hysterical scream of paint in *Francis Bacon*, the final eruption in Rossellini's *Stromboli* in *Cinema 2*, or indeed the explicit connection of rhythm to the sublime in the seminars on Kant. As Deleuze so memorably puts it there, and his tone is entirely approving; 'My whole structure of perception is in the process of exploding' (1978, 13). That, to put it simply, is what Deleuze sees as the 'political' power of art, it *destroys* the representational image of thought. Obviously this is a strange kind of 'ontological politics' that is not oriented around political issues or positions, and Deleuze and Guattari make it clear that art does not, and should not operate in this way. In *What Is Philosophy?* they suggest that revolution is the 'presentation of the

infinite in the here and now' (1994, 100), which is what art can do even if it cannot 'summon a people' who might effect a revolution. 'A people can only be created in abominable suffering' they say, 'and it cannot be concerned any more with art or philosophy.' (1994, 110) But although art cannot make 'real politics' in this sense, it can create sensations that resist 'servitude,' 'shame,' the 'intolerable' and the 'present' by creating new bonds between people, even if only for an instant. Such bonds are the 'victory of a revolution [...] even if these bonds last no longer than the revolution's fused material and quickly give way to division and betrayal' (1994, 177). This would be the sense of a transversal revolutionary politics, not that art and political movements somehow work together – as with leftist art activism that sees itself as the 'aesthetic wing' of a militant movement (see, Raunig 2007) – but that they each pursue revolution with the means at their disposal, which in art's case is aesthetic, the sensation.

Art, then, can cause explosions that destroy the structure imposed upon perception by the understanding (i.e. conceptually organized cognition), and its representational image of thought (most significantly, recognition). This would be art's politics, to explode the representational clichés that dominate our thought and sight, and to offer alternatives to the underlying cognitive structure that support this. This is precisely how Bacon uses photographs, he extracts their abstract qualities such as texture and ignores their representational clichés of figuration and narrative. This typifies, Deleuze claims, 'the most interesting cases' of painting using photography, which 'are those where the painter integrates the photograph, or the photograph's action, apart from any aesthetic value' (2003, 183). In these cases painting uses the photograph in order to betray both its representational and aesthetic functions (understood here as being integrated in normal aesthetic experience, as Kant outlines in the first Critique).[4] In this way Bacon's painting unites Kant's two definitions of the aesthetic by making what exceeds the limits of the first (sensation) come to define the scope of the third (art), as it confronts its immanent conditions of representation that its photographic sources embody, and so confronts the political conditions defining the present. This is also the case in Deleuze's account of certain paintings by Gerard Fromanger, who projects banal photographs of shops onto his canvas that he paints in monochrome colors. In this way, Deleuze argues, the paintings conflate the representational structure of the photograph with the abstraction of the commodity on the flat plane of the painting, which thereby actualizes 'the circulation of exchange value, whose importance lies in its mobilization of indifferents' (1999, 72). Fromanger puts this 'circuit of death' into relation with the scintillating energy of the painting's colors, converting it into a 'vital circuit' (1999, 74) between the commodities the photo represents and the paint and its sensation. In this way the abstract and yet differential force of colour disrupts capitalist circulation, just

as photography overcomes its own limits by becoming painting.[5] As Deleuze puts it: 'This circuit of life feeds continually on the circuit of death, sweeps it away with itself to triumph over it.' (1999, 73) While this does not accomplish a political revolution, it is *revolutionary*.

Bacon gives a clear explanation of his 'non-rational' thought process in his interviews with David Sylvester. Speaking of his own technique he says;

> the mystery of fact is conveyed by an image being made out of non-rational marks. And you can't will this non-rationality of the mark. That is the reason that accident always has to enter into this activity, because the moment you know what to do, you're making just another form of illustration. (1987, 58)

What is this 'mystery of fact'? The fact that a sensation created by an art work doesn't remain on one level – like abstract art or photography – but appears, Bacon continues, 'on many levels' and so 'leads to a deeper sense of the reality of the image,' a reality 'caught raw and alive' (Sylvester 1987, 66). Here the sensation or 'fact' emerges through overcoming the representational and narrative clichés that are not simply produced by, but actually constitute rational consciousness. The sublime intuition frees the nervous system from its conceptual determination, forcing the brain to confront chaos and construct an analogical expression of it. Deleuze described this sublime faculty of 'thought' in *Difference and Repetition*, and as we shall see it is a model that continues to the end, even if its vocabulary changes.

While Deleuze argues that Bacon and Fromanger use the photograph against itself, his analysis of cinema is not so generous. The very ontology of cinema, its essence as movement- and time-image is founded on *not* being photography. The cinematic 'shot,' Deleuze writes in *Cinema 1*, is a 'mobile section,' a '*temporal perspective*' on the whole of duration, a perspective whose modulating vitality effectively keeps this whole open. The photograph, on the other hand, is an 'immobile section' that 'moulds' the internal forces of a thing into equilibrium, forcing it to become an object, or in other words a representation (1986, 24). Deleuze attributes his understanding of cinema to Henri Bergson, and follows him in distinguishing 'real movement' expressing 'concrete duration' from the 'immobile sections' that represent units of 'abstract time' (1986, 1). Abstract time separates an object from the space it moves through, spatializing movement and dividing it up into homogenous units, while 'real' movement is heterogeneous – even with itself – inasmuch as it changes qualitatively each time it is divided. This is the first, and most famous of Bergson's three theses on movement, but it immediately gives rise to a fundamental difficulty when applied to cinema, which is that Bergson himself seems to refute it. In *Creative Evolution*, written in 1907, Bergson attributes what Deleuze calls the

'incorrect formula' (1986, 1) for time to cinema. 'What is real,' Bergson writes, 'is the continual *change of* form: *form is only a snapshot view of a transition*.' (1944, 328) The 'cinematograph,' he continues, throws a series of such 'instantaneous views,' or snapshots on a screen 'so that they replace each other very rapidly'. In this way, Bergson argues, cinematic projection reconstructs movement from photographs (1944, 331-2), meaning that the movement seen on the screen is not in the image but in the cinematic 'apparatus'. Movement is in this way rendered abstract and impersonal, and, Bergson writes; 'Instead of attaching ourselves to the inner becoming of things, we place ourselves outside them in order to recompose their becoming artificially.' (1944, 332) This, Bergson will claim, is nothing less than an image of thought, because as he puts it, 'we take snapshots of the passing reality [...] hardly doing anything else than setting going a kind of cinematograph inside us' (1944, 332). The brain is a cinema projector replacing photos with more photos, representing movement in a pre-existing space by stringing together snapshots and preventing us from experiencing the non-rational 'fact' of a movement's duration. Deleuze makes various excuses for Bergson's 'mistake,' and makes him instead the originator of the idea that the essence of cinema is the moving image simultaneously expressing and constructing the infinite movements of duration. In this sense 'the brain is the screen' Deleuze will say, rather than the photographic projector, affirming that technology supports and extends our image of thought, and so plays a crucial role in the politics of our contemporary image-culture.

The movement-image, however, only indirectly expresses the becoming of the open whole of duration because it passes through the sensory-motor schema of the viewer, and so makes subjective interest and value its condition of possibility. Indeed, at the beginning of *Cinema 2* Deleuze dramatically dismisses the movement-image as a cliché (1989, 20), one that continually moves towards its sublime limit but can never break through to its immanent outside, can never provide a real experience that might encompass the all, and climb the thread suspending this moment from the universe. The movement-image, he says, is too 'normal' (1989, 36) because it subordinates the movement of the whole to the conditions determining its possible representation. It is as if the movement-image brings us back to a disappointingly transcendental subject, the brain of the human-all-too-human cinema goer who cannot escape the assumption that the universe is in some way for us. Modern cinema will invent a far more astringent and alienating cinema where the viewer will be replaced by the visionary, and the cliché imposed by the sensory-motor will explode in what Deleuze, again entirely approvingly, calls 'abnormal' and 'aberrant' films.

The time-image of modernist cinema abandons narrative and the normal relations of subjects and objects in its embrace (at least on Deleuze's account) of total

experimentation. This too, will be an image that emerges against photography, and even perhaps through its negation. For example, Deleuze will argue that while Ozu's use of extremely long takes or 'still-lives' perhaps suggests a reconciliation of cinema and photography, in fact the opposite is the case and; 'At the point where the cinematographic image most directly confronts the photo, it also becomes most radically distinct from it.' (1989, 17) Why? Because in Ozu's still-life we are confronted with time in its pure state, and here Deleuze recites the formula's that he's used since the last chapter of his book on Proust: 'There is becoming, change, passage. But the form of what changes does not itself change, does not pass on. This is time, time itself, "a little time in its pure state": a direct time-image, which gives what changes the unchanging form in which the change is produced.' (1989, 17) This passage also clearly echoes that from *Difference and Repetition* where Deleuze explains the third synthesis of time, and how it marks an explosion of the sun that definitively overcomes any transcendental subjectivity – and more specifically its a priori principle of chronological time – established by Kant's Copernican revolution. At this sublime moment – Deleuze specifically calls it such (1994, 146)[6] – aesthetic experience exceeds its conditions of possibility and senses the transcendental Ideas, which on Deleuze's perversely Nietzschean reading of Kantian critique emerge as the differential, real and immanent conditions of experience itself. At this sublime moment transcendental experience (i.e. Ideas), or 'problems' as Deleuze calls them, emerge in a *Geistesgefühl* (as Kant calls the sublime), an 'intellectual-feeling' or feeling-thought. This strange sensation presents the unpresentable, it comprehends infinity in 'thinking' the Idea, and as a time-image it puts the supersensible and sensible, virtual and actual into a relationship of reciprocal determination. In *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze calls this the 'secret coherence' of the event and the act, a coherence that turns back against the transcendental subjectivity that gave birth to it to 'smash it to pieces' (1994, 89). This, Deleuze tells us with some satisfaction, is the precise moment within Kantianism when Kant destroys his own system, 'a furtive and *explosive* moment which is not even continued by Kant' (1994, 58). This sublime moment, or event, is thought. 'To think,' Deleuze writes, 'is to create – there is no other creation – but to create is first to engender 'thinking' in thought.' (1994, 147) The syntheses constituting rational experience, not only Kant's but those of the movement-image as well, are thereby replaced by 'spatio-temporal dynamisms,' as Deleuze calls them in *Difference and Repetition*, or by the refrains that Deleuze and Guattari say replace time as 'the ground in a priori synthetic judgment' (1987, 378-9), or what in cinema Deleuze calls the 'vital intuition' of the time-image (1989, 22).

Despite Deleuze's celebration of the sublime time-images produced by Modernist cinema in *Cinema 2*, 'the brain is the screen' also has a dark side, and is also responsible for the worst aspects of our control society. Deleuze here returns to his

theme of how a vital art resists its political exploitation and oppression, and the quixotic heroism of what he and Guattari call art's 'unfortunately incomparable, but nevertheless competitive, means' (1987, 381). When the brain becomes the screen a new mechanism producing subjectivity emerges in the ambiguous figure of the 'spiritual automaton'. This passive viewer is on the one hand animated by all the spectacular clichés of our utterly mediated control society, and on the other is a visionary schizo synthesising exterior forces through an inhuman nervous intelligence. The politics of the brain-screen involves a struggle over this power of 'psychomechanics,' a conflict between the State and corporate mechanisms that automate our thought and thereby homogenize subjects into masses, and the singular and ontogenetic event produced by a 'will to art'. This is a political struggle over the production of subjectivity, and while art uses technology to produce a singular subjectivation undetermined by conditions of possibility, digital technology in the hands of capital imposes its immanent conditions of possibility in order to, Deleuze claims, reproduce 'extrinsic elements [...] in an autonomous manner by the intrinsic elements of the code' (2003, 114).

Significantly, Deleuze praises Benjamin's 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' for offering an immanent critique of this development. Benjamin, he says, set himself 'inside cinema in order to show how the art of automatic movement (or, as he ambiguously said, the art of reproduction) was itself to coincide with the automization of the masses, state direction, politics become 'art': Hitler as film maker....' (1989, 264) Benjamin foresaw the aestheticization of politics that was made possible by the replacement of artistic singularity, or 'aura' as Benjamin calls it, by mass reproduction. Against the usual interpretation of Benjamin then, Deleuze sees this as a largely negative development because it institutes a new regime of production reproducing resemblances on a mass scale, and introduces a new control society operating through the 'psychomechanics' of consumption and conformism, a regime he rather dramatically summarizes (following Benjamin) as; 'Hitler and Hollywood, Hollywood and Hitler' (1989, 164).

Deleuze discusses this conflict in relation to the electronic-image, which emerges from 'a new computer and cybernetic race, automata of computation and thought, automata with controls and feedback' (1989, 265). Here power is no longer organized around the *Führer*, but is instead 'diluted in an information network' (1989, 265) that not only effects the story-line of cinema (as computers become characters, such as in *Alphaville*, or *2001*), but the form of its images. While the electronic-image is able to express duration like the time-image, in doing so it also extends technological and political control beyond the limits of space and time, and out into the infinite. According to Deleuze the electronic-image has no outside, it has a right side and a reverse, and is reversible and non-superimposable. This enables it to be

the object of perpetual reorganization within an omni-directional space in a state of constant variation, these variations being ordered through axiomatics that remain tied to representational clichés on the one hand, and to the circulation of capital on the other. Under these conditions the (brain) screen has become, Deleuze claims, using a term he takes from the art-historian Leo Steinberg, a 'flat-bed plane,' a 'table of information, an opaque surface on which are inscribed "data," information replacing nature, and the brain-city, the third eye, replacing the eyes of nature' (1989, 265). These aspects of the electronic-image, it is important to note, are no longer specific to the cinema, but condition all aspects of image production, and inasmuch as they are co-extensive, all aspects of life in general. The political stakes of the electronic-image are therefore those of contemporary life, and revolve around the status of thought; what in this flat brain-screen of the electronic-image is creative, and what exercises control? What, in other words, is the relation between the 'new spiritual automatism' and the 'new psychological automata,' are we entering an age of 'cerebral creation or deficiency of the cerebellum?' (Deleuze 1989, 266)

Deleuze is at his most uncertain here, and is clearly reluctant to speculate very far about an image regime that was still embryonic.[7] While he says the question remains that of expressing a new 'will to art,' the stakes seem to have risen; 'I am afraid that the new methods may invalidate all will to art, or make it into a business, a pornography, a Hitlerism... .' Nevertheless, the clues for creating a new future seem to be in the past, inasmuch as 'the cinematographic image was already achieving effects which were not those of electronics, but which had autonomous anticipatory functions in the time-image as will to art' (1989, 266). Bresson, he tells us, first reveals how modern psychological automaton are produced by the speech act rather than motor action. This is then picked up by Robbe-Grillet's strange deconstructions of genre, where repetition and flat intonation suggest the characters are hypnotized, as if their actions were pre-ordained by the genre's form. Similarly, Resnais' films reveal an automation achieved through the unpredictable feedback systems operating between past and present. These anticipations of aspects of the electronic-image in the time-image created remarkable images and new sensations, but while they reveal the creative potentials of the Modernist will-to-art they also illustrate how quickly these are instrumentalized by the powers that control their production.

This is because, Deleuze argues, the brain-screen is not defined by its technology but 'depends on an aesthetic' (1989, 267). It is a question, in other words, of how perception is ordered and controlled, of the contemporary conditions of possible experience, and today it is the aesthetic of the 'flat-bed plane' that organizes images into information regardless of whether the technological support is digital or analog. Deleuze's perceptive description in fact applies as well to post-Cinematic images as it does to the screen-prints of Robert Rauschenberg;

> the image is constantly being cut into another image, being printed through a visible mesh, sliding over other images in an "incessant stream of messages," the shot itself is less like an eye than an overloaded brain endlessly absorbing information: it is the brain-information, brain-city couple which replaces that of eye-Nature' (1989, 267).

The problem is that the brain-screen has no outside, it encompasses the world in a continual variation that nevertheless tends to be organized by a limited number of (aesthetic) axioms. These axioms organize life in general rather than just the human, and in this sense, Deleuze explains, 'free life *within man himself*' (1999a, 130). The form of man has been 'overcome' in the realms of language, life and labour, Deleuze argues, but rather than this liberating man it has dissolved him, as life regroups on dispersal, on an 'unlimited finity' where 'a finite number of components yields a practically unlimited diversity of combinations' (1999a, 131). While on the one hand this unlimited finity is the contemporary form of the 'eternal return' (1999a, 131), it is also the moment when the vital power of life itself can be captured by technology and capital. It is no longer, in other words, a question of discovering inhuman forces within the human, because the contemporary is marked by these forces relocating to an asignifying language (1999a, 132), to molecular biology and its manipulation of the genetic code, and to 'third generation machines, cybernetics and information technology' (1999a, 131). How can 'cerebral creation' liberate our brains, when the creative energy of "life" is no longer opposed to the political systems that profit from them but entirely immanent within them? Deleuze's last line of the book on *Foucault* ruefully hopes that this 'will not prove worse' than previous regimes, and in the essay 'Postscript on Control Societies' he balefully warns; 'A snake's coils are even more intricate than a mole's burrow.' (1995, 182)

This would explain the ambivalence of Deleuze's positive example of an electronic-image – Hans-Jürgen Syberberg's film *Hitler: A Film from Germany*, which he offers as an antidote to Benjamin's warning of Hollywood becoming equivalent to Hitler. This film, Deleuze claims, is the sequel to Kracauer's famous book *From Caligari to Hitler* because it runs in the opposite direction, not from German film to Hitler, but from Hitler to A Film from Germany. As a result, the film effects a 'change taking place inside cinema, against Hitler, but also against Hollywood, against represented violence, against pornography, against business...' (1989, 264). It does so on the level of content through a critique of the fascist psychological automaton, of the production of 'Hitler in us'. On the level of form however, Syberberg's electronic-image – its connectivity, its flatness and its informative nature – is constructed through older redundant technologies that the movement-image had itself discarded and ignored. Thus Syberberg's celebrated use of back and front pro-

jection, of models and puppets, or of miming to playback all, according to Deleuze, use these techniques in ways that Hitler and Hollywood had already rejected or perfected (1989, 264). Such techniques are therefore immanent to but already distanced from the powers they critique, enabling them to grasp the contemporary electronic-image from within in order to pull it apart through their disjunctions and disassociations (1989, 267), a process culminating in the disjunctive synthesis of sound and image, 'a *fusion* of the tear,' as Deleuze quotes Syberberg (1989, 268). In this way Syberberg's films,

> stretch out a vast space of information, like a complex, heterogeneous, anarchic space where the trivial and the cultural, the public and the private, the historic and the anecdotal, the imaginary and the real are brought together [in ...] a network, in kinds of relationship which are never those of causality (1989, 268-9).

This is a contemporary electronic-image, but it is a mad, non-representational, non-linear, 'irrational' and utterly schizophrenic image, creating 'a complex, heterogeneous, anarchic space'. Significantly, it is the division of sound and image that imparts 'a non-totalizable complexity' to the experience of the film's 'information' that goes beyond 'the psychological individual' (1989, 269). The problem however, is that Syberberg's sublime 'will to art,' his 'art beyond knowledge' and his 'creation beyond information' seek to redeem the mythical power of the speech act, 'an act capable of creating the myth instead of drawing profit or business from it,' and redeem its subject, 'a pure informed person capable of emerging from the debris' (1989, 270). This seems a reactive politics that means, Deleuze laments: 'Redemption arrives too late [...]: it appears when information has already gained control' (1989, 270). Contemporary art in the time of the electronic-image is perhaps always too-late in this sense, because like cinema, it's 'life or after-life' also 'depends on its internal struggle with informatics'. In this struggle on the inside (of capitalism, of informatics) all contemporary art can do is reflect on its conditions of possibility, and try to ask, Deleuze says, 'a question that goes beyond them' (1989, 270). Such a question would, as Deleuze puts it, 'convert a hostile area to art, with a certain violence, and of turning means against themselves' (1989, 331). But the problem, as we have seen, is that an area 'hostile' to art shares the same aesthetic as art employs to go beyond it. The electronic-image, unlike the time-image perhaps, defines both the means of control and the means to its resistance.

Unsurprisingly, the snake's coils also embrace contemporary art, and in *What Is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guattari will return to the 'flat-bed plane' in their rejection of Conceptual art, claiming that with it the composition of the image has become

'informative' rather than energetic, and the opinion of the viewer rather than sensation defines what is art (1994, 198). We see here a similar shift in the conditions of artistic production to what Deleuze described in the case of cinema, with the 'conceptual turn' art starts to share its aesthetic 'diagram' with the rest of life, which now wants to produce a 'concept'. Contemporary art therefore risks becoming the mere 'propagation of information,' in an era when, Deleuze says, 'information is exactly the system of control' (2006, 320-1). Deleuze could not be any more explicit in his condemnation of this development, declaring: 'A work of art has nothing to do with communication. A work of art does not contain the least bit of information.' (2006, 322) In these terms both the electronic-image and post-conceptual artistic practices risk becoming complicit with established political powers, by adopting, Deleuze warns in *Cinema 2*, their 'operational processes' and becoming 'caught in the machine's operations and passage' (1989, 331). In this situation, he argues, so-called 'critical' practices achieve nothing, because the production of 'counter-information' actually enforces conformity by failing to go beyond the existing conditions of possibility, or format, that underlies all 'intelligence' (see 2006, 322). But because these conditions have seemingly joined with the powers of life to take us beyond the form of man, as Deleuze laments in *Foucault*, it is hard to see how any such 'beyond' might be possible.

This then, is the situation confronting visual art today, inasmuch as post-conceptual artistic practice is generally taken to mean that contemporary art, no matter how aesthetic, is nevertheless organized through a conceptual framework. The model for this form of practice comes from Marcel Duchamp, who tells us in *The Green Box* (1935) that the readymade is a photographic 'snapshot' or 'sign of accordance' between it and the laws governing its choice (1973, 27-8). It's no surprise then, that Duchamp hated Bergson. For Duchamp, this choice is entirely independent of the readymade object, which merely exists as 'information' (1973, 32) indicating that a conceptual decision has taken place – 'this is art'. This 'decision' not only liberates art from any medium specificity, but from any aesthetic conditions at all, involving as Duchamp famously put it 'a complete anaesthesia' (1973, 141). Art was no longer a question of color and materials, but, as Duchamp rather wryly put it, of 'grey matter' and of the concept of art that it instantiated. The art object becomes a simple place-holder for the concept of art, an entirely arbitrary signifier that effectively dematerializes its signified – 'art'.

In *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze and Guattari will offer an alternative understanding of the readymade that explores an entirely different sense of how 'thought' might produce art. There, they claim that; 'Territorial marks are *readymades*,' (1987, 349, see also 1994, 184) using the English word '*readymade*' in order to emphasize its connection to Duchamp (see 1980, 389; 1991, 174). The fundamental artistic

gesture of the readymade, Deleuze and Guattari argue, is the appropriation of something in order to use it in a completely different way, like the stage-maker bird that turns over fallen leaves to mark out the 'stage,' on which it sings 'a complex song made up from its own notes and, at intervals, those of other birds that it imitates'. In this the stage-maker bird is, Deleuze and Guattari say, a 'complete artist' (1994, 184). This makes the readymade, they continue, 'the base or ground of art. Take anything and make it a matter of expression.' (1987, 349) In this sense the readymade is a technique used to create a refrain, a material object that expresses (ie. repeats) a genetic difference. In the case of the stage-maker bird, it both establishes a territory and opens it onto its outside, because the maintenance of one involves the necessity of the other, just as the present draws from the past in order to create its future. The refrain, in this sense, expresses a spatio-temporal dynamism. 'As *thought*,' Deleuze and Guattari write, 'the circle tended on its own to open onto a future as a function of the working forces it shelters' (1987, 343, italics added). If the functional purpose of this 'artwork' is to perpetuate the species, its aesthetic dimension introduces '"lines of drift"' as Deleuze and Guattari put it, that free it from its conditions (1987, 344). Perhaps then, this model of the readymade might be able to ask a question that goes beyond its ubiquitous acceptance as the model of 'conceptual' art.

In one sense Deleuze and Guattari's reading of the readymade is familiar, inasmuch as it makes the simple gesture of appropriation the fundamental creative act, and is entirely consistent with Duchamp's quip that a readymade is simply an object that has 'changed direction'. It is a change in direction that is also achieved by Bacon's 'catastrophe,' which opens the conditions of painting onto their outside and allow chaotic forces to act as what Deleuze and Guattari call 'directional components,' or the 'ecstasies' of 'chaosmosis' (1987, 345). Unlike Duchamp however, Deleuze and Guattari see the change in direction achieved by the readymade to be material and aesthetic, rather than conceptual, and as such it is an example of what they call 'thought'. This non-conceptual thought is thought as passive synthesis, as the sublime event of a problematic Idea creating its intuition (to return to Deleuze's vocabulary from *Difference and Repetition*), and is how the readymade escapes mechanical reproduction and restores, Guattari tells us, 'the Benjaminian aura' (2013, 209). Here we have the beginning of a genealogy of contemporary artistic practice that incorporates the readymade as its foundational moment, but rather than being post-conceptual involves, instead, producing material sensations through a sublime thought. It is here, perhaps, that we have a question that might go beyond the reservations Deleuze expressed about Syberberg's films, one that emerges from the material conditions of the new aesthetic of the electronic-image, while refusing to 'return' to the old technologies that predate it. It would not be a question of redeeming painting in this sense, but of posing a question to contemporary 'thought'

that goes beyond its current and conditional aesthetic. This would be to go beyond the definition of contemporary art as postconceptual and post-internet, and to seek once again the real conditions of its difference.[8]

Guattari discusses Duchamp's first readymade, the *Bottle Rack* (1913), precisely in this sense. The act of appropriation, Guattari writes, can produce a 'problematic Affect' (2013, 206) (what Deleuze calls passive synthesis), in which various components suddenly appear together without obvious subjective intention or meaning. This problematic Affect is a chaotic incursion or 'event' that 'speaks through me' and 'devalues the clarities and urgencies which imposed themselves on me' and 'makes the world sink into a void which seems irremediable' (2013, 205). This is the moment of intensity=0, which Deleuze often refers to and that he draws from Kant's first Critique. There, Kant argues that sensation emerges as an intense difference from 0, and Deleuze and Guattari will return to this definition of sensation throughout their work. On the one hand, then, the *Bottle Rack* voids its context and received meaning, intensity=0, and on the other, Guattari writes, it 'functions as the trigger for a Constellation of universes of reference that sets off intimate reminiscences – the cellar of the house, a certain winter, beams of light on the spider webs, adolescent solitude' (2013, 209, translation modified). The *Bottle Rack* changes direction, and doesn't stop changing direction, or as Guattari puts it, there is a 'discordance of different ways of beating time,' which are 'set into refrains' (2013, 206). Beginning from the problematic Affect, from its singular and intimate 'feeling of being' (2013, 213) produces a 'fractal virtualisation' as Guattari calls it, from which 'procedures of elucidation threaten to flee in every direction' (2013, 206). The readymade is first a sublime moment dislocating experience from its conceptual conditions, and allowing it to receive the aleatory forces of the event. This is the moment of intensity=0 where intuition is undetermined by the transcendental syntheses of space and time, and is instead able to develop in relation to this immanent outside as a spatio-temporal dynamism or refrain expressing all of time and space from its perspective. This is what Guattari calls the art work's 'consummation as disjunction' (2013, 211), its rupture with received meaning (cliché) that turns its material expressive, the aesthetic object being both a material body and an image, an actualization of the virtual dimension of duration as well as a thread the readymade's appropriation follows back into this encompassing element of living force. The readymade thus becomes what Guattari calls an 'existential refrain' (1995, 15), because it expresses the vitality of life, in a life, it always 'produces an added value, it secretes a surplus value of code. It is always ready to pull something out of its pocket.' (Guattari 2013, 134) The readymade is a 'multiplicating' (2013, 211) process that produces an aesthetic rupture with representation, while simultaneously actualizing this process in a 'subjectivation'. As a result, the readymade's 'mutating becomings'

(2013, 205) or 'heterogenesis' enable the aesthetic object, Guattari claims, to act as a 'reappropriation, an autopoeisis of the means of production of subjectivity' (1996, 198). The readymade, we might say, is the way contemporary artistic practice accomplishes a resistant form of spiritual automation, deterritorializing subjectivity into its components of molecular matter and cosmic force, and reterritorialising these into a people to come, into, as Deleuze and Guattari so poetically put it, 'vectors of a cosmos that carry them off; then the cosmos will itself be art' (1987, 381). Thus the readymade demonstrates Deleuze's insistence that Kant's two senses of the aesthetic – as a theory of perception and as a theory of art – must come together. What he means by this is that the reflective aesthetic judgment found in the third Critique must replace the conceptual understanding determining experience as it appears in the first. In these terms, then, what we need is basically the opposite of what Osborne's triumphalist account reports; the hegemony of the concept in a non-aesthetic and post-conceptual art. Instead Deleuze and Guattari call for an aesthetic *post*-conceptual art, a sublime art that affirms the power of thought to accelerate our cybernetic machines beyond the limits of their current subjectivations qua productions of statistical masses. While Deleuze, when on his own, was clearly worried that this problem might have escaped our means to grasp it, with Guattari he projected the artistic 'thought' of the readymade beyond its conditions of informative representation, digital reproduction and post-aesthetic conceptualism. In affirming a post-conceptual art against the concept Deleuze and Guattari affirm an aesthetic regime whose univocity goes beyond the reach of global capitalism or digital technology, and whose 'transindividual subjectivity' (Guattari 1995, 101) sets off towards a new Nature, towards the sci-fi Romanticism of a "cosmic" art.

Notes

1. The quotation in the title comes from Deleuze 2006, 322.
2. In 'the photo,' Deleuze and Guattari tell us, 'faciality, redundancy, signifiance, and interpretation are at work everywhere' (1987, 116).
3. Despite this, I think its also possible to propose examples of 'minor photography' that attempt to resist the cliché (for examples, see Bleyen 2012).
4. As Bacon puts it; 'I think the texture of a painting seems to be more immediate than the texture of the photograph, because the texture of the photograph seems to go through an illustrational process onto the nervous system, whereas the texture of a painting seems to come immediately onto the nervous system.' (Sylvester 1987, 57-8)
5. In a less explicitly political way than Fromanger, the painter Florence Julien, 'invented,' Deleuze and Guattari write, 'a procedure by which she extracts from photographs lines that are nearly abstract and formless' (1987, 224).
6. A fact almost never mentioned in the literature, except for the notable exception of Janne Vanhanen's excellent book *Encounters with the Virtual, The Experience of Art in Gilles Deleuze's Philosophy* (University of Helsinki Press, 2010).

7. Deleuze writes; 'We do not claim to be producing an analysis of the new images, which would be beyond our aims, but only to indicate certain effects whose relation to the cinematographic image remains to be determined.' (1989, 265)
8. This would be the project of Éric Alliez, between *The Brain-Eye, New Histories of Modern Painting* which seeks 'to bring to light a thinking at work in 'modern painting' (to show *that* it thinks and *how* it thinks)' (2016, xxi) and *Défaire l'image: De l'art contemporain* which addresses the more diffuse question of the 'aesthetic' conditions of contemporary artistic practices in the midst of life.

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Art's Utopia: The Geography of Art against (its) History

Antoine L'Heureux

'We think too much in terms of history, whether personal or universal. Becomings belong to geography, they are orientations, directions, entries and exits.'
(Deleuze and Parnet 1987, 2)

Deleuze's promotion of becoming over history is paradigmatic of his whole philosophical system, and affirmed throughout his work in many different ways. In *L'Abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze* he argues that it is ludicrous for historians and philosophers to tell us that revolutions fail or go wrong, as if it meant we should stop making them, because nothing will ever stop the becomings which overtake those who have no other choice than revolution.[1] History does not account for the forces or becomings that animate it and without which nothing would happen, just as pure events, on Deleuze's account, give rise to but remain hidden by their actualization in or as states of affairs. Actualizations are organized diachronically to construct historical narratives, but history does not account for the pure events which are its ontological and genetic conditions. This is highly relevant to a notion of art history because art for Deleuze and Guattari is an expression of these pure events, and is therefore irreducible to, yet inseparable from, history.

I would like to make it clear that I write as an art practitioner with a background in academic research,[2] and it is precisely in the spirit of this dual focus that I will develop, in part through my own art practice, an ahistorical account of art that aims to radicalize the notion of art history into a utopian geography of art. I do so not only because I think it reflects the most innovative aspects of Deleuze and Guattari's vision of art, but as well because I think it offers the most to the future of artistic practice.

Art is a Will-to-Absolute Deterritorialization

'all history is really the history of perception,
and what we make history with is the matter of a becoming,
not the subject matter of a story'
(Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 347).

This is a history of perceiving invisible forces, a history of the ways humans relate to, understand and feel an absolute, an outside, that ordinarily remains hidden. Art has always been the expression of such invisible realms. In Classicism the absolute or outside is a transcendent God and his paradise; in Romanticism the outside is the earth itself, its uncharted territories and its overwhelming forces; whereas for Modernism, Deleuze and Guattari conclude, becoming, 'the matter of a becoming,' is our way of perceiving and conceptualizing the outside, the transcendental plane of immanent forces that creates history.

This eternal function of art to express invisible forces is conditioned by what I call a 'will-to-absolute deterritorialization,' the desire to create a movement by which inorganic Life, itself absolute, is attained and united with. This is different from Riegl's 'will-to-art' which, as Ionescu claims, 'pre-supposes that humanity, regardless of the level of cultural development, realises an a priori interest in a specifically visual pleasure' (2013, 17). The will-to-absolute deterritorialization is not human, it is not *of* humanity, it is not anthropomorphic. Rather, it is a will proper to inorganic Life that wants to effectuate *itself* through the entire universe, and as such through us, through humanity. It is *Life willing itself*, Life being simultaneously the absolute and that which wills, whereas (organic) life (which encompasses humanity) is that which Life 'sets against itself in order to limit itself' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 503), the necessary limit without which it couldn't "take hold" of itself (reterritorialize) in order to (re-)launch itself again. The will-to-absolute deterritorialization is closer to Worringer's 'urge to abstraction,' if this urge is not defined as human (as Worringer does) but to the universe itself.[3] It is *lived* by humanity as its intuition of and attraction to invisible forces, as its everlasting drive towards the *outside* of our states of affairs and the historical time of our lived experiences. Humanity, propelled by this inhuman drive, has found two ways or forms of thought to express it: art and philosophy.[4] I see an inhuman will-to-absolute deterritorialization running through humanity, and artists use art as a means, a tool by which to effectuate (create-express) this absolute deterritorialization.

Absolute deterritorialization necessarily requires a component of relative deterritorialization to operate, 'precisely because it is not transcendent' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 510). As a result, the will-to-absolute deterritorialization is always linked to an historical present from which it can act on, and so depart from. In relation to art, the present as necessary relative foundation remains relevant (even in the context of an ahistorical account of art) in the realms of artistic creation and of aesthetic experience.

In terms of aesthetic experience, the artwork leads a viewer anchored in the present to a landscape beyond all geographical locations and passing presents, an absolute landscape which nevertheless contains traces of the "here and now" the artist departed from. In terms of artistic creation, the present defines the artwork's subject matter and figurative aspects. Francis Bacon departs from the tangible figures of his friends or lover (which we can still recognize in the paintings) in order to launch himself, the painting and the viewer towards the absolute or outside of the body without organs (the Figural).[5] George Dyer moves along a chronological timeline, and yet the body without organs of his "portrait" belongs to an (absolute and ahistorical) realm of simultaneously infinite past and future.

Through his technique the artist engages with his "present" position within the history of perception, which also functions as a foundation from which he departs. Bacon is clearly positioned by Deleuze "against" or "after" both geometrical abstraction and abstract expressionism (2003, 103-110, 117-119), two other ways to see or intuit invisible forces in the history of perception, and themselves positioned against previous paradigms of abstraction and expressionism, and so on. But Bacon's work is not a development or evolution of those modern art paradigms (ie. it is not a relative deterritorialization of them), it is a new way to perceive and to sense the outside, a new vision of invisible forces. In order to achieve such new visions, artists freely re-use aesthetic devices taken from previous artists. Deleuze tells us that; 'Every painter recapitulates the history of painting in his or her way ....'[6] Bacon repeats or re-uses in his own way various aesthetic devices or 'diagrams': the Egyptians' elaboration of form and ground as belonging 'on the *same plane* of the surface, equally close to each other and to us' (Deleuze 2003, 123); the barbarian's or Gothic art's use of the northern or 'frenetic' line 'opposed to the organic life of classical representation, but also to the geometric line of Egyptian essence' (Deleuze 2003, 129); and the various diagrams of color (Byzantine mosaic, seventeenth-century painting, Cézanne, Van Gogh and Gauguin) responsible for the 'liberation of light and the emancipation of color in relation to the tangible form' (Deleuze 2003, 132). Bacon appropriates and blends these different aesthetic diagrams to create a new diagram that goes beyond them (e.g. the broken tone of a wild line against a flat shore of bright color or black), re-launching the history of perception towards new horizons,

and so escaping any of its previous conditions of existence. In this way, my ahistorical account of art does not deny the history of an artwork's creation and experience, but I want to oppose historical accounts of art to an ever-expanding geography, people and 'story' of art: an (a)spatial, (a)social and (anti-)narrative complex that is so much more radical, vital and true to what art is.

The Artwork's Resistance to Time and Space

'Absolute deterritorialization does not take place without reterritorialization.
Philosophy is reterritorialized on the concept.
The concept is not object but territory.'
(Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 101)

The same goes for art. Like philosophy, art goes through an absolute deterritorialization only on the condition of reterritorializing itself on a possible universe, on a 'Rembrandt-universe or Debussy-universe' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 177). These universes that art creates are expressions of pure events, they *are* pure events. Here lies the particularity and paradox of the artwork: when expressed in the artwork the event retains its 'raw' or 'pure' virtual state, whereas ordinarily we only experience the event as it is represented by our actual states of affairs within historical time. 'What History grasps of the event is its effectuation in states of affairs or in lived experience, but the event in its becoming, in its specific consistency, in its self-positing as concept, escapes History.' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 110) It is the ontological nature of artworks (possible universes *as* pure events) to escape history. Precisely how the artist achieves this 'paradoxical' feat through her medium is conceptualized by Deleuze most potently in his books on Bacon and on cinema, and in the short space I have here I aim to discuss how my own practice of painting works to embody this ontological condition.

The artist intervenes in the possible universe in ways resistant to time, as we have seen art opens history onto the ahistorical, and resistant to space, art opens the actual universe onto new universes or lands, it creates '"monadological" points of view [that] can be interlinked only on a nomad space' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 494). Indeed, artists are nomads *on* and *of* the absolute, working in a nomad space where 'no line separates earth from sky, which are of the same substance; there is neither horizon nor background nor perspective nor limit nor outline or form nor center' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 494). Artists create an open-ended and expanding geography, interlinked territorial expressions or universes *of* and *as* the absolute realm of pure events.

The movement of absolute deterritorialization, from the actual to the possible universe, flees from the specific presents in which it operates, the 'present' of the artwork's creation and the 'presents' of aesthetic experience. The artwork is a vector moving from history towards the ahistorical, from chronological time – inside which the materiality of the artwork exists and is experienced – to the atemporal. This vector is *followed* by the viewer when he experiences the sensation expressed in the artwork, when he *travels through* the artwork's percept and affect. From the perspective of history, i.e. of our experience of chronological time, this 'atemporal vector' is unidirectional, and as soon as it pierces through history, through the incessantly passing present, this vector begins to behave like a compass that has lost its magnetic pole and tries to point in all directions at once. The vector becomes non-directional and is *simultaneously* aligned with the past, the present and the future. The artwork thereby allows for three movements at once: it plunges through the present (of both its creation and of its experience), and heads towards the past *and* the future. The artwork's vector points 'everywhere' (to conceptualize the atemporal or ahistorical geographically), and at 'every times'. In the following passage then, Alice personifies both a viewer experiencing an artwork and a hypothetical figure 'inside' the artwork:

> The paradox of this pure becoming, with its capacity to elude the present, is the paradox of infinite identity (the infinite identity of both directions or senses at the same time – of future and past, of the day before and the day after, of more and less, of too much and not enough, of active and passive, and of cause and effect). [...] Hence the reversals which constitute Alice's adventures: the reversal of becoming larger and becoming smaller – "which way, which way?" asks Alice, sensing that it is always in both directions at the same time, so that for once she stays the same, through an optical illusion; the reversal of the day before and the day after, the present always being eluded. (Deleuze 1990, 2-3)

Any figure in a painting, and the viewer who herself becomes the "figure of the artwork" through her aesthetic experience, is launched in two directions, plunging back into the pure past, into the synchronous accumulation of all presents that have ever passed,[7] *itself* a becoming that launches the figure towards a future *forever* to come, towards a synchronicity of unforeseeable futures. A synchronicity of pasts and futures: in three seconds *and* seventy years ago *and* in a thousand years *and* ... 'which way, which way?'

The artwork that is counter to any passing present is untimely in Nietzsche's sense:

> Nietzsche opposes history not to the eternal but to the subhistorical or superhistorical: the Untimely, which is another name for haecceity, becoming, the innocence of becoming (in other words, forgetting as opposed to memory, *geography as opposed to history*, the map as opposed to the tracing, the rhizome as opposed to arborescence). (Italics added, Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 296)

An ahistorical account of the artwork does not remove its political or spiritual agency in relation to historical time, quite the contrary, it affirms its agency for all presents. The artwork is best defined not as a historical artefact but as a machine that relentlessly operates its atemporalizing function, launching the viewer outside of history regardless of her position within it. This simultaneous orientation (past, present, future), the ontological fact of the artwork, conditions the seemingly paradoxical qualitative descriptions of the artwork: primeval and futuristic, whilst contemporary to the viewer's 'here and now'; nostalgic, prophetic, and disruptive of the present; and so on. As with Gauguin's painting *Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?* (1897-8) an artwork answers all those inquiries *at once* because there is only one answer to the three questions: the ahistorical Life the artist expresses-creates. Through the aesthetic experience of the artwork we are destabilized in relation to our ordinary experience of chronological time, and thereby to our understanding and experience of art history, which begins to fall apart.

Art's Revolutionary Utopia

There could be many ways or conceptual strategies to counter a history of art, and instead accounting for artworks in ahistorical manners: a 'typology of visuality – haptic and optic, linear and painterly' (Ionescu 2013, 10); a 'pathematology [...] of anonymous affects' (Ionescu 2013, 24); we could develop a Nietzschean 'symptomatology' of artworks as symptoms of a will, of active and reactive forces, of the noble and of slavery; or elaborate an event-based account of artworks where each is thought of as an 'historically independent' 'accident' resulting from a Nietzschean dice-throw.[8] But such a typology, pathematology, symptomatology or "lottery" remain *too focused on the side of history where artworks emerge* as types, effects, symptoms or accidents. *A radical ahistorical account of art looks to 'the other side of history' and this leads to a geography of utopia*.

Revolution and utopia seem intuitively linked: revolution, taking place in chronological time, leads to utopia, or is at least a step towards it. In Deleuze and

Guattari this articulation is reversed: the revolution is *in and of itself* the utopia: '[T]he success of a revolution,' they write, 'resides only in itself, precisely in the vibrations, clinches, and openings that it gave to men and women at the moment of its making' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 177). The success of a revolution does not reside in that which it gives or results in, in a new social, political, cultural, or environmental 'context,' it resides in the becomings ('vibrations, clinches, and openings') that emerge through revolutions. This success, these becomings, constitutes *in themselves* a utopia. Deleuze and Guattari call this a 'utopia of immanence':

> to say that revolution is itself utopia of immanence is not to say that it is a dream, something that is not realized or that is only realized by betraying itself. On the contrary, it is to posit revolution as plane of immanence, infinite movement and absolute survey, but to the extent that these features connect up with what is real here and now. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 100)

Utopia is therefore that which in a (historically definable) revolution escapes history. Revolution and utopia are reciprocally conditioned: the revolution, identifiable in states of affairs and chronological time, does not take place without utopia being attained, and utopia, irreducible to the historical advances the revolution might induce, nevertheless only exists in and through a revolution. As in our ordinary conception of utopia as a 'place to reach,' the utopia of immanence, as a plane of infinite movement, is geographical. Utopia is, however, a slightly awkward concept because even when opposed to History it remains lodged within it as its idea or motivation. The two are easier to reconcile when it is remembered that for Deleuze and Guattari the concept is becoming itself, born in History, and falling back into it, but not of it. In itself it has neither beginning nor end but only a milieu, and is thus more geographical than historical. Such are revolutions and societies of friends, societies of resistance that create pure becomings, pure events on a plane of immanence. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 110)

Despite this I nevertheless propose to keep the concept of utopia, albeit as becoming (i.e. becoming as a utopia), and as a place or geography aimed at by artists, while revolutions and the futures they aim for take place in states of affairs and chronological time. Hence utopia and revolution are two co-existing and reciprocally determining geographies (the aspatial and the spatial) and times (the ahistorical and the historical). Utopia will never come to be *actualized* in the universe and the historical time we live in. There will forever be pure events that exceed states of affairs, becomings that surpass any histories, and possible worlds emerging in the face of oppression. This is not bad news, quite the contrary, it posits utopia not as an uncertain promise of the future but as having always existed, including here

and now, in its endless challenge of and for the future. More specifically it emerges through our encounters with (and the creation of new) artworks.

To its advantage the artwork, as *timelessly* untimely (absolutely untimely), in comparison with social, cultural or political revolutions (only untimely relative to the specific present in which it takes place), survives history, the artwork continues it's aspatializing and atemporalizing operations throughout history: a 'monument'[9] that 'does not commemorate or celebrate something that happened but confides to the ear of the future the persistent sensations that embody the event' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 176-177). Still, there are many similarities between artists and revolutionaries. The utopia of immanence attained by revolutionaries *is the same as* the utopia attained by artists and expressed in their artworks: becoming, a plane of immanence. Revolutionaries live an enthusiasm of becoming that is also found inside art's utopian geography, an 'immanent enthusiasm without anything in states of affairs or lived experience being able to tone it down, not even the disappointments of reason' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 101). Similarly, all those places where Deleuze discusses May '68 could also be said to refer to an artwork. Less than a year after the May uprising Deleuze described it as 'of the order of a pure event' (2006, 233); as 'a becoming breaking through into history' (1995, 153); and as 'a demonstration, an irruption, of a becoming in its pure state' (1995, 171).[10] The crucial difference between artists and revolutionaries is that artists know that utopia is attainable *here and now*, and their problem is to expand this utopia through their specific medium. On the other hand, revolutionaries, however motivated or convinced, doubt that utopia will be attained *in the future*, and they will only be artists if they begin to express, through the forms their revolution produces, this immanent enthusiasm. Surely the most beautiful and radical moments are when artists and revolutionaries meet and one no more knows to which side one belongs.

Art's Utopia: a Patch-(Art)-Work Geography

The possible universes of art are modes of inhabitation, lands, settings, architectures, houses, etc., which allow the artist to both attain and give a consistency to her becoming-absolute (affect) and her vision of the absolute (percept). The absolute is thus expressed and created in a becoming beyond any of its previous modes of existence, and this is conserved in the artwork. As nomads of the absolute, artists use such inhabitations or lands as stepping-stones towards further unforeseeable landscapes. The radical act of artistic creation is never the representation or realization of a pre-conceived idea, the nomad never precisely knows where and how she'll settle next because her act is always pure experimentation, an unforeseeable becoming.

A Led Zeppelin piece of music connects to a Gauguin painting, a Led Zeppelin-Universe opens itself onto a Gauguin-Universe, and vice-versa, to form a single geography. The affect of a single chord connects a Led Zeppelin song to the percept of a flat plane of orange in Gauguin. It is not a matter of looking at paintings whilst listening to music. The geography of the utopia expressed in art is a constellation of interlinked universes, lands or monads. Those lands co-exist and are opened onto one another because by allowing for a movement outside of history, artworks have a certain synchronicity, they not only co-exist in historical time as material things, but also, and primarily, in the atemporal or ahistorical virtual dimension of possible universes. In a kind of neo-Leibnizianism, the artwork is 'the monad, astraddle over several worlds, [...] kept half open as if by a pair of pliers' (Deleuze 1993, 137), half opened onto one another and onto the absolute which is like a wind that blows through their territorial borders, a breath of fresh air[11] coming from the Outside, and 'which surveys all possible universes' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 178).

The Story of Art as Opposed to (its) History

This ahistorical geography is not the subject of a history of art but of a 'story' of art, mythic in appearance, which tells of its creation by a people of nomad-artists. This story of art is a synthesis of a multitude of aesthetic experiences that 'tell' of the adventures of occupying-creating the absolute. But this story cannot be narrated, instead the viewer intuits it through experiencing art, a story not told through words but felt, lived, through complexes of sensations. It 'tells' of modes of existence, ways to inhabit this earth by inhabiting the absolute, and gives answers to the only ethical question: how to live the present? Artists produce pure events, they are 'athletes' of the inorganic (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 172), wanderers on the plane of immanence, territorializers of the absolute, constructors of a utopia, they live Life, agents of a timeless resistance to human limits. As viewers we become witnesses to, and take part in, a grandiose ethico-aesthetic experiment elaborating these various modes of existence. What ensues is our encounter with the untold and untellable story of a people and their utopia, a story which to different degrees appears both mythic and 'agonizing,' as Deleuze describes the pure event:

> The agonizing aspect of the pure event is that it is always and at the same time something which has just happened and something about to happen; never something which is happening. The x, with respect to which one feels that it just happened, is the object of the "novella"; and the x which is always about to happen, is the object of the "tale" ("conte"). The pure event is both tale and novella, never an actuality. (Deleuze 1990, 63)

Art's utopian geography and people agonizingly appear to have already happened or not to have happened yet, giving them a mythic quality. This is not because artworks were always created prior to aesthetic experience, or because they represent possible futures to come. We hesitate *to believe* in this story because its utopian geography and people are primarily virtual, and their actuality relegates an absolutely radical endeavor to the all too human, material and chronological facts of a history of art. Perhaps we feel that this story only belongs to a past we have lost, and so we feel nostalgic for this lost potential to realize the utopia; or perhaps we feel that this story belongs to a future we are yet to attain, and then we see no immediate hope for our present. But these feelings find their very conditions in a history of art which works to deny our belief in art's utopian geography and people: a self-denying and historicizing procedure that opposes itself to and works against the self-affirming utopia of art. Ultimately it is not a matter of believing or not in this story of art, it is a matter of believing *in this world* here and now, in the invisible forces that incessantly give rise to it, and always launch it forward towards its unforeseeable future. Believing in this world means to trust in the very possibility, and in our capacity, to attain to an absolute.

New Man: a Utopian Aesthetic Experiment

My art practice is centered on the notion of a new (wo)man, one that echoes Nietzsche's 'superhuman'. My practice is thereby utopian in nature, and aims to work against what I see as a contemporary reluctance to commit to new utopian and radical ideals. A utopia of immanence achieved through art practice would result amongst other things in the creation of women and men who incarnate the past-, present- and future-orientation of humanity. As monuments *to* and *of* becoming, the new (wo)man cannot persist without being incessantly (re-)created anew. The new woman always appears to escape as soon as she is incarnated, and her existence-persistence is a never-ending battle. She is a paradoxical personage that has already come (in the past), that is achievable here and now (in the present), and that will forever remain to come (*à venir*) (in the future). I believe art in its most radical form has always worked towards creating such a personage, one which blurs past, present and future, blurring our world and an Outside, a permanent experiment constituting humanity's noble search for a future both *against* and yet *for* humanity (*avenir*).

My work moves between oil painting, performance and its video and photographic documentation, and sound, which I combine in installations. I will focus here on my painting practice. The regular presence in my paintings of an ambiguous figure who is continually changing appearance attests to this elusive new (wo) man I experiment in becoming-expressing-creating. An ongoing and open-ended series of paintings is titled after him/her: *The Emperor* a.k.a. *the Impostor* a.k.a. *the Exhausted* a.k.a. *the Aristocrat* a.k.a. *the No-Man*.... Looking at myself in the mirror I easily experience this *simultaneity*: first, *myself perceiving myself* (a grounding experience – 'arriving' into a body, 'my' body, and into a world, 'this' world), and second, *perception perceiving someone* (an un-grounding and liberating yet menacing feeling – thrusting me towards an undefinable unknown, towards a '*perception perceiving*,' a *something*-else seen in the mirror). This experience of infinite oscillation, first between *myself* and *something larger* (perception perceiving, or perception 'itself'), and second between *myself* and *something*-else, is crucial to my painting. My painting could be defined as a kind of 'self' portraiture insofar as my 'self' has become something else through its encounter with a specific point of view or image. This encounter does not only occur with a reflection in a mirror, but as well through wandering in countries often foreign to me to provoke chance encounters that I then document photographically, or with an artwork (mine or the photographic documentation of another artist's work), or with other photographs that I stumble upon.

The painting process starts in the studio with a photograph. At first the canvas is covered with a chaotic ground of contrasting tones and/or hues, or with a pure light produced by a single hue or a gradient of many hues, or a mix of the two, on which the image will appear. The image will not "germinate" from a region of the ground and expand over its surface (as it does in Bacon), instead the image results from many "all-over" layers of more or less transparent light or abstract structures/frames placed on top of one another and then more or less wiped off again. I am interested in the landscapes and figures we experience as evanescent relationships of light, as if they were pure hallucinations or apparitions that overpower the sense of touch by the eye, and tint the world with a veil of falsity. More abstractly, or ontologically, my painting process proceeds from the virtualization of an actual to the actualization of a virtual (or inversely so), repetitively, whereby each of those processes is enacted by adding or erasing one or many layer(s) to/from the painting. Whether the point of departure is an actual point of view on the world (an *actual* that will first be *virtualized*) or an artwork (a *virtual* landscape/figure that will first be *actualized*), the process remains (ontologically) the same: actual-virtual-actual-virtual....

Figure 1: Antoine L'Heureux, *Dancer (Rainer)*, 2014, oil on canvas, 1.42 x 1.68 m. Image courtesy of the artist.

In *Dancer (Rainer)* (fig. 1) the point of view is that of looking through a two-layer screen of light orange and blue to perceive a figure that is positioned within a red frame and on a grey shore (both hint at the architecture of an actual space), within a chaotic background. The two-layer screen is not an *actual* screen, nor is the chaotic background an *actual* feature, they have no representational function, they are aesthetic devices, equivalent in that sense to the armatures that Bacon uses to frame his bodies without organs, and which, he says, 'never ever had any sort of illustrative intention' (Sylvester and Bacon 2008, 23). The screen and background are abstrac-

tions, and for me an engagement with abstract painting. But in my painting the abstract is never an end in itself, disconnected from the world (and thereby arguably a form of transcendence); it is rather what is 'seen through,' literally (in this case) *and* ontologically. The abstract is either chaotic or geometric/architectural, and functions as a *condition* of perception. The act of looking through layers of abstraction acts as the *genesis of the perception* of the non-abstract forms within them – the *conditioned*. The figure's shoulders appear to tend towards a cyan that results from seeing the figure through the orange and blue layers of the screen, similar to when Deleuze discusses minute and obscure perceptions (in our case of orange and blue) that enter into a differential relationship (dOrange/dBlue) in order to integrate/actualize themselves as *that* clear perception of cyan (see, Deleuze 1993, 88). Abstraction is employed as a way (or diagram) to proceed by '...virtualization-actualization-virtualization...'; abstraction is always a chaotic pure-light that functions as a virtual conditioning an actual, itself opening onto a virtual, and so on, reminding us of the crystal-image of Deleuze's modern cinema, through which a virtual image becomes indissociable from "its" actual image (see, Deleuze 1997).

By proceeding by '...actual-virtual-actual-virtual...,' a process of genesis, I don't however, aim to express the genesis of (organic) forms themselves (as Bacon does), but rather to emphasize an engagement with the *genesis of perception* itself, in other words *the pure event that effectuates itself as the act of perceiving*. What I try to produce is an aesthetic experience that can be formulated as follows: *to perceive through the genesis of perception*, a perception 'that also perceives' its own genesis, without having to tear open (organic) figures and landscapes in order to reveal the becomings that condition them (which is the violence that overtakes Bacon's figures). The viewer looks *through* a virtual to see an actual which in turn is looked through to see a virtual which in turn ..., and so on. It is precisely in this way that *the new (wo)man perceives*: she is not in the world as if trying to escape it and attain the absolute, she perceives (the world and herself) through the genesis of perception and as such she knows that she already is and always has been bathing in/as the absolute, that she *is* the absolute, and that it is from that 'position,' from that 'point of view' that she perceives (the world and herself).

The new man is this condition in which the absolute perceives itself as a man. This entails a point of view *from* and *of* the absolute onto the absolute: *the absolute sees*, and it sees nothing else than itself (anything else would introduce forms of transcendence outside the pure plane of immanence that the absolute is). The painting is *how* the absolute sees, and thereby correlatively *how* the new man sees. The viewer's eyes gain an absolute function, his eyes become indiscernible from the 'absolute's eyes'. The *now-absolute-viewer* perceives not only a landscape but (when the painting holds a figure) also another 'new man' (e.g. Dancer (Rainer)), a new friend of

the type 'new man' he has himself become. In most of the paintings this figure looks back directly at us, as if inviting us to join her on the land she has reached: art's utopian geography. It is not the viewer per se but the absolute that sees through the *now-absolute-viewer,* and when the absolute, aware that it can see nothing but itself, perceives this figure, *the absolute sees itself as a man* (the concept of new man). Having become absolute, and remaining absolute, the viewer sees itself as having (regained) a semblance of man *in this new man*. The figure in the painting is no more a new friend inviting us to join her but *us, already there in the utopia*. The painting has become mirror, and the viewer sees *himself* as The Emperor, as Impostor, as The Chaosmic Dancer, etc., the many appearances of the evanescent and forever falsifying new man. This description of the aesthetic experience the painting aims to induce is defined by the ontological movement: man – absolute – new man/viewer – absolute – The Emperor a.k.a. ....

The painting stems from a point of view on the actual world that is then virtualized. This does not take place on the grounded canvas but through the brain/body, and it operates by destruction, abstraction and extraction. From the photograph, with all its details, remains only specific motifs and qualities which become intensive virtual features extracted-abstracted from the image (= actual-virtual). For example the shadow of a figure, a horizon line cutting across the view point, the angle of some architecture, a sense of floating, a ray of light (extracted-abstracted from a photograph of Rainer), etc., form the virtual conditions of a movement towards a landscape yet to come, one created by the process of painting. The brushstrokes are loose and rather uncontrolled, so that the virtual features undergo actualization as if by accident, the brushstrokes are therefore mechanical, procedural. The colors are most often mixed directly on the canvas by working with thin overlays of paint, actualizing unpredictable hues. The aim is to make as few decisions as possible and not to plan an outcome, so as to allow the unforeseeable landscape/figure to emerge 'by accident'. Often the initial actualization fails, either because it was overly representational (too close to the photograph), or nothing has emerged through the attempted process of actualization (the chaotic pure-light remains 'in and of itself,' or simply a chaotic 'mess' appears (Deleuze 2003, 109)). Whether this first attempt was a success or failure a second virtualization takes place, this time directly on the canvas either by erasure (total or partial wiping out of one or many layers of paint) or by overlay (to paint another often semi-transparent layer) so as to launch the painting and 'its actualizations' back towards a chaotic pure-light. Actual-virtual-actual-virtual... and so on, until the image 'fixes itself'. This occurs when the image seems to sit precisely in-between its actualization and its virtualization, a point of view *of* and *from* the absolute, neither falling into the darkness of a mess, nor being a chaotic pure-light *in itself.* These risk referring to a transcendent realm or to its

fantasy (disconnected from the world, from the plane of immanence), rather than offering the very fragile equilibrium of a chaotic pure-light beginning to radiate through our world.

Inevitably, at the point where the image 'fixes itself' something in the image *disturbs* our ordinary point of view on the world. Colors appear to clash, forms are broken, incomplete, they seem to require more tangibility, the point of view is blocked by shores of colors, and so on. This disturbance is not the 'hysteria' (Deleuze 2003, 44-55) of Bacon's spasming body without organs, but correlates instead to the inherently *hallucinatory function of the eye* that is provoked by the painting. The world as we ordinarily perceive it becomes hallucinatory, and we are no longer looking at the world from within, as if the world is there awaiting our act of looking, but are now in the absolute perceiving the world as it comes into existence. The onto-genesis of our perceptions and the onto-genesis of the world itself have become one in the same. As Deleuze puts it: '*Every perception is hallucinatory because perception has no object*' (1993, 93). The world appears *simultaneously* with us, and our perceptions, and this is what I call the 'world hallucinated' as a necessary correlate to the hallucinatory function of the eye. When this function begins to broaden its horizon, it includes its own genesis within that which it gives to see, opening the world onto the 'disturbing' non-spatial and ahistorical realm of pure events. The disturbance is not (only) a matter of aesthetic taste, clashing colors for example correlate to a menacing threat because the chaotic pure-light that begins to radiate through our world also corroborates its collapse. Paradoxically, the utopia is threatening, liberation is menacing, inorganic Life is marked by (organic) death, a fact that stems from its very ontology and imbues my paintings, creating a utopia with an eerie feeling.

On the other hand, when the painting process begins with an artwork (and not with an actual point of view on the world that first needs to be virtualized), the point of departure is already *virtual*. The first step is therefore to plunge into this virtual landscape/figure so as to actualize it, in other words to actualize the artwork through my aesthetic experience. It is no longer a question of opening an actual perception onto *itself*, onto its onto-genesis, but of pinning down or 'actualizing' in my own painting the virtual, inorganic and vital movements of my aesthetic experience of this other artwork. Evidently not all aesthetic experience is interesting, and I only paint, capture-express, the rare moments where I've been overtaken by a becoming-absolute leading to *myself-now-absolute* perceiving a new man. At this moment an *artwork-now-mirror* reflects, and allows for me to become, the intangible new man I search for through my practice. The ontological movement of this process of creation is: myself as viewer – absolute – new man a.k.a. The Chaosmic Dancer a.k.a. The Elephant-Rider (in *I Am Past* below) a.k.a. ... .

Figure 2: Antoine L'Heureux, *I Am Past*, 2014, oil on canvas, 1.42 x 1.68 m. Image courtesy of the artist.

I Am Past (fig. 2) follows such a becoming through my aesthetic experience of a painting, and where it is exhibited at The Royal Elephant National Museum in Bangkok. The technical painting procedure is again the same (more or less uncontrolled or mechanical brushstrokes, rather unpredictable hues, layers of paint repetitively applied and erased, etc.), only this time abstraction is not explicitly used in order to engage with the genesis of perception (as it was in *Dancer (Rainer)*). If *I Am Past* nevertheless embodies a perception 'through' the oscillation of virtual-actual, it is not only because the technical procedure moves incessantly between the (re-)actualization of forms and colors and their (re-)virtualization into intensive virtual features (this 'crystallizing' process remains explicit to different degrees in

each painting). It is also because the virtual layer or space of the framed painting (where the elephant and man virtually find themselves) begins to blur with the actual layer of the space where the painting actually is (the museum where the tusks are located). Those blurred layers (virtual-actual) are then 're-virtualized' in *I Am Past* (virtual-actual-virtual), which is a virtual space inevitably linked to the *actual* gallery space where the painting is encountered (a painting of 'a painting on a wall' on a wall) (virtual-actual-virtual-actual). My art practice therefore elaborates different diagrams or strategies to realize this new man's crystal-vision of the world, in a kind of no-style deriving from a repetition of the difference that expresses perceptions 'through' the oscillation of actual-virtual-actual....

This new (wo)man is my strategy for achieving a practice of nomadism within the absolute. He is perhaps above all 'The Impostor,' because each time she appears it is under a new guise, always *the* absolute, but constantly beyond any of its previous conditions of existence. He is both that which repeats (he always re-appears) and difference (in different guises). 'The Elephant Rider' and 'The Chaosmic Dancer' populate art's revolutionary utopia, and the landscapes that surround them, their visions posit a patch(art)work geography *of* and *as* the absolute that belongs to no history. They break through into our already hallucinated world and its chronological time as flashes or hallucinations from and of a mythic place and time, the accumulation of which begins to form in us the intuition of an untellable story of art. Those are not fantasies, imaginations or projections, they are pure becomings, the very "material" that makes utopia the common ground and endeavor of a society of friends: The Elephant Rider, Bacon's George Dyer, The Chaosmic Dancer, Gauguin's Fruit Picker, Matisse's Music Players, etc., personage-becomings, personage-sensations indissociable from those who captured them in their mediums.

Which history could tell us anything about the new man and his friends whose common task is to make us believe in this world here and now? What is radical about art is precisely opposed to *and outside of* (its) history. Deleuze already conceptualizes how painting, cinema and literature can be made to embody such radicalism, what I have elsewhere termed the artwork's embodiment of a 'commitment to Life'. We now need to develop new art practices which expand this commitment to Life, and to conceptualize the new ways in which they achieve this through their specific mediums.[12] Practically and philosophically we need to affirm art's radicalism, its revolutionary and utopian potential, because as a practice art needs to continue taking part in humanity's timeless experiment in elaborating new modes of perception and existence.

Notes

1. Deleuze claims both the Bolshevik and American revolutions failed; both announced an age of the new man (universal proletarianization and universal immigration, respectively) that ultimately led to Stalin, and to Reagan. Deleuze also gives the examples of South Africans and Palestinians being 'caught up in a becoming-revolutionary' because they are forced into situations where 'there is nothing else to be done. [...] The future of history and the present becoming of people are not the same thing' (author's translation, quoted in P.-A. Boutang 2004).
2. I have completed a practice-based PhD in the Department of Art at Goldsmiths, University of London.
3. Worringer finds the conditions of the urge to abstraction in man, in 'psychic presuppositions': 'the urge to abstraction is the outcome of a great inner unrest inspired in man by the phenomena of the outside world'. Furthermore: 'Each individual people is naturally, in consequence of its innate structure, predisposed more toward the one or the other side, and the observation of whether the urge to abstraction or the urge to empathy prevails in its art provides us, at the same time, with an important psychological characterisation.' (Worringer 1997, 15 and 45)
4. Art and philosophy have developed the tools to express or conceptualize the absolute through, respectively, the affect and percept, and the concept. Science as a third form of thought fails to effectuate Life's will-to-absolute deterritorialization because of its very method, measurement, which serves to create an ever more detailed survey of the (actual) universe. (see, Deleuze and Guattari 1994)
5. 'As opposed to a *misérabiliste* painter who paints parts of organs, Bacon has not ceased to paint bodies without organs, the intensive fact of the body.' (Deleuze 2003, 45-46)
6. This is the title of chapter 14 of *Francis Bacon – The logic of sensation*.
7. 'a "past in general" that is not the particular past of a particular present but that is like an ontological element, a past that is eternal and for all time, the condition of the "passage" of every particular present' (Deleuze 1991, 56). We could also translate *un passé éternel et de tout temps* as 'a past that is eternal and *of* all time,' i.e. a past of all the presents that have ever passed (see, Deleuze 1991, 52).
8. 'Accident' understood as 'fruit of chance, in the Nietzschean sense,' and as a result of 'the repetition of a dicethrow': the 'affirmation of *chance*, [... and] the affirmation of *necessity*' (Deleuze 2002, 40 and 26).
9. 'The monument [i.e. the artwork] does not actualize the virtual event but incorporates or embodies it: it gives it a body, a life, a universe. This was how Proust defined the art-monument by that life higher than the "lived".' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 177)
10. Quoted in Patton 2009, 41.
11. Deleuze and Guattari claim painting and writing brings 'a breath of air from the chaos that brings us the vision' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 204).
12. A practical task I hope to exemplify with my art practice, and a philosophical task I began in my PhD thesis by showing how some of Thomas Struth's photographs, Pierre Huyghe's installations, Peter Doig's paintings and Francis Alÿs' performances embody new paradigms of commitment to Life beyond the one described by Deleuze and Guattari (see L'Heureux 2011).

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