

Variations: The Philosophy of Gilles Deleuze

Plateaus – New Directions in Deleuze Studies

‘It’s not a matter of bringing all sorts of things together under a single concept but rather of relating each concept to variables that explain its mutations.’

Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations*

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VARIATIONS: THE PHILOSOPHY OF GILLES DELEUZE



Jean-Clet Martin

*Translated by
Constantin V. Boundas and Susan Dyrkton*

EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY PRESS

French edition © 1993, 2005, Editions Payot & Rivages
English translation © Constantin V. Boundas and Susan Dyrkton, 2010

Edinburgh University Press Ltd
22 George Square, Edinburgh

www.euppublishing.com

Typeset in Sabon
by Servis Filmsetting Ltd, Stockport, Cheshire, and
printed and bound in Great Britain by
CPI Antony Rowe, Chippenham and Eastbourne

A CIP record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 978 0 7486 3882 6 (hardback)

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Contents

Letter-Preface by Gilles Deleuze	vii
Preamble	ix
<i>First Variation: Ethics and Aesthetics</i>	1
1. Battlefield	3
2. Transcendental Empiricism	16
3. Nomadology	36
<i>Second Variation: Three Poetic Formulas for Nomadic Distribution</i>	55
1. Time Out of Joint	57
2. The Dice Throw	79
3. 'The Garden of Forking Paths'	105
<i>Third Variation: Multiplicities</i>	119
1. The Image of Thought	121
2. Variations	146
3. Poetics of Multiplicities	162
<i>Fourth Variation: Malcolm Lowry, or, the Manifesto of Things</i>	175
1. The March Towards Death	177
2. Mannerisms	191
3. For a Microphysics of Qualities	205
Postscript to the Anglo-American Edition: What is a Multiplicity?	215
Notes	217
Bibliography	225
Index	231

Letter-Preface by Gilles Deleuze

In reading you, I appreciate that your preoccupation with my work shows such a thorough understanding. Here, I will try to respond to some of your remarks, although more often than not the differences between the two of us are a question of language.

1. I believe in philosophy as a system, but I dislike the notion of system when people relate it to the coordinates of the Identical, the Similar and the Analogous. I believe that Leibniz was the first to identify system with philosophy and I agree with the sense he gives this identification. The questions on ‘overcoming philosophy’ or ‘the death of philosophy’ have never impressed me. I feel I am very classical. The system must not only be in perpetual heterogeneity, it must be in *heterogenesis*, and it seems to me this has never been tried before.

2. From this point of view, what you say about metaphor, or rather against it, strikes me as correct and profound. I only want to add something which in no way contradicts what you have said, but rather follows a similar direction: the double turning away or treason seems to refer to operations that establish a radical immanence – they are the trace of immanence. The essential connection with the *Earth* is derived from this.

3. You really grasp the meaning that the definition of philosophy – as an invention or creation of concepts – has for me. This means that philosophy is neither contemplative nor reflexive nor communicative; it is, rather, a creative activity. I believe it has always been that, but I have not yet been able to fully explain myself on this point. This is why I would so much like my next book to be a short text on *What is Philosophy?*

4. You also have a firm grasp of the importance the notion of multiplicity has for me. And, as you say, multiplicity and singularity are essentially connected – singularity being at the same time different from the ‘universal’ and the ‘individual’. ‘Rhizome’ is the word most able to designate multiplicities. Then again, it seems that I have entirely given up on the worthless notion of simulacrum. Finally,

A Thousand Plateaus is devoted to multiplicities for their own sake (becomings, lines, etc.).

5. 'Transcendental empiricism' actually doesn't mean anything if the conditions are not specified. The transcendental field should not be traced over the empirical, the way it was with Kant: it must be explored for its own sake, and therefore experimented with (but in a particular way). This type of experiment furthers the discovery of more multiplicities, and also the exercise of thought, to which my third point refers. I believe that along with the multiplicities, the most important issue for me has been the image of thought as I tried to analyze it in *Difference and Repetition* and later on in *Proust and Signs*, and elsewhere.

6. Finally, allow me to offer a piece of advice for your work: in the analyses of concepts, one must always begin with very concrete and rather simple circumstances, neither from philosophical antecedents, nor even from problems as such (the one and the many). For example, with respect to multiplicities, one must begin with the question, what is a *pack*? (as opposed to a lone animal); what is an *ossuary*? Or, as you said so well, what is a *relic*? It is, for example, in the concrete relationship between man and animal that one must locate a possible critique of mimesis. I have therefore only one thing left to tell you: do not lose the concrete – return to it constantly. Multiplicity, ritornello, sensation, etc., are developed into pure concepts, but are strictly inseparable concerning the passage from one concrete item to another. This is why one must avoid granting any notion a primacy over others: each notion must involve the others as its turn and time has come [. . .]. I believe the more gifted a philosopher is, the more he has the tendency, *in the beginning*, to abandon the concrete. He must prevent himself from time to time – the time needed to return to perceptions and to affects, which must double up the concepts.

Forgive the immodesty of these remarks. I was trying to be quick. All my best wishes for your work, and please believe that I am sincerely yours.

Paris, 13 June 1990
Gilles Deleuze

Preamble

Deleuze's philosophy does not easily lend itself to commentary or to the caricatured suggestion that, upon meeting Félix Guattari, his writing drastically changed. 'Two-fold writing' necessarily requires special attention to guide the work through the interstices of shared passions or to matters increasingly external to pure philosophy, as witnessed in the unusual confrontation between cinema and so many other desire machines. There will be, therefore, a question regarding marriages and nuptials between the adventures of the concept and the machinations of extraordinary stories in the vein of Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past* and Melville's *Bartleby* – to mention only the most emblematic encounters.

Given these solicitations, Deleuze's philosophy will be placed in a state of perpetual bifurcation, and will inevitably be carried to regions far from homegrown disputes. Moreover, it will be punctuated by a passion for the concrete, always experienced as a multiplicity that succeeds in doubling up the concepts. Perhaps this is the reason behind Deleuze's late decision to carry the history of philosophy, in his book on Leibniz, along constructions of extra-philosophical thought, despite the fact that the invented concepts had already been liberated from the exigencies of the university and linked to life. His classical style, as he mentioned, lies in his desire to grasp the world bodily, and thereby, on behalf of philosophy, take hold of areas that are external to it and incapable of being completely subsumed under a doctrinal consideration.

As far as Deleuze is concerned, we should never use a concept in order to talk about ourselves, to appropriate an idea in the first person singular, or to bring the concept under the vanity of an 'I'. All these are convenient labels that erase the disquieting event we encounter, eliminate the newly experienced outside in the same way one avoids risking a serious study. Obviously, we never write ourselves. Each new book leads back to the threat of deterritorialization without returning to the self. This is the meaning behind Deleuze's exhortation, in his *Letter-Preface* – to always return to the concrete.

PREAMBLE

Philosophy begins with the need to break away from oneself, and from the specialists' habit to value words that end in *-ism*. From his Leibniz, we will retain, not his Leibnizianism, or whatever would strengthen his personal thesis, but rather the experience of the *Fold* – the folding device that, for example, experiments with every living fibre of a thought that regards the individual as the product of its refolded enveloping world. Deleuze never speaks in his own proper name or with the pretension of imaginary and institutional functions. The philosopher assumes a name in order to lose the form of the 'I' through the complicity of a 'we', within which the reader could slide and find a shared place.

In Deleuze's writings, 'we' designates multiplicity and, given its impersonal utterance, allows us to encounter the always evasive different that destabilizes our descriptive catalogues. No less than the author, the work also liberates itself from subjective unity. It creates loose sheets that resist capture within the artificial fetters of dogma. It assumes the form of a note, understood as a marginal note, a quick sketch, within the context of a variation or an atypical *mélange*. Therefore, the paragraphs that Deleuze pins into his books resemble autonomous leaflets and stapled segments, between which one can interpolate signs from everywhere that are difficult to read without risk of capture. Hence, the unusual references to werewolves, sorcerers and animals that Deleuze exploits as lines of flight or even as humorous forms. *A Thousand Plateaus*, this unique Deleuze-Guattari book, is precisely the mechanism of symbiosis of the multiple writing and of the lavish experiences that it supports, as it relaxes and then suddenly contracts around certain points – the *ritornellos* – or later, the *concepts*. How can we read and digest notebooks of this kind, readily available to everyone and bringing to mind Valéry's own, when we deny them the dogmatic form of a high-school-like *exposé*?

We cannot tackle a multiplicity without first constructing it, without experimenting with all the dimensions and plateaus that fit together. For this reason, I call *variations* the varieties of this nature, and I intensify them, under names as unlikely as those of Bernhard Riemann, Malcolm Lowry, Stéphane Mallarmé – wondering what theory Deleuze could possibly devise with the events that his precursors had launched ahead of their time. Some of these multiplicities are extended in a way that resembles a suspended staircase with superimposed landings; others resemble a system of fanned-out playing cards. Have we, in the fashion of Bernhard Riemann, explored all the ideal notebook dimensions that consist of as many leaflets as

Preamble

necessary, with a combined thickness of zero – as excessively thin as a transparency?

In a certain sense, we can say that a variation implies a fourth dimension – the dimension that Deleuze calls ‘plane of immanence’. This could easily be compared to Delaunay’s canvases, when, for example, the three graces – the three young women – engage in a dance where their bodies begin to fade within the cubic architectural elements (*La Ville de Paris*, 1917). Variations often demand blends of such amplitude, as if the vision’s foreground and background were falling back on a univocal surface – a line of immanence. At any rate, inside the transparent space of this ideal notebook, a multiplicity will be fanned-out from the position of singular points, from crossings found on every layer and all strata of an astonishing mille-feuilles, and always in accordance with new values. All these points are ramified, dotting numerous heterogeneous leaflets, laying atop one another and bearing, on each of their widespread supports, a reminder, a return consistent with each new posture or different rule of distribution. How are we to glide along these surfaces? According to which orientation are we to traverse their shallow depths? According to which dynamisms will we traverse the folios that compose a multiplicity?

Each of the variations we have created establishes a peregrination across the various superimposed leaflets of a multiplicity. From one leaflet to another, the variation repeats all the postures and positions for one and the same element, which correspond to it on the sum of the explored strata. At the same time, the reader is invited to acquaint himself with other itineraries and to visualize different linkages. It is perhaps a voyage of such breadth that we must assume it under the sign of nomad philosophy, passing as it were from one mast to another, much like a sailor on his riggings.

In fact, this peregrination that Deleuze invites us to follow finds its place of birth in a text of Immanuel Kant that creates a conceptual character, an unusual mariner – the clandestine passenger wandering in the margins of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and carrying this critique along a clinical course – a course that allows it to reach its superior form. Deleuze pushes this form in the direction of what he calls ‘transcendental empiricism’. On this exterior line, and with different purposes in mind, the question of orientation will be raised once again: how do we orient ourselves in thought? According to which maps? According to which images?

FIRST VARIATION

Ethics and Aesthetics

It is impossible to maintain the Kantian distribution, which amounts to a supreme effort to save the world of representation: here, synthesis is understood as action and as giving rise to a new form of identity in the I, while passivity is understood as simple receptivity without synthesis. The Kantian initiative can be taken up, and the form of time can support both the death of God and the fractured I, but in the course of a quite different understanding of the passive self.

(Deleuze 1994: 87)

Battlefield

Having reached the end of the transcendental analytic, Kant returns one last time to the familiar course in order to pin down its articulations in a cursory manner and with the help of a metaphor. Kant's use of metaphors is precise enough to allow us to bring their trajectory into relief. We know that Kant never flatters himself for the literary quality of his writing; he explicitly prefers the precision of demonstration and the clarity of concepts. His main objective is not to seduce the reader with a lofty style. Kant does not aspire to please, except through his conceptual rigour. And transcendental philosophy, even as it attempts to enunciate the mechanism of reflective judgement, willingly prevents itself from giving in and being invaded by the free play of a discordant accord, or by a mode of exposition that the understanding would no longer seek to determine. Nevertheless, there is metaphor in Kant. We could even say that Kant, on many occasions, immerses himself in an allegorical construction that brings to light a secret, anachronic character that contrasts with the often barren appearance of the most hackneyed formulae of the critical edifice. Indeed, we witness the birth of a desert island that Deleuze revisits in 1950, in a text bearing the same title (Deleuze 2004). In this early text, Deleuze stages the creative character of desire on this desert island. The separation and isolation of those who were shipwrecked mobilize the power to repeat, with a choice of difference – the now displaced conditions of life on the mainland. This is a creative repetition that, following the example of Robinson, could have led Dafoe to stage anew the colonial values, based on a vastly different plane of composition. We are certainly far from an equally creative repetition in Kant's work. The fascinating text in which Kant establishes the limits between the obscure unknowable and the pacified experience of the most certain phenomena serves as a model of its kind and deserves to be remembered in its entirety.

We have now not merely explored the territory of pure understanding, and carefully surveyed every part of it, but have also measured its extent,

and assigned to everything in it its rightful place. This domain is an island, enclosed by nature itself within unalterable limits. It is the land of truth – enchanting name! – surrounded by a wide and stormy ocean, the native home of illusion, where many a fog bank and many a swiftly melting iceberg give the deceptive appearance of farther shores, deluding the adventurous seafarer ever anew with empty hopes, and engaging him in enterprises which he can never abandon and yet is unable to carry to completion. Before we venture on this sea, to explore it in all directions and to obtain assurance whether there be any ground for such hopes, it will be well to begin by casting a glance upon the map of the land which we are about to leave, and to enquire, first, whether we cannot in any case be satisfied with what it contains – are not, indeed under compulsion to be satisfied, as there may be no other territory upon which we can settle; and, secondly, by what title we possess even this domain, and can consider ourselves as secured against all opposing claims. (Kant 1929: B295/A236)

As we can see, the *Critique of Pure Reason* is exposed in this text in its entirety in order to sharpen, through metaphor, the terms of an alternative the disjuncts of which merit our attention. On the banks of a tormented shore is where the critical apparatus develops its most remarkable effects, especially those developed by Deleuze as a new aesthetics. What is at issue, and in many respects defines the fundamental claim of the critical method, revolves around the need to accommodate an established land within a metastable space. To the smooth dimension of a moving earth and to the swirling fluxes of a tumultuous nature on the path to separating the elementary declinations, we must oppose a system of places organized by a cohesive principle that functions as a grid, and we must measure all changes on the basis of a universal causality. It is here, on this sedentary distribution of objects on territory secluded from the powers of outside influences, that the essence of Kant's discovery of the transcendental is being played out, understood as a necessary affinity for the categories to the object of a possible experience. That this thorny and often very obscure relation goes through the specifications of the soil on which Kant grounds the regulated distribution of the general categories of objectivity, as they relate to the unity of self-consciousness, is shown by the recurring fears related to the uncertain construction of a system of pure knowledge, always compromised by the perils of a shaky underground and peopled with strange beings exhibiting unpredictable becomings. In this respect, critical philosophy faces two dangers: on one hand, the affirmation of the illusory exigency of

dogmatism, preyed upon by a transcendental realism that produces the object of a dialectic; and on the other, the weight of the constant menace of a capricious sensibility, completely indeterminate and perpetually changeable, whereupon a wild diversity develops, bristling with potentialities that escape both the unity of the active synthesis and the organic hierarchy of the faculties that characterize speculative common sense.¹ It is clear that the first risk we encounter follows an irreducible interest of reason and remains, so to speak, intra-critical with respect to everything derived from the inevitable search for something unconditioned behind every given condition. It finds a satisfactory solution within the limits of a transcendental idealism that grounds the empirical reality of pure representations once they are connected with phenomenal conditions. But – and this is much more delicate and poses a problem that Kant will constantly skirt around – it lends itself to the possibility of a necessary coherence in phenomenal successions. At this level, the other risk of critical philosophy makes itself known as the power of a pure outside. Criticism diligently refuses to associate with this outside to the extent that its jurisdiction does not find the necessary support for its exercise.

We cannot help but see that, under these unthinkable quarrels with an outside far removed from all exteriority, the issue is the evoked nightmare (hardly evoked) of a cinnabar – that is sometimes red, sometimes black, sometimes heavy, sometimes light – that straddles all categories, participates in all the reflections of an unbridled imagination, refuses the exact determination of the recognition of phenomena within a subject believed to be the same, and allows the most irreducible doubt to rise. For a measuring instrument, our shipwrecked mariner will only have a barometer, the cinnabar of which (the red mercury) is thrown into a turmoil and changes endlessly its density. The Cartesian hypothesis of the evil genius had at least offered an orientation to doubt by pinning it on the absolute omnipotence of a supreme being who grounded an incoherence, both willed and deliberate. But on the contrary, the hypothesis of a heavy cinnabar makes every game-master disappear. The evil genius does not question the extreme rigour that grounds the evidence of the Cogito. With respect to the God who deceives, it is only the objective value of our representations that is rendered problematic. The evil genius who puts all his industry and all his power at the service of the ruse of simulation and dissimulation, remains inscribed in the play of truth and appearance. This is why it never weakens the order of the certainties linked to the absolutely transparent existence of a subject

enclosed within its true identity and why, by the same token, it preserves the internal coherence of our representations. Put otherwise, the evil genius hypothesis preserves the value and the precision of the logical succession of thought, the rigorous connection of the chains of reason, the coherence of intuitions and deductions, the inextinguishable clarity of simple natures – in short, it preserves, in its purity, the luminous regime of evidences.

Even if the organization of ideas comes from a dream, or from an hallucination, this dream is not incompatible with enlisting a science that concerns the rules of development and the composition of the oneiric game. At any rate, it is clear that this plan of the deceiving God presupposes, at the very foundation of its practice, a certain number of indispensable and inalienable rules of method necessary for the production of representations. They establish a system of perfectly homogeneous ties whose principal merit resides in the genesis of a world which, having a regular and organized appearance, sustains itself on a hierarchy of laws. From here, the illusion itself is established on a number of perfectly evident atoms that the omnipotence of the evil genius prevents from transgressing. Descartes' deceiving God resembles a game-master who scrupulously watches over the game, and ousts the cheater who spoils the divine pleasure derived from the wonderful ruse. It is the pitfall of a much more daunting game, made obvious by the inconstancy of the imagined cinnabar that haunts the passages of the *Critique of Pure Reason*.

In fact, Kant does not bother to raise the question of the objectivity of our representations on the terrain of the Cartesian analysis. The objective value of our ideas must not be based on transcendental realism. All the a priori elements of our faculties – the metaphysical exposition of space, time, categories and Ideas – have no objective value unless, through a transcendental deduction, we relate them to phenomena, that is to say, to the receptive conditions of sensibility. Or again, such a deduction never concerns the realm of Ideas, which is already incompatible with the establishment of finitude. The cinnabar hypothesis compromises the objective value of our representations in the realist sense, since the entire critique consists of turning our backs on naïve realism, preventing the dogmatic conception of objectivity. The point where Kant introduces his greatest torment and raises the furore of a storm is at the very level of the internal coherence of our representations. In short, the risk announced by Kant's meteorological nightmare, with the proliferation of the unstable cinnabar, is in the anarchic development of a changing game,

always prepared to impose new rules – without the master transcending it, pulling strings from his omnipotent height – and whose immanent development modifies the principles of its own exercise with each move. At any rate, what is still missing is the orthonormative table of a game that is regulated in advance by the divine omnipotence. As a result, a game without definite rules ensues – the tossed dice roll from square to square, from red to black, seemingly without any rational connections.²

It is against this $n-1$ dimension, from which all support is eliminated, that Kant will try to build the ramparts of the *Critique of Pure Reason* as the delimitation of a territory with stable contours. But occasionally the critical rotation breaks up, cracking along various points, causing the storm of a furious sea to swell. With unbearable cracking sounds, polar icebergs crash against one another and are hurled in a jumble onto the shores of an obscure island, in a fantastic cloud that incites the wildest ideas – a cloud of sand and foam, of crystalline powder and salty vapour where, at the approach of enemies against whom the Kantian island seeks to forewarn itself, an intense life erupts in all directions. For a moment, the Kantian ground breaks into myriad golden particles, producing, on the foam and the fog, a nebulous screen from which a group of adventurous navigators extracts the most heterogeneous hallucinations. This ‘empire of illusion’ that offers ‘the deceptive aspect of new lands’ the opportunity to endlessly attract ‘the navigator who dreams of discoveries [and] . . . adventures’, this strange country, never fails to remind us of Thomas de Quincey’s admirable text that Deleuze exploits in an impressive analysis of perception (Deleuze 1993b: 94):

[T]he dusty vapour had developed itself far and wide into the appearance of huge aerial draperies, hanging in mighty volumes from the sky to the earth; and at particular points where the eddies of the breeze acted upon the pendulous skirts of these aerial curtains, rents were perceived, sometimes taking the form of regular arches, portals, and windows, through which began dimly to gleam the heads of camels ‘indorsed’ with human beings – and at intervals the moving of men and horses in tumultuous array – and then through other openings or vistas at far distant points the flashing of political arms. But sometimes, as the wind slackened or died away, all those openings, of whatever form, in the cloudy pall would slowly close, and for a time the whole pageant was shut up from view; although the growing din, the clamours, shrieks, and groans, ascending from infuriating myriads, reported, in a language not to be misunderstood, what was going on behind the cloudy screen. (de Quincey 1890: 411–12)

Here we find a string of superimposed or contiguous overtures whose pulsations expand to a set of differently actualized singularities, structured according to the variable speed of the vortex and the intensity of molecular agitation. We could say, repeating an example used by Simondon in his analysis of perception, that we are faced with the oversaturated solution of a liquid in suffusion in which crystals appear – crystals that are virtually caught in the amorphous state of an aqueous suspension.³ This type of solution is entirely different from the actualized crystalline structures it generates. It constitutes a transcendental preindividual field that cannot resemble the corresponding empirical actualizations. This transcendental dimension is peopled by singularities that preside over the genesis of individual entities. And these singularities are connected by a completely heterogeneous series, on a plane of metastable consistency that contains the available set of potential forces and energies. Thomas de Quincey's cloud – as much as the oversaturated solution of Simondon – represents a free distribution of singularities in a state of matter where no force has been integrated in a series of determined convergences, or according to an empirically determined chain. It is quite the opposite: all singularities are still floating; they are astride the assignable vectors, simultaneously extended in every direction to the vicinity of other singularities. In other words, all present forces realize the virtual diagram of dynamic spaces that remain in a state of suspension. The latter is such that there is no foreseeable solution at the level of the empirical precipitation where the particular and individuated dynamic plane will appear. Everything coexists in a field of vectors as a condition of metastability.

In this crucial moment of metastability, where there coexist all the virtual levels brought about by all the relations of forces of the oversaturated solution, nobody is yet in a position to foresee exactly what will happen. As Simondon observed, with the presence of the smallest crystalline seed, the most inconspicuous ventilation can initiate crystallization within a particular orientation, causing all the singularities to converge on a number of fixed series. In this respect, before the first crystal appears, the oversaturated liquid is a pure field of tension, which, with the help of the smallest local accident, will *trigger* the most decisive event. We can say then that the moment of greatest uncertainty bears the conditions for the most critical problem – the conditions of the event that produces consistency for every series in line with the orientation it imposes, through an unpredictable throw of the dice. The event, according to Deleuze's

beautiful formula, could be compared to the trajectory of the sombre precursor announced in the rumble of thunder, and which, while invisible, determines the course in reverse – the precursor that orients in intaglio and, in the least expected way, connects all the energies stirred up by the storm.⁴ This is why, in Simondon, before the individuated formations of *perception*, one must take into account the local accidents within a perceptual metastable field that the perceptual form actualizes, in the manner of an oversaturated liquid that precedes the genesis of crystalline chains.

Once again, we find this static genesis in Vasarely's work, where divergent structures coexist on one and the same plane. That the eye cannot actualize them all does not make them any less *real* in a state where singularities float, and where the smallest local accident inflects around a polarity of convergences. It is this genesis, reflected in pop art, that is short-circuited by the form of psychology as it remains at the meta-empirical level of a pre-given form – a form from where we extrapolate the successive *Abschattungen* of an already individuated ground of perception. The process of Gestalt theory traces the good form, and offers it as a de jure foundation of an empirical given. It derives this right from facts, and consequently confuses the meta-empirical with the transcendental.

We would do well then to carry on with empirico-transcendental distinctions, provided that we do not take the transcendental to be a mere generalization of an empirical domain whose form we preserve the way Kant had done with his separation of matter from form. In the best case, this type of abstraction rests on a process of generalization that preserves all the requisites of experience, even when the experience in question is barely possible. We must no longer think of the transcendental as a copy of the empirical or as a meta-empirical structure that retains the essential characteristics of its unnamed origin. In fact, the Kantian separation of the pure form of sensibility from the matter of phenomena confirms the ambiguity in critical philosophy and its inability to break away from the exigencies of common sense. It continues with the form of common sense as it raises a simple empirical exercise to the transcendental level.⁵ The distinction between the empirical and the transcendental does not pass by the pure form of possible experience different from the matter of phenomena; on the contrary, and against hylomorphism, it plunges into this matter in order to extract real conditions. And so, in this context, we must distinguish a problematic field where all preindividual singularities are distributed as so many topological

instances, with no determined direction yet assigned to them from a field of resolution that crystallizes the singularities on the basis of determined itineraries. It is this highly significant distinction that Deleuze successfully thematizes with the help of Albert Lautmann's mathematical reflection, expressed as follows:

The geometrical interpretation of the theory of differential equations clearly presents two absolutely distinct realities: the field of directions and of the topological accidents that may happen to it, as, for example, the existence, inside the field of singular points with no direction attached to them; and the integral curves, in the form they take in the vicinity of the singularities of the field of directions. (Lautmann 1946: 41–2)

The event flashes between these two planes as a crucial option that oscillates between a distribution of singularities without *determined* direction and the nature of directed and polarized singularities. And so, the event has as a condition the hesitation of all floating singularities, angled on all sides towards each of the fixed singularities. And it is realized in the general precipitation that causes singularities to meet as it points them in an individuating direction. This is why every event plainly includes an element of reality that no concrete situation could ever actualize, and is also counter-effectuated in a virtual, albeit real, dimension.

From here, perception, the central element in transcendental philosophy, refers to the resolution of a problem that in no way disappears in its corresponding solution. This counter-actualization stirs up de Quincey's dust cloud. In fact, in these turbulent regions we will find all the differential connections between the preindividual singularities that coexist virtually and determine a set of equally probable solutions, to the point of absorbing the tensions of those force fields under consideration. Perception defines a problem as it creates a form chosen from among the lines of actualization that coexist in the event – the same event responsible for bringing about a determined orientation and polarity. But it is obvious that when the polarity changes, all singularities enter new differential relationships and congregate in accordance with other relationships within proximity. What is absolutely fantastic about Thomas de Quincey's cloud is that it seizes the improbable figure from an aspect of the event that no probabilistic figuration can possibly effectuate; that is, it seizes the state of perception on the verge of leading all forces towards one residual solution, before the problem crystallizes its tensions around a formally individuated nucleus.

Battlefield

In fact, this dust cloud is the site of multiple polarizations. It is the perception of an opium addict in perpetual variation as the latter tests, with each aeolian mutation, the redistribution of all singularities, and produces vague zones of convergence in series which themselves diverge. Within this cloud, the multifariousness of a battlefield is presented to perception as it ties together heteroclitic elements – men, camels, weapons, horses emerging from arches, portals, incommensurable windows – overrun by the sombre factual precursor that surveys the battle and grants it the unusual consistency that accounts for Stendhal's astonishment in *The Charterhouse of Parma*:

The furrows were full of water, and the damp earth of the ridges was flying about, three or four feet high, in little black lumps. Fabrizio just noticed this odd appearance as he galloped along . . . The escort was now galloping at full speed, and our hero realized that it was shot which was tossing up the soil. In vain he gazed in the direction where the fusillade came. The white smoke of the battery seemed to him an immense way off, and amid the steady and continuous grumble of the artillery fire he thought he could distinguish other reports, much nearer. He could make nothing of it at all. (Stendhal 1925: 44, 45)

In his Bautzen journal, Stendhal claims that from noon to three o'clock 'we see very well all we can see of a battle, that is to say, nothing'. All the conditions for perception are present and yet we see nothing. It is not that the realm of the visible performs an all-out retreat in order to dispense with the order of visibility; rather, as in Vasarely's illustrations, the battle produces a state of surfeit within which no form and no ascribable direction will be crystallized to the detriment of another, except through certain localized and altogether unforeseeable accidents. The battlefield establishes a plane upon which coexist the set of configurations that the relations between singularities succeed in virtually suspending in that aspect of the real that cannot be effectuated and, therefore, remains necessarily invisible and enveloped by the event. The only singularities to remain visible are those that successfully absorb series coming from the same direction and surrounding a polarity that imposes a path to the crystallization of elementary chains. The state of the battle designates the hesitation, given that all impossibilities are equally real – real, without being actually visible, and virtual, without being merely possible. This static genesis (which is nevertheless dynamic in its order of effectuations), this transcendental morphogenesis developed by

Simondon, de Quincey and Vasarely, remains tied to the integral calculus that Leibniz applied to the individuation of perception.

For Leibniz, the world is expressed in the sombre depth of each monad, much like a mist perpetuated by an infinity of tiny folds, moving about in all directions in the form of confused *petites perceptions*; or again, in the form of passive syntheses suspended in a state of equilibrium, disturbed by the smallest local accident and inflecting against the large folds of conscious macroperceptions. Macroperceptions are nothing really but the translation of a disequilibrium within the order of microperceptions; they are the expression of a continuous differentiation or of an endless metastability whose polarization presupposes an outside, in the existence of a body that affects the microperceptive equilibriums. It is perhaps for this particular reason that we say the perceived resembles something for Leibniz; and that something forces us to think. Perceptions evoke vibrations that are received by an organ that, consequently, permits the introduction of a disequilibrium or a specific direction to the stable space of microperceptions. For this reason, the structure of macroperception resembles the structure of the body that excites it, without being identical to it. This is why pain does not resemble the actions of a pin prick, but rather the pin's imprint on our body, as well as the orientation that it produces at the centre of the metastable field of *petites perceptions*. And so, as Deleuze's thorough analysis conclusively demonstrates, the connection between *petites perceptions* and conscious perceptions is not one of parts to a whole, but rather that of the ordinary to the remarkable, of the regular to the singular (Deleuze 1993b: 86–7).

This passage from the ordinary to the remarkable mobilizes the entire body of integral calculus. In this context, and in order to understand Leibniz's characteristic endeavour, let us consider the area *DEFG*, limited by the segments *DE*, *DG*, *EF* and by the arc *FG* of the curve whose equation corresponds to $y = x^2$ (Fig. 1).

Calculations of areas such as these are made possible through successive approximations contrived from the subdivision of the interval *DE* into n lengths of h , all equal among themselves, whereby y_1 , y_2 and $y_3 \dots$ are the coordinates of the points of division (Fig. 2).

The desired quantity is therefore obtained through the summation of the three rectangular areas that are created in this way, and it is this that brings about an approximation of the area *DEFG*. But as Cavalieri suggests, it is also possible to reach a much more precise approximation – albeit anexact and unjustifiable on the plane of

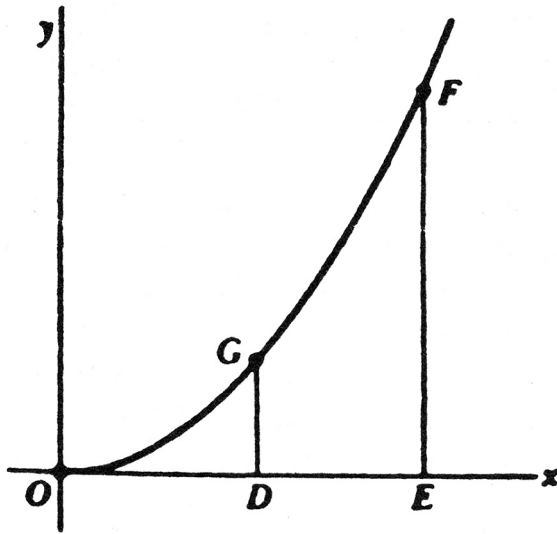


Figure 1

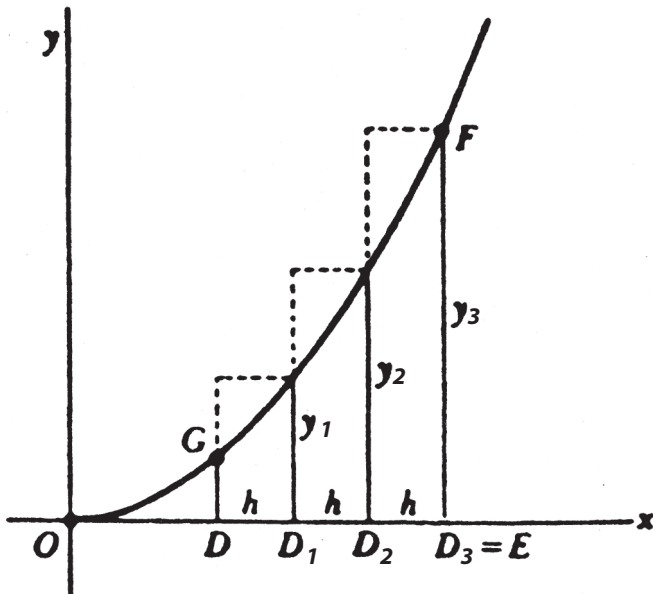


Figure 2

imperceptible colours: $dy/dx = y$. As Berkeley will reproachfully say to Leibniz, we are faced with levels of the world wherein each part may be divided into an infinite number of elements; these elements are themselves infinitely divisible into other parts that constitute infinitesimals of the second order, and so on *ad infinitum*.

Rather than assume that the 'good form' is an explicative principle, the Leibnizian analysis has the advantage of engendering it through a process in which the combination of infinite series permits us to account for the genetic conditions of the form realized at the level of macropception. But Leibniz wants each monad to have the same potential for singularities and the same type of molecular agitation, even if each one of them filters a different perspective. In other words, only those singularities that enter into differential relations are permitted entry into perceptive existence, the series that *converges* according to the demands of compossibility. And these demands of compossibility establish the bigger picture that casts off every divergence and impossibility, discarding them to the heap of worlds that are merely possible. Thanks to this closure of the world from which all impossibilities have been expelled, thanks to the Baroque principle of harmony, Leibniz, despite everything, remains opposed to the idea of a universe of perceptions where, as in a battlefield, all singularities would enter into a conflict in accordance with the divergent rhythms of a massive puzzle, without a common support and without a game-master.

And so, Leibniz's analysis permits the connection, beyond the Kantian method, of the conditions of real experience with a transcendental aesthetic that initiates the kind of static genesis that is inherent to our sensibility. In other words, it permits the relationship with a transcendental aesthetic that initiates a genesis according to which, between blue and yellow, there would be not only empirical differences, but also a concept of internal difference whose space and time would spread out over the plane of variable consistency (Deleuze 1993b: 95). Off the coast of an uninhabitable island the cinnabar floats – red, black, heavy, light – as a common factor between divergent qualities. This is the centre of a problem that Deleuze's philosophy experiments with – in the creative event where the world is torn asunder, under the lash of a whip of fury that raises the dust through which reality becomes visible.

Transcendental Empiricism

Kant will never stop protecting himself from the molecular furore of the ocean, from the sea overtaken by fog, or from the polar breeze streaked with a multilinear aurora borealis; he will incessantly shield himself from all this inorganic life, even as he reveals the intense nature of this raging cosmic battle. As Michel Serres very poetically maintains, at the dawn of the world, clouds float with fluid edges and tumultuous meteoric storms, from which rare, barely formed islets emerge (Serres 1997: Préface). Order is one of these rare islands that Kant endeavours to transform into an originary continent, a fundamental occurrence and a universal organization. However, Kant fears throughout these spectacular hesitations that expose the ‘deduction of the concepts of understanding’, that understanding will never find the opportunity to use its determining power, in which case, phenomena would never be compliant with the conditions of its unity. Under these conditions, sensible diversity will remain submerged in an aberrant confusion and in a molecular consistency completely removed from causality’s schemes.

We rediscover this unusually persistent fear in the first introduction to the *Critique of Judgement*, where the requirement for a principle of complete connection of everything contained in the totality of phenomena is postulated, in keeping with an ‘ought to be’ of a quasi-moral nature (Kant 1969). In this introductory text, this postulate assumes the appearance of an indispensable prerequisite for the organization of a system of experience. This is why we must admit unconditionally ‘that the unlimited disparity of the empirical laws’ and ‘the heterogeneity of natural forms do not suit nature’. In other words, without such a practical presupposition, unconditioned and by the same token indemonstrable, the risk becomes truly unavoidable for irrational connections to occur between the elements of the sensible world and the proliferation of unnecessary and arbitrary links. At any rate, in order to maintain the coherence of our representations, we must have recourse to a completely unpredictable act by which we will bring about the synthesis of the manifold. But,

according to a second, equally indispensable postulate, we must also presuppose an act through which this represented manifold can refer to the general form of objectivity. Consequently, it is not enough to offer a synthesis that cannot be justified – a synthesis in the order of genesis, free from all necessity – but one must also hope that between the synthesis of the manifold and the form of objectivity a rational harmony exists.

Here we find a free determination of the synthesis regarding its origin, a determination that nothing justifies, and yet a synthesis which, if it hadn't occurred, would have condemned all experience to wallow in chaos. We should not mistake this for a free agreement of faculties since we are actually faced with a determinant judgement. However, this determination of the synthesis through understanding is itself altogether undecidable. In this respect, Deleuze is perfectly correct to consider understanding as the site for the determination of the play of faculties, in the context of the first critique (Deleuze 1984: Chapter 1).

In fact, understanding as a power of rules has a number of *a priori* concepts, defined by the table of categories that are considered on one hand to be representations of the unity of consciousness and, on the other, as predicates of an object in general. That a category is a unit of synthesis and, under this form, is also a predicate of objectivity in general, means that through it the entire dimension of objectivity is determined. Given the table of categories, one must admit, according to an unavowed and perhaps arbitrary choice, that the form of objectivity in general and that of every object in particular is necessarily substance, relation, cause or effect – despite the fact that all these categories cannot and should not be attributed to the same object *at the same time*.

From this point of view, the categories of the object = *x* are the correlates of transcendental apperception, on the condition that the latter be defined as unity of consciousness across time. The 'I think' accompanies all our representations in so far as the relationship of our representations to an object is regulated on the basis of an order of succession; that is, according to a temporal order from which chance has been excluded:

Whatever the origin of our representations, whether they are due to the influence of outer things, or are produced through inner causes, whether they arise *a priori*, or being appearances have an empirical origin, they must all, as modifications of the mind, belong to inner sense. All our

knowledge is thus finally subject to time, the formal condition of inner sense. In it they must all be ordered, connected, and brought into relation. (Kant 1929: A99)

This order of time forbids all categorial bifurcations. It designates the homogeneous and invariable substrate of change, the ground upon which objects must be distributed and recognized, on the basis of two essential rules: the sequential, chronological unfolding of diversity, and the understanding of the necessity of this unfolding. It is, therefore, the synthesis of apprehension that offers us the opportunity to see the unity of the manifold emerge. And this unity must be able to reproduce itself according to the temporal order of a causality determined by transcendental apperception.

In this sense, we understand why schematism makes time the formal condition for the **diverse** of inner sense and also the condition for the relations of all representations, to the extent that time must be understood as the regulated support for the categorial dispensation. At this level, a transcendental determination of time is homogeneous with the categories from the side of the understanding and with the phenomenal diversity from the side of intuition.

It is not, therefore, by chance that the schema is conceived on the basis of a determination of time. Such a form of determination manifests the ultimate possibility for envisaging the succession of phenomena according to an orientated or, if one prefers, an irreversible mode of causality. We know that time, as Kant conceived it in his transcendental aesthetic, may well be felt under the form of an intuition that is irreducible to concepts; but this does not prevent it from being subjected to a single dimension where different times can never occur simultaneously, but are essentially sequential to one another. It is only on this condition that ‘only in time can two contradictorily opposed predicates meet in one and the same object, *one after the other*’ (Kant 1929: A32/B49).

Time as a foundation for the principle of non-contradiction fulfils the condition necessary for all coherence; however, it never establishes its sufficient reason. As a matter of fact, a succession is also required to offer the necessary element for a causal sequence. It is this determination that produces, for no real reason, the hidden art of schematism. In this perspective, the hypothesis of the cinnabar likely fulfils all the conditions for the first requirement. But the problem that it manifests concerns the undecidable character of schematism attached to the transcendental apperception, as if the latter were a

real principle of reason. Now, if it is true that it behoves the nature of the principle of reason to be without reason, it would also be possible that no determination of time be produced, thereby leaving the succession of phenomena in the worst possible disorder.

The undecidable alternative for the first critique is therefore quite simple: either our knowledge finds the opportunity to conform to an object – that is to say, finds the unity expressed in the correlation of the object = x and the transcendental apperception (as the subjective principle capable of regulating the passage of one perception to another and the order of the categorial dispensation) in order to constitute the entire series of perceptions; or we are condemned to an indeterminate chaos, with the implication, as Kant maintains, that we can produce ‘a multitude of perceptions, and indeed an entire sensibility, in which much empirical consciousness would arise in my mind, but in a state of separation, and without belonging to a consciousness of myself’ (Kant 1929: A122).

The succession of phenomena, and the succession of categories as attributes of the object in general, must have the character of necessity if we want to avoid the proliferation of a wild, explosive and fibrous sensitivity. Hence, we are offered the alternative between two conceptions of sensibility, with the latter being divided between two types of transcendental aesthetic: in place of the correlation ‘transcendental ego–object = x ’, it would be possible to find the consistency of a supersaturated field of turmoil, potentially stirring up a pack of larval subjects in view of the unlikely cinnabar in a state of continuous variation. As Deleuze claims, such a field would offer all the conditions for a transcendental site, since it would permit access to the virtualities of real experience rather than to the generalities of a possible experience (see Deleuze 1994: Chapter 3). We know of course the concrete option that critical philosophy chose when, according to a categorial obligation, it decided in favour of a schematism driven by the ‘*absolutely first* . . . principle of our thought’ that unites the many empirical consciousnesses in the unity of a single self-consciousness (Kant 1929: A117, note). It is completely inexplicable that here an utterly primary principle of thought is put into motion, and that an unthought origin is raised to the level of a fundamental principle of thought. This alleged principle – fundamentally obscure and in the form of a *causa sui*, cause without cause, ground without ground, sheltered in its originary retreat – escapes the system of natural causality.

It is necessary to see the transcendental apperception as the

inexplicable ground that, thanks to its originary nature, shies away from the requirements of speculative philosophy, and according to which all knowledge proceeds with an indefinite ascent in the order of causes. This becomes clear in the thesis of the third antinomy:

Everything which *takes place* presupposes a preceding state upon which it inevitably follows according to a rule . . . The causality of the cause through which something takes place is itself, therefore, something that has taken place, which again presupposes, in accordance with the law of nature, a preceding state and its causality, and this in similar manner a still earlier state and so on. If, therefore, everything takes place solely in accordance with laws of nature, there will always be only a relative and never a first beginning. . . (Kant 1929: A445/B473)

It is therefore obvious that everything happens as if we would have to admit, in the depths of thought, a first beginning or, in accordance with the antithesis of the same antinomy, a causality of freedom constitutive of the originary apperception, incomprehensible and inexplicable because of its absolute anteriority. Immediately, we see that even the possibility of the *Critique of Pure Reason* is derived from the absolutely first necessity of the fact of freedom whose exposition can only be worked out in the *Critique of Practical Reason*.

We see there is no escape from the nightmare of the cinnabar, and the rise of a multilinear aesthetic, except through morality. Nietzsche is certainly correct to denounce Kant's submission of the will to morality as he does when he reclaims an affirmation of a will disengaged from moral scrutiny. From the very beginning, Kant rejects perceptual variation and multiplication of perspectives where the fragmentary mobilization of the will as the will to power is exposed. It is therefore possible to return to transcendental philosophy as Deleuze does, but to take it in a new direction, towards a multisensible aesthetic, denying the Kantian alternative.

To choose in favour of chaos, rather than an organization grounded in schematism, is tantamount to being definitively trapped within an arrangement whose terms one has not chosen.¹ Indeed, since Kant, the mistake of all transcendental inroads lies in preserving the pure form of objectivity and consciousness. It is always taken for granted that the alternative to the formal manifold, distributed in a homogeneous and sequential time (*chronos*), comes up against a complete and indeterminate chaos. This is why metaphysics sees the manifold as being imprisoned by the unity of subject and object. Metaphysics, therefore, reaches closure via the following alternative:

either we postulate the existence of a regulated diversity under a homogeneous and irreversible time – a uniform time that supports all its parts; or we admit the chaos of the *Ungrund*. In this respect, those who are apologists for the ground-less and for the vertigo of abysmal depths remain the inevitable prisoners of the Kantian alternative. Deleuze's discovery lies elsewhere. It calls on a *heterogeneous temporality* whose fragments no longer come together on the basis of the idea of a restored totality. Rather, they are put to work according to the divergent rhythms of *Aion*, as pieces of a massive puzzle with the notion of support removed – a disparity or a variation with $n-1$ as its formula. By the same token, it calls upon an aesthetic of multiplicities that affirms the combined strength of all preindividual singularities, thrown in all possible directions on a multidimensional plane of immanence and actualized through local accidents that assume the asymmetrical genesis of the sensible.

Under these two aspects, and without being inscribed in the measured identity of subject and object, while also avoiding being swallowed up by the immense chaos of the undifferentiated abyss, Deleuze's transcendental empiricism traces its own differentiated topological course, and liberates the part of the event that is irreducible to empirical forms, thereby marking the event's real but nevertheless non-actual conditions. This perfectly determinable sensitivity, tested and mobilized by Deleuze towards a transcendental field where all virtual singularities and configurations coexist through the roll of the creative dice, becomes the announcement of a destructive tremor in the realm of thought. This tremor is apt to blur the world of individuals while turning it on its head and suspending the cloud that foreshadows the ripples of a raging sea. Instead of letting itself be determined by the unity of transcendental apperception which, in accordance with the mode of time, imposes the regulated form of necessary sequence on the categories of the object = x , the imagination could very well constitute divergent syntheses that would mobilize all the *categories* of the object in general. These categories could then begin to proliferate *at the same time*, and break away from the principle of a necessary, synthetic unity of phenomena in favour of a harlequin cinnabar that would be simultaneously red, black, heavy, light, cause and effect.

Transcendental empiricism is, therefore, inseparable from piracy (*peirates*) launched to its *ex-periri*, at the peril of its own shipwreck.² Once again, we find in the test of this limit the adventure of the foolish navigator, having left behind the obscure island, whose

intensive wake Kant seeks to secure by repairing the multilinear journey through territorial stratification. But at the limit of this unusual test that causes the insular taxonomy to flee, the dimension of the *sensed* as such is deployed. In this line of flight, in this movement of deterritorialization, the dimension of the sensed is molecularized and succeeds in pirating all the connections that make sensation the combined result of faculties under a speculative common sense.

In this respect, it is obvious that the entire doctrine of faculties, diligently elaborated by means of an analogical metaphoricity, establishes the site of an intrigue. We must return to this site, to the extent that the genesis of the sensible finds itself short-circuited within it, thanks to the constraining postulates of certain moral options and ineradicable doxic values. Along with the analogical exigency of a *sensus communis*, we must diffuse the entire apparatus in order to produce the conditions for the discordant agreement of all faculties. At any rate, what is woven under the construction of a common sense is the massive reactivation of all common places that the critique, as transcendental philosophy, should have eradicated. Kant, according to Deleuze, can appeal to the postulate of schematism as the alleged agreement between understanding and sensibility only because, at the level of common sense, an even deeper agreement between faculties has already been presupposed (Deleuze 1984: 22–3). In other words, the object's necessary submission to the subject, taken from the Copernican revolution, has a sense only in the context of the mobilization of a common sense that can reinject an already presupposed harmony into the system. Here, in the depths of this harmony, we inevitably encounter the notion of an agreement that confirms the wholesomeness and the solid nature of all faculties as they join hands in the friendly process of community, communication and the analogical correspondence of various sensible data. In this context, the cinnabar, whether perceived, imagined or conceived, essentially remains the same – recognizable in every occurrence of pure reason.

And so, here we find recognition, as a model of common sense, shared by all faculties, in a concordant exercise in order to define every object according to the form of the same. In this respect, an object is recognized when all faculties are able, through a common accord, to bring their respective forms to establish the form of an object's identity. It is true that from this point of view, 'recognition . . . relies on a subjective principle of collaboration of the faculties for "everybody" – in other words, a common sense as a *concordia facultatum*; while simultaneously, for the philosopher, the form

of identity in objects relies on a ground in the unity of a thinking subject, of which all other faculties must be modalities' (Deleuze 1994: 133). With respect to values in use in philosophy, we move imperceptibly from *doxa* to an *urdoxa*, which misunderstands itself. Based on this extrapolation, transcendental philosophy institutes the unity of faculties at the heart of an absolute subject, and renders possible the conformity of each faculty to the form of the object that can be identified by all other faculties. Hence, the correlation between pure apperception and object = x necessarily extends itself on behalf of the empirical qualification to an affinity between all phenomena. In fact, the principle of the affinity between phenomena takes root in the unity of apperception that warns us against incoherence while it prevents the fibrous sensibility from expressing itself in incommensurable tatters devoid of the concordant exercise of common sense.

The *Critique of Pure Reason* effectively designates an unusual tribunal to invigilate over the proper use of each faculty, so that to each one it devolves a domain compatible with the territory supporting all other faculties. Under the umbrellas of these different domains, a viable territory imposes a well-balanced distribution of the ground, succeeds in disallowing territorialities to overlap, and repairs the compartmentalized development of human arrangements. It succeeds on the same grounds that previously propped up the play of encounters and similitudes – the common ground where beings had inaugurated the space of contiguities and the order of coexistences. From this point on, it is inevitable that this sedentary distribution of natural arrangements according to territories, domains and domiciles would call for a tribunal that would determine, on common ground, the element that belongs to each faculty. This distribution inevitably compromises the possibility of testing other distributions of faculties, other distributions of percepts, affects and concepts.³

Is this necessary to repeat? A tribunal of this nature can justify itself only by hypostatizing certain facts that have never been criticized. Without any previous examination, the first Critique presupposes the determination of time produced by a subject already removed from the speculative jurisdiction. From this perspective, the exercise of common sense takes off in the context of a postulated subject but, at the same time, it leads back to an arrangement of territorial domains from a ground established on the most ordinary metric and the most current weights and measures.

This is why it is difficult to leave the Kantian island, to abandon its soil without knowing whether we could find 'another soil to settle'

– a solid ground somewhere else, a ground that could be arranged into territories, domains and domiciles by means of fixed and proportionate determinations, born of an agrarian practice, the schemes of which we are able to find in the ‘Conjectural Beginning of Human History’ (Kant 2007a) and in all Kant’s anthropological texts.

At any rate, it is very probable, according to Deleuze, that the agrarian question played a non-negligible role in the organization of judgement, understood as the faculty of distinguishing parts (Deleuze 1994: 36–7). As a basic quality of judgement, the prerequisite for common sense, of a space of encounters and contiguities, designates a principle of distribution and delimitation affecting the division of the earth into neatly separated enclosures where the division of beings and entities is measured according to their degree of proximity to, or distance from, this transcendent principle of distribution. All transcendental philosophy, therefore, remains indebted to a series of ‘doxic’ presuppositions whose form it keeps intact: as we will see later, for Kant, man’s natural dispositions and his faculties never develop in an enduring way except through their implantation in the soil – an implantation connected to a sedentary life determined by agriculture (Kant 2007a).

Be that as it may, against the backdrop of this *urdoxa*, of this image of thought, we can only understand the distribution of faculties on the basis of an organic whole, loyal to the principle of harmony that characterizes the idea of common sense. Given the requirement of this type of sedentary judgement, the diversity of phenomena is only perceived under the condition that it be inscribed in the unity of object = x as a correlate of transcendental apperception. Only a collective manifold of the sensible is perceived and each faculty can account for it in agreement with all other faculties. In fact, to the extent that the transcendental apperception designates the ground of all recognition, and the synthesis of recognition mobilizes the transcendental ego as its condition, only this form of the manifold becomes sensible. This is compatible with what is given to our senses for an object that we can always conceive, recall, imagine, idealize; that is, a unique object that produces an agreement for all faculties. The sensible here, therefore, is nothing but an abstract sensible, one given exclusively to the senses within common sense. This is why the diverse, while incompatible with this agreement of our faculties (a cloud, fog, ice at the point of melting) is also apt to reactivate all the virtual planes coexisting in the event. We are then faced with the monstrous cinnabar, whose qualities bifurcate at once – cause

and effect, substance and accident, quantity and quality, red, black, heavy and light – without sequences or successions. This entire and particular sensibility represents a sphere that cannot be perceived by the common sense whose function is to organize the sedentary distribution of the Kantian doctrine of faculties. This pure outside, the *sensed* as such that violates recognition, thereby forcing us to think, must now define the site of another doctrine of faculties – the doctrine that Deleuze discovers in a logic of sense and in a logic of sensation. The latter are the indispensable elements of a grand aesthetic, ethical and political philosophy, of an untimely philosophy large enough to summon all the powers of a non-organic life, an art of conjugations and of declinations, *critique* and *clinic*.⁴

Obviously, there are encounters that force us to think and that mobilize ideas foreign to the mould of recognition, alien to that sensibility incapable of taking hold of anything other than what all faculties relate to at a common site. Agitated by unusual encounters, each faculty shakes off the tranquil assurance of common sense, ceases to converge upon other faculties, and branches off in the exercise of its own divergence, the length of its own distances. These encounters are inevitable.

Modern literature offers the most decisive experimentation with this disturbing occurrence: the force of dispersion where the power of the outside – or, as Blanchot says, ‘the vertigo of spacing’ – affirms itself. In this respect, Paul Valéry’s *Eupalimos or the Architect* is an unbeatable attempt that merits our lingering over it, since it is developed on the exact shore that Kant always closes behind the tumult and the fury of the oceans. On this shore, Valéry’s Socrates experiences the same trouble that Kant experienced in the face of his changeable cinnabar. Indeed, he has an extremely unusual encounter that no form of recognition can successfully handle in the concordant use of faculties. He faces an unusual object – white and purified under the combined action of water, sand and sun. The object warrants being picked up, while thought is whipped by an unexpected storm. Held between the thumb and the index finger, the smooth object offers food for thought and forces us to choose: ‘Chance placed in my hands the most ambiguous object imaginable. And the infinite reflexions that it caused me to make were equally capable of leading me to that philosopher that I became, and to the artist that I have never been’ (Valéry 1932: 53). It is from this shore that Socrates returns with the curious determination to appoint himself as the deliverer of minds, abandoning the object in general for the

tumultuous space from whence it should never have come. From the curvilinear flow of water and wind, the strange thing inherits the disjunctions and works furiously to make them coexist in a virtual way: 'I could not determine whether this singular object was the work of life, art, or rather of the true . . . intrigued by the object whose nature I could not understand, and which was equally claimed and reflected by all categories, I sought to escape from the perplexing image of my find' (Valéry 1932: 59, 61).

In its peculiar fluctuation, the object in question produces the divergence of all the categories it expresses, much like an umbel. We rediscover, at this level, the same problem generated by the Kantian cinnabar that also mobilized categories in accordance with an order of dispensation that could not be determined from the point of view of time. The umbelliferous form of this object whitened by the sun, that Valéry never defines – this something = x that we never see – must be explained in line with what Husserl thematizes under the explosive force of vague essences (Husserl 1931: §74). Resembling the umbel as a mode of inflorescence in the course of which the stalks grow, diverge and dispose of their flowers in an identical plane, the vague essence belongs to a plane of immanence, perpetuated by bifurcating 'eidetic singularities'. In this case, the level of radicalism faced by Husserl's philosophy corresponds exactly to the phenomenological reduction that puts all the multidimensional fluxes of consciousness to work ahead of the individuation of perception. Here we are faced with a dimension that opens up on the *chiaroscuro*, on 'the oscillating clarity and the intermittent obscurity' of a preindividual plane, that is not only meta-empirical but transcendental, the way Kant intended.

The Husserlian analysis elegantly stresses that with perceptual individuation we must resort to an eidetic preindividual plane that is not copied from the given form of a homogeneous time and a uniform space:

It is part of the peculiarity of consciousness generally to be continually fluctuating in different dimensions, so that there can be no talk of fixing any eidetic concreta or any of the phases which enter immediately into their constitution with conceptual exactness . . . It is only the individual element which phenomenology ignores, whilst it raises the whole essential content in discrete fullness into eidetic consciousness, and takes it as an ideally self-same essence, which like every essence could particularize itself not only *hic et nunc* but in numberless instances. We can see at once that a conceptual and terminological fixation of this and every similar

flowing *concretum* is not to be thought of. . . . There is no question of an unambiguous determination of eidetic singularities in a realm of description. . . (Husserl 1931: 209–10)

This difficult Husserlian text expresses a demand that Albert Lautmann will also discover in his own way. It refers to a situation in which all the eidetic singularities are pulled in all directions, in the way of an umbel, without any determined orientation uniting them: an undirected dimensional plane. Now, for Husserl, an exact science of the geometric and theorematic kind cannot handle this transcendental plane. The latter cannot be the object of a Euclidian, royal science, but implicates one that is anexact and yet rigorous. Husserl strongly emphasizes this: it would be disastrous to believe that the a priori methods of the exact sciences must serve as the model for all new sciences. A theorematic science, valid in the domain of empirical objects, is not concerned with the construction of morphological concepts that are adequate for describing the bifurcation of eidetic singularities. The contents of such a transcendental plane, striated with preindividual singularities, invite fluid essences that only a minor science is in a position to problematize. In opposition to exact theorems and their ideal essences, we must now reach a preindividual molecular dimension, permeated by morphological or morphogenetic essences as the correlates of a nomadic science.

The umbellous form, characteristic of the object that Valéry's Socrates discovers on the beach, designates that which Husserl correctly defines as *vague or fluid essences*, differing in their field of extension from the immobilized precision of ideal concepts and genres (Husserl 1931: §74). Under the notion of the eidetic singularity, Husserl discovers a new dimension to the concept, 'essentially vague', that describes all fluid *concreta* as immanent to individuated percepts. Indeed, vague essences are neither inexact in the way of sensible and empirical things, nor exact in the way of ideal theorematic essences. They are essentially *anexact*, stretched in all directions towards an irreducible bifurcation. This is why, Deleuze insists, vague essences do not constitute the mere lineaments of a proto-geometry, but rather designate the site of a permanent passage to the limit, boring out between all faculties a zone of indiscernibility, an obscure community without connection to the conjunctive analogy of common sense (see Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 367–8 and 408–9).⁵ The vague and white thing, the black and red cinnabar, all testify to a common fact of sensation without any relation to common

sense, a fluid essence, astride several incommensurable categories, a vagabond or nomadic essence.

The presentification of such a thing, straddling several heterogeneous realities, represents the initial shock and the brutal encounter that, by a lucky stroke, leads Valéry's Socrates to the gaseous and turbulent zone where all courses and all discourses are thrust together. Faced with this strange object that reaches the edge of the categorial compartmentalization, and this Pandora's box that holds *together* all goods and all evils, Socrates himself loses the unity of his faculties, and plunges into this asubjective state of consciousness, considered by Husserl to be under the influence of a form of a multi-dimensional and impersonal flux. Presented with the anexact disparity of the vague object, the identity of the subject begins to yield little by little, allowing its own wreck to emerge from under the smooth space of sea and sand. Feet planted deep in the soft sand, Socrates' unity still loses its balance, and comes undone into asignifying and asubjective molecules: 'I told you that I was born several [times]. . . The child when it appears is a countless crowd . . . A multitude of Socrates' were born with me' (Valéry 1932: 52). It becomes an anexact crowd that can be neither numbered nor identified – a pack. By his own admission, the chance that places the vague object in Socrates' hands brings about a strange hesitation that pulls the soul towards a molecular becoming. His soul decomposes into a multiplicity of preindividual singularities, into a vague and nomadic Socrates, straddling several coexisting and heterogeneous destinations – from a virtual perspective, the length of a rough course. But this course, similar to the one Sextus pursues in Leibniz's *Theodicy*, this course of multiple and diverging paths upon which Socrates lets his vague essence wander while he distributes its impossible becomings – this course, Socrates brings to an end as quickly as possible.

Instead of realizing all Socrateses in one and the same heterotopic space, we move, in the way Deleuze seems to criticize Leibniz for, towards rigorous limitations, towards a geometry of theorems that permits the reduction of all the non-actualized Socrateses to mere ideas: 'Ideas. They have remained in the condition of ideas. They came, asking to be, and they were refused' (Valéry 1932: 52). From the swarm of coexisting Socrateses, the object briefly succeeds in raising its voice. However, the umbelliferous rhizome with its vague perimeters must promptly clamp up again in order to swiftly locate the shadow of centenarian trees. Around Socrates' withdrawal the dialogue's veritable strong component is engaged with Phaëdrus, on

one side, who mobilises all the resources of an Archimedean geometry, and, on the other side, Socrates, the imperturbable representative of a royal science of the Euclidean kind. Obviously, Socrates will remain deaf to the Eupalinos' unusual science that Phaedrus wants him to hear. Indeed, Eupalinos the architect constantly experiences the immediate intuition of vague essences and the intensification of the sensibility that agitates him. We are indeed confronted with the distribution of many and heterogeneous Eupalinoses on a single tumultuous stage:

I am already as different from myself as a tightened string differs from itself when loose and sinuous. I am quite other than what I am. . . . Phaedrus here lies the peril. It is the most difficult thing in the world! . . . O moment most important of all, and chiefest rending . . . And having obtained them by a sort of interruption of my life (an adorable suspension of ordinary duration) I still force myself to divide the indivisible. (Valéry 1932: 27, 28)

This suspension of *Chronos* and of his homogeneous determination of time invests in the dangerous lands of *Aion*, brings time off its hinges, and liberates the most divergent becomings through the interruption of individual life. It is reminiscent of Stendhal transforming Fabrizio into a mobile element crossing the battlefield, in compliance with a diagonal of variable speeds that reunites the lumps of volatile earth in order to induce the unusual effects of decelerating and accelerating. Certainly such an experimentation is the world's greatest and most perilous test. It is this great peril of experience where the rupture of common sense establishes the harmony of faculties and reaches its apex; it is a momentous laceration that engenders another dimension of sensibility to run through music, painting, literature and architecture in the intensive space of the body without organs.

A new transcendental aesthetic, that would also double as a theory of sensibility, must discover in art the possibility of another form of experience – a transcendental experience in which the realm of representation is bound to collapse, carried as it is on a line of deterritorialization capable of going to the limit, and opening a trail where all closures are eliminated in a pirate furrow that outlines a radical field of immanence. In this sense, we must agree with Deleuze that 'empiricism truly becomes transcendental, and aesthetics an apodictic discipline, only when we directly apprehend in the sensible that which can only be sensed, the very being of the sensible' (Deleuze 1994: 56–7). Only then are the two senses of aesthetics

reconnected 'to the point where the being of the sensible reveals itself in the work of art, while at the same time the work of art appears as experimentation' (Deleuze 1994: 68). This double relation of a truly transcendental aesthetic must not be produced on the basis of a *ratio essendi-ratio cognoscendi* nexus. The being of the sensible must never be inscribed in this logic of withdrawal that establishes the essence of manifestation. Between the part of the event that is counter-actualized at the preindividual level of virtual coexistences or of singularities distributed in all the directions of a multidimensional field, and the part of the event actualized in the individuated order of empirical forms, no transcendence should be interposed and no *ratio* should be mistaken for a ground. The being of the sensible may well not be visible; however, this does not make it veiled through the play of an ontological dispensation. This is why rendering visible the being of the sensible is never a simple presentation of the unrepresentable in the order of unveiling. As a matter of fact, there are no hidden principles, no missing places, no nothingness to signal in the direction of the unrepresentable or of the Idea whose outline would be present in lack itself. In other words, Deleuze's visible is not the site of an exposition external to its withdrawn origin in whose direction hermeneutics would be permitted to climb.⁶ With respect to the battlefield, between that which is not visible and the tangible realm of that which is actualized, there is no exteriority; there is rather a relationship of radical immanence. Between the oversaturated solution of a forcefield and the putting into play of a directional polarity to take on all singularities within the actualized crystal, the connection is immediate. The transcendental plane is not a hinterland against the background of which the visible would be installed, thanks to a withdrawal.

From the vantage point of an empirical exercise of the faculties, if it is impossible to consider the coexistence of impossibles, it does not mean that this blindness affects the play of exposition. The exposition is not presentified except during an obscure ebb of the ground towards the ground-less; the ground necessarily overshadows the ground-less in the manner of a veil correlative to unveiling. Deep down, the exposition remains loyal to the obscure as it manifests everything in the blind withdrawal of that which bestows the lure of the visible. Between the visible and the invisible, therefore, depth is introduced – a depth that a philosophy of multiplicities contests in the name of the platitude of apparatuses and arrangements. It is this very platitude that proves the vanity of every negative theology and

all hermeneutics. An arrangement corresponds to a multiplicity that has nothing to hide and has no principle whose sense one will have to discover through interpretation. Or, if one prefers, between the distribution of singularities in a field of vectors and the curves that move in their vicinity we must not wait for the process of a possible, in order to begin to exist with the help of the principle of reason. On the one hand, there is no ideational field for a possible governed by the principle of non-contradiction, and, on the other, the entry of the possible in a real world begins thanks to the principle of reason. At any rate, we can no more look at the transcendental plane from the principle of non-contradiction – discovering high above our heads an abstract, intelligible world, different from the realm of existing entities – than we can know how to invoke the opening of an existence grounded on the sombre soil of that which recedes towards the abyss, with, on top, a transcendent god who possesses the ability to make the possible real.

In the transcendental realm, all series of the most divergent singularities coexist. The aggregate of relations to which all singularities contribute, and every orientation, every polarization in the course of actualizing individuated forms, is present in this realm. And, of course, polarizations are incommensurable. In short, the transcendental field that Deleuze develops enables a set of impossible worlds to coexist as a relationship of virtuality rather than one of possibility. The principle of non-contradiction, valid in the realm of empirical data, loses its legitimacy at the transcendental level; whereas the principle of reason, on whose supplement we tied the passage of the possible to the real, loses its relevance and completely dissolves, in the way of the dead god. From the being of the sensible to the sensible itself and from the visible to its own condition, we are led back to a virtual no less real than the actual. And so, between the virtual and its actualization, the connection never reproduces the one between *ratio essendi* and *ratio cognoscendi*. The virtual is as real as the plane of reality, which we cannot separate from its actualization through the mediation of a hidden god. Deleuze defines this mysterious plane, from where ex-position has been eliminated, as the immanence of the plane of consistency. On this plane, everything is real without being actual, and virtual without being possible.⁷

At this level, we no longer encounter the being of the sensible after searching for its trace in the exposition that represents it or after discovering in its withdrawal the presence of what is absent, and within the missing place, the presence of the unrepresentable. It is no longer

a question of a sensible exposition of the Idea in an art that is now understood to be the trait's retreat; nor is it a question of a revelatory dissimulation, nor one of the manifest dispensation of things in the liberated depth of the canvas. From the actual to the virtual and from the visible to the counter-actualized part of the event, there is no unveiling. We can see nothing of the battle simply because *we see too much*, and because all possible trajectories surge *at the same time* in a skein of inextricable folds. The difficulty with exposing it, therefore, is not due to the dissimulated being's withdrawal behind those beings that it manifests. This notion of visibility advances against a blind groundlessness and is based on its forgetting its own origin.

Heidegger's 'being in front of the eyes' (*Vorhendenheit*) exposes the dimension of presence provided that it props itself up against the non-presence that establishes nothingness and, by the same token, it offers a complete history upon which *Dasein's power to be* is grafted as the project of all possibles. If *Dasein* is thrown into the world, action establishes the possible, not the virtual, in which case history opens up the possible with an envoy bent on its destiny. In Deleuze, there is no hermeneutics of facticity by which to discover the meaning of Being in plain throwness and to explode in a play whose stages show the homogeneous dispensation of the sending off. The dice throw that Deleuze affirms becomes a terrible power of the play, without common measure to the Heideggerian sending off: it develops a process of differentiation and distribution that is more geographic than historic, as we will discuss later. Be that as it may, the question of the transcendental aesthetic is this: how can we produce the virtual and yet real being of the sensible visible? How can we test the inactual forces that are not visible? What constitutes the experience of art itself?

This series of questions is inaccessible without the mobilization of a *logic of sensation* where the sensed will be conceived in a way that, within each faculty, allows it to reconnect with the multiplicity that it introduces in the form of individuated qualities. It is a matter of somehow finding the central fissure for each faculty, the micrological plane, from which its remarkable points are deduced, and it is a matter of reactivating the uncertain state of fluid perception. The latter is bound to be entangled because of the simultaneous emergence of the folds that agitate it in all possible directions in compliance with an enhanced clarity, or an almost monochromatic electric flash – a stormy night! “This is how one ought to see,” I kept saying as I looked down at my trousers. . . . ‘This is how one ought to see

how things really are” . . . Just looking, just being the divine Not-self of flower, of book, of chair, of flannel’ (Huxley 1954: 34, 35).

According to Huxley, there are states of perception where each faculty returns to its non-representative dimension. There are ruptures in conscious macroperception liberating the pleats that the artist ‘with the master awareness of a master hand’ (Huxley 1954: 32) is perfectly prepared to make sensible. In this respect, painting designates a multicoloured variation on the undulatory theme of crumpled fabric – ‘a silken wilderness of countless tiny pleats and wrinkles, with an incessant modulation . . . of tone into tone, of one indeterminate color into another’ (Huxley 1954: 32).

Deleuze successfully conceptualizes this modulation of colour in his book consecrated to Francis Bacon. Indeed, according to Deleuze, the eye of the artist renders visible the circuits that have not been realized by actualized perception, or by divergent courses lacerating the eye not unlike lightning that crosses all singularities, stretching over the expanse of a night sky. By the same token, each sensation, in its own domain, cancels the coordination of an alleged common sense. Each faculty reconnects with its own fibrous virtuality, rediscovering orders of irreducible qualities, thresholds and gradients that once again reconnect differences of nature and impossibilities. It behoves sensation to express a difference and a plurality of levels as it goes through its empirical exercise towards a threshold, beyond which it finds itself ramified.

What great enjoyment, says Nietzsche in the *Twilight of the Idols*, for the one who casts the evil eye and the cruel ear on the world, thereby disseminating sensible qualities along with the exercise of common sense. ‘What a delight for one who has ears behind his ears as for an old psychologist and piper like me, in presence of whom precisely that which would like to stay silent has to become audible’ (Nietzsche 1968: Preface). To return a multiple voice to numberless echoes that repeat from ear to ear and from cavern to cavern, to expose before our very eyes the variable matter of a differential colour – this is what establishes the unique programme of a multi-sensible logic of sensation.⁸ Here, each faculty relates to the others through an element of surprise, in a discordant accord that does not offer a special point summoning the unrepresentable. The life of percepts and affects that cluster around a variety of colours and odours swarms around what Kant relegates as inessential – all the sensible qualities to the benefit of an a priori form of sensibility. These qualities are fragmented by all the distances of a Sahara, ‘the silky desert

of innumerable (anachronous) little folds' coming from the dead time and a jump in place, which we shall soon analyze. Across this monochromatism of an atemporal clarity, temporally atemporal or, as Péguy says, aternal – across this enhanced and instantaneous clarity – each faculty reconnects with the others in a volcanic and irrational manner, according to the centuries of the *Aion*, independently of any representable common object. This is why, for Deleuze, 'between a color, a taste, a touch, a smell, a noise, a weight, there would be an existential communication that would constitute the "pathic" (non-representative) moment of sensation' (Deleuze 2003: 37).

Here it is the painter's responsibility to show us, in the collapse of common sense, an original consistency of the senses, a multisensible figure in the matter of differential colour that has been carried to its pure internal relations. In the last analysis, this multisensible figure that produces the sedimentation and the consistency of very different sensory qualities relates to a rhythm of the senses, or rather, as Huxley says, to a respiration, that does not return to its starting point: it relates to a recurrent ebb or repeated flows that travel from one enhanced and intense beauty to another (Huxley 1954: 20). Around this rhythmic point that moves from one faculty to another, behaving as if it were incapable of belonging to them without also removing them, there exists a discordant accord between sensible dispositions, in the form of a body without organs.

For Deleuze, the body without organs is the dimension of the body opposed to the organization of organs that we call 'organism' and to the organization of faculties rooted in common sense. The common element of sensation, that is, the consistent dimension of the sensible, is defined by the body without organs – in which the sensed as such ceases to be represented in order to become real – in a repeated flow caught in the rhythm of an inorganic wave that does not pass between two faculties without mutually deterritorializing them. The body without organs is, therefore, the site of an intensive variation of organs, a kind of hysterical line that cannot be divided without changing nature. With each degree of the body's division, the organs are recomposed according to new relations of proximity – an allotropic variation that the nineteenth-century clinic characterized as hysteria.⁹

Once again, we find this line of hysteria in Van Gogh's exploding stroke where the body is distorted by the contortion of colours, in a diabolical dance that carries the painter along in a becoming, wherein the hand now sees. But if the painter plants an eye in the

hand and makes gesturally rhythmic the colours that the eye touches, then cinema, for its part, engages us in an acoustic becoming where, as with Nietzsche's *Twilight of the Idols*, we encounter a massive, overgrown ear. Indeed, in Woody Allen's *Another Woman*, we find a curious form of a sonorous or acoustic voyeurism, bringing the ear to the vicinity of the look. This is a visual becoming that connects all the faculties of the main character with a device that would indicate not only that something has happened, but that nothing is as it was. Here, the past itself becomes other in line with a central collapse communicated from one faculty to another in a curious experience of time and space, having lost all the marks of representation.

This is why experiencing what happens behind the wall is possible only when the ear renounces its empirical exercise and begins to function amid an inorganic limit, where it becomes a pure *voyance* of a sonorous image that cannot help but be seen. Here, Woody Allen films speech as something visible, a joyful voice felt by an ear that can see, so that speech and perception reach a common limit that, while relating them to each other, separates them as well.¹⁰ Here, something is communicated from one faculty to another and from one organ to another, on the condition that it be metamorphosed onto the body without organs, through the huge effort of spacing, stretching and contracting while measuring, with each spasm, the power of creating new relations, and new multisensible drawings according to the stationary journey of a subject having become-nomad.

Nomadology

Around the Kantian island the vessel drifts, uncertain amidst the swirling flows that carry it along in all directions upon the smooth surface of the water. It is drawn to a new land that a restless fog extracts from its sombre abode. Here, the sun dives into its crystalline limit and disperses its rays of copper hues, in a way that resembles the flashes of a ceramic vessel bent in a big fire. All colour stands out, as Gauguin would say, in a blaze radiating before the dazed eyes of the mariner. At the horizon, Zarathustra rises and, in his pot, brings to a boil all that is aleatory, while he fires up the massive oven that will reunite all the fragments of chance in a broken diagrammatic mixture, with traces of red and purple, to which the violence of the sky becomes juxtaposed. Only such a cooking of chance can make thought shudder.¹

This torrid voyage in the limitrophe borders of insular representation is carried out under the name of *Anti-Oedipus*, as a joyous and light experiment of sorts, infused with humour and power. *Anti-Oedipus* is the site of a prodigious synthesis that Michel Foucault correctly regards as a test where *ars erotica*, *ars theoretica* and *ars politica* entertain relations of vicinity as befits multiplicities: 'I would say that *Anti-Oedipus* . . . is a book of ethics, the first book of ethics to be written in France in quite a long time. . .' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: xiii). *Anti-Oedipus* is an ethics or, to put it in Deleuzian terminology, it is a typology of affects, a differential ethology capable of describing the compositions of relations on a plane of immanence. Ethics, as ethology, is the geography of the body without organs whose longitudes and latitudes *Anti-Oedipus* endeavours to follow. Certainly, one may always say of *Anti-Oedipus* that it is a drift dictated by the circumstances, historically situated around 1968 and, consequently, a stylistic exercise the dated jargon of which will inevitably be absorbed in the constant recess of an outmoded actuality. But such an observation rests on the radical misrecognition of the untimely and necessarily inactual character of the event. *Anti-Oedipus* is the drunk boat that penetrates the oversaturated space

of the event, in the middle of a fusion where the markings of representation are lost; it is off course in the crossings of all the routes, traversing, according to an intensive transversal, the battlefield upon which arise the heaviest and lightest, the most black and the most red cinnabar, a set of broken tones where a multisensorial dimension of sensation emerges. In this respect, it would not be improper to say that with *Anti-Oedipus* the *Critique of Pure Reason* shatters on its farthest outside and that, along the length of this fragmented line of flight, the island with the shores in motion develops its volcanic craters as so many pots in whose depths the great chance simmers. *Anti-Oedipus* is perhaps the name of a boat of a biting style that connects all the names of history, and reactivates all the fires of creation where critique and clinic fuse together.

Perhaps we have locked away this great book all too quickly inside a critique of psychoanalysis, forgetting that it is philosophy, critical and transcendental philosophy, meant to bring about an aesthetics of sensation open to creative schizoid syntheses. As such, of course, they would be foreign to the empirical preoccupations of the epoch, and to the conformist images of thought, to good and common sense which, for a moment, adorned the mask of psychoanalysis, linguistics and hermeneutics. As Deleuze and Guattari stress, with double averted faces, separated at the middle, which, for the sake of convenience, we roll together in the proper name of Deleuze:

schizoanalysis is at once a transcendental and a materialist analysis. It is critical in the sense that it leads the criticism of Oedipus, or leads Oedipus to the point of its own self-criticism. It sets out to explore a transcendental unconscious, rather than a metaphysical one; an unconscious that is material rather than ideological; schizophrenic rather than Oedipal; nonfigurative rather than imaginary; real rather than symbolic; machinic rather than structural – an unconscious, finally, that is molecular. . . ' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 109–10)

The objection could be raised that a critique of this nature remains immanent in Kant's manner and style. Now, of course, in order to rediscover the pathic moment of the passive synthesis under the extrapolations of the representative syntheses, we must find internal criteria capable of taking matters into account and establishing a dividing line between the empirical and the transcendental, without resorting to principles that would transcend the plane of consistency. In fact, in Deleuze we must distinguish two varieties of planes, with only the first corresponding to the requirements of a transcendental

philosophy, whereas the second is the result of an illusory hypostasis based on strictly empirical principles. On one hand, we have planes of organization that concern the development of forms and subjects in accordance with a principle of vertical and discontinuous production. Whether structural or genetic, such planes always have at their disposal a supplementary dimension: the withdrawal of that which always flees, a groundless ground necessarily hidden because it cannot be given by itself, but must be negatively inferred from that which it organizes: presentation of the unrepresentable in the form of a trace, mark, etc. This is why this plane of organization also requires the hypostasis of a plane of transcendence. But if we manage to undo this meta-empirical hypostasis, if we succeed in escaping the images of thought, we necessarily discover an entirely different plane – a plane that Deleuze defines in terms of consistency. The plane of consistency designates a distribution of remarkable points at the crossing of longitude and latitude, knots and intersections, the individuation of which is not that of a subject – a geometrical plane whose growth never affects its being plane or flat. ‘This plane of immanence or consistence includes fogs, plagues, voids, jumps, immobilizations, suspensions, hastes’ (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 94).

Consequently, the Kantian critique, as a critique of reason on its own, is not far from working out such a plane of immanence and, as we shall see, it does penetrate into this nebulous region where the pure form of time liberates all the aberrant movements that escape the schema of number. But the big difference between the Kantian and the Deleuzian critique is that the former suppresses the cloud, develops an endeavour of sedentary systematic rotation and delimitation, whereas the latter produces a becoming of the limit irreducible to a mere transgression of the dialectical kind.²

The critique is therefore inseparable from a metamorphosis or a becoming that engulfs itself within the internal limit that unfurls amidst beings and things. From a certain perspective, it is an undertaking of demonic piracy, a leap in place that plunges into the limit itself in order to liberate the power of intervals – in other words, the distances of a smooth space crossed by haecceities, floating lines. The individuation of these lines does not include any personal subject, but rather degrees of intensity prepared to open up, at each level, a world apart, or even better, vague essences astride all the planes of the virtual that encumber the heart of things.³ The critique is a stationary stroll that, between all individuated things, connects with their fibrous heart – acting as a median fissure that opens them to

their planes of consistency, to their singularities, satisfied in simply being themselves amidst this monochromatic desert that inhabits and de-composes them.

That *Anti-Oedipus* is the proper name for a floating maritime adventure, a pirate ship that spurs the limit to take flight from its middle and follows its wake in the extreme distribution of things – this must not be misconstrued in a metaphorical sense. Becoming a sailor necessitates modifying one's longitude and latitude, not only metaphorically, but also with respect to an arrangement of desire that differs from the transports precipitated by pleasure. To be a mariner requires establishment on a modal plane where our particles intersect and interfere in accordance with longitudes and latitudes whose conjunction no longer belongs to a subject – a kinetic and dynamic knot through which other exchangers slide to establish an intensive continuum. The mariner initiates an arrangement that glides over the invading sea – a smooth and brilliant expanse that joins the infinite and assumes a vastness within which the individual reaches its inorganic dimension. This metamorphosis affects a point whose longitudes and latitudes are gradually modified to join different singularities. It is never explained by the implementation of a transfer arranged between an assignable beginning and end. It is an affirmation of the middle, growth by the middle, a desire that can never be produced around its destination, around its end – a desire that should not be read in the quest for pleasure, or in a lack to be filled, but rather through the production of a continuum, a plane of immanence. This is the continuum of intensities that Melville successfully achieves in the suspense of the maritime calm that makes all things resonate in their silent heart:

The stillness of the calm is awful. His voice begins to grow strange and portentous. He feels it in him like something swallowed too big for the esophagus. It keeps up a sort of involuntary interior humming in him, like a live beetle. His cranium is a dome full of reverberations. The hollows of his very bones are as whispering galleries . . . but he may not lounge, for to lounge is to be idle; to be idle implies an absence of anything to do, whereas there is a calm to be endured – enough to attend to, heaven knows. His physical organization, obviously intended for locomotion, becomes a fixture, for where the calm leaves him, there he remains. (Melville 1964: 21, 22)

Through this inert mobile, the universe in its entirety is decentred in silence and assumes a texture consistent with an asubjective viscosity.

An accumulation of becomings upon a body without organs in perpetual mutation occurs in this impersonal individuation of the unlimited stillness of the calm. The oesophagus, the skull and the hollow of the bones are intensified from their middle and extend themselves to unnatural arrangements within which their identities fade away upon the installation of a massive ear removed from common sense, from the location assigned to it by its organism as well as the negative order of pleasure. The central point of Melville's text proclaims that if desire does not have pleasure as its own end, it is not due to a lack impossible to fill. Rather, it is due to the very positive extension of an inert body whose remarkable points are connected to other points, gain in extent, and gradually join the sea and conquer an individuality, which exceeds the organic limit of the person. Here, the mariner is merely the nexus of a cosmic reverberation and the dome through which celestial rhythms pass. He endures the suffering of the stillness of the calm the same way a maybug shakes off its organic arrangement in its inert mobility where nothing is lacking, and that the necessity of staying put limits desire – an immobile voyage in the flat immensity of absolute stillness. The mariner uses body inertia to construct a body without organs in connection with the consistency of the sea, upon which he allows desire to flow. The unbearable inertia is the price the seaman pays in order to extricate desire from the law of pleasure or from the process of interruption by means of which a subject is reconstituted and rediscovers itself.

But in the stillness of the calm, this return to the self can no longer be completed. The body is connected to immensity and enters an arrangement where individuation corresponds to an haecceity. And so, the stillness of the calm is not merely absence of noise. As for the seaman's inertia, it can no longer be confused with the lack of mobility. It corresponds to a new dimension of movement where rest becomes an absolute speed; a new dimension of sound where each vibration reaches the limit of the imperceptible. In its own way, *Anti-Oedipus* is the grand book of a stationary voyage, a leap in place that liberates desire from the extrinsic law of pleasure, an immobile voyage in a region where, as Melville says, 'the days went slowly round and round, endless and uneventful as cycles in space . . . How many centuries did my hammock tell, as pendulumlike it swung to the ship's dull roll and ticked the hours and ages' (Melville 1964: 17). Here is where all micropereceptions bang into one another, according to 'the distances of a Sahara, the centuries of an Aion' (Deleuze 2003: 70), crossed by voids, by suspense, by precipitations and by fogs; an

immense tissue of intertwined folds in accordance with relatively large arrangements, and where the subject loses its own individuality. In this dreary intermediary silence animated by sonorous molecules, in this chaosmos consisting of countless connections of speeds and slownesses, in this inertia that suspends the incommensurable rhythms of time – accelerating and decelerating them in line with the rolling sea – in the mariner's vast psychedelic torpor on the boat in motion, the navigator's real voyage begins, and the production of a celibate machine traversed by 'a strange subject . . . with no fixed identity, wandering about over the body without organs, but always remaining peripheral to the desiring-machines, being defined by the share of the product it takes for itself . . . being born of the states that it consumes and being reborn with each new state' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 16).

It is therefore indisputable that desire, once extricated from the finality of pleasure, produces a voluptuousness that marks the quality of a process of subjectivation; that is, a 'subjectile' movement, very different from the constitution of a subject. Pleasure designates the end of a process wherein the subject may return to itself and seek the means of finding itself again inside the boundlessness of desire; voluptuousness, on the other hand, of courtly love, masochism, the inertia of the vessel, including all the celibate machines that extend from Duchamp's *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even* to Kafka's *Penal Colony*, constitutes a pure experience of intensive quantities, an experience of the intolerable where the 'subjectile' touches a limit that causes it to turn against itself and extract fragments in order to link them up once again in the absence of all support, all finality and all pleasure. What is sensed at this limit designates a pure 'I sense', a special moment where what is sensed emerges as such. Being liberated from common sense, it is the terrible sensation of becoming other, of passing elsewhere, of fleeing past all the median openings towards arrangements where woman, animal and gods mingle following the multiple figures of the body without organs that a residual subject traverses. *Anti-Oedipus*, as the transcendental analysis of this composition of relations, consequently designates a veritable ethics of the body without organs, an ethology that releases affects and singularities, forms of expression and of content.

A plane of immanence or of consistency encompasses diverse modes. What happens here is inseparable from the bodies without organs that cross it like oil stains or soap bubbles, with uncertain

limits and endless co-penetrations. Their volumes sometimes divide themselves and sometimes double up, according to very variable alliances. This is the mystery of the soap bubble whose limit transforms itself according to its encounters with other bubbles that inhabit or divide it in an instant that cannot be assigned. On the plane of immanence, the bodies without organs interpenetrate developing networks of encounters that augment or diminish their extension.⁴ This is why the issue of the body without organs is inscribed in Spinoza's great question regarding the power of bodies: we have no idea how far a body goes and of what it is capable. What can a body do? How far does its power of affecting and of being affected apply itself?

A question of this magnitude actually addresses the problem of an ethics of relations. In fact, with respect to this question the body is not defined in terms of whether or not it belongs to an organism, but more in terms of the relationships that divide it or help it to develop in terms of the arrangements it assimilates and that are consistent with a contact that passes its farthest limit – as a soap bubble whose outline corresponds with other bubbles in one and the same holder. Perhaps, the plane of consistency is nothing more than the common limit extending between all the connected bubbles – a single limit as the unique section of a multiplicity in variable dimensions. There is no longer an organic plane in this litany of foamy spheres where only that which increases the number of connections reaches a level of consistency. No longer is there an organized body; instead, there are only pure topological relations that connect the body or the soapy limit that passes between all the contiguous spheres.⁵

In this respect, the body no longer sees itself in terms of genus and species, but rather in terms of its complex relationship to the infinitely variable limit from which it extracts singularities and affects. In a plane of this nature, we no longer distribute beings according to categories, but we follow their dispersion according to the connections that are actualized in it and the functions expressed therein. The problem of the ethical, therefore, consists in determining the way in which a connection with the common and univocal limit will affect a given mode. Thus, an affect creates a relationship of proximity that permeates the nets of categorial taxonomy between the draught horse and the workhorse (see Deleuze 1988b: Chapter 6). The affect is the inorganic transversal that is filed between genera and species, upon which typical features of expression are linked. It corresponds to the limit on which proximities and incorporeal effects are established and emerging properties are developed.⁶ In this respect, all organic

bodies are grounded in acts of proximity, affections, connections and encounters prepared to actualize and sometimes to interfere with the development of organs and organisms. This composition of relations and affections resembles a *primitive function* with respect to which the organized body will become a *derivative function*.

To understand this, we need only to think of the tick in its tree to which life has nothing more to offer than perpetual hibernation. The tick belongs to the univocal limit that relates it to other modes, in accordance with a number of topological variables that select organs and articulate typical traits of expression. In fact, the tick mobilizes three singularities: a sphere that exposes the smallest surface possible to the outside world; a tough skin that allows nothing *to filter or escape to the outside*; and a very small body that cannot *be seen or crushed*. Minimal exposure, filtering and camouflage constitute very particular modes of relating. And that is not all! To this form of content a form of expression is linked that is itself tripolar. The solitary, blind, deaf and dumb tick is characterized by three affects or three traits of expression that fill its power inside the immense forest – three verbs: to be hoisted, to fall, to suck. Light affects the tick – it hoists itself on the leafy extremity of trees. The smell of blood affects it – the tick falls on animals. Hair annoys it – it sets out on a slow peregrination towards a patch of hairless skin and starts sucking its host's blood. With the help of these three affects, the tick fulfils its capacity to survive. Without these characteristic powers, organs would never develop.

We have only those organs that are in a position to fill the affects of which we are capable. These bring the tick to the common limit of the plane of immanence, according to three modalities. To be sure, modes are infinite and extremely variable in their ways of referring to the common limit that encompasses them – namely, to substance. It is this network, this fabric of non-totalizable relations, that Deleuze considers to be a body – a body without organs, a body from which the organs cannot help but be removed. This is why the organism itself is nothing more than an arrangement of singularities and features of expression whose relations are topological before being organic.⁷

This topology of affects and corresponding singularities testify to the true conditions of a transcendental plane. Gilles Deleuze's transcendental ethics begins at the precise point where the problem of an inorganic ethology is adumbrated, rendering the speeds and slownesses of our particles as tangible, that is, the composition of

relations under pure functions – primitive and derived – whose univocal limit manifests the risk of a transcendental empiricism. How can we recover this limit and experience it with sufficient prudence? How can we reconnect with the plane of immanence without foundering in madness and without turning life into an affair of demolition? This is the central preoccupation of the ethics developed in *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Passing through the doors of perception towards pure percepts, pure affects and pure concepts does not occur without risk, as we have seen with Van Gogh and Nietzsche.

At any rate, connecting with the common limit that concerns all bodies without organs involves a series of metamorphoses that do not occur without irreversible failure at the level of the constituted organism – Malcom Lowry's alcoholism, Aldous Huxley's drug addiction, Antonin Artaud's madness, etc. In fact, when we cross the limit, anything can happen – speeds and slownesses take on other coefficients; space and time change coordinates and submit the principle of individuation to the test of haecceities: 'The body without organs is an egg: it is crossed with axes and thresholds, with latitudes, longitudes, and geodesic lines, traversed by *gradients* marking the transitions and the becomings and the passages, the destinations of the subject developing' (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 19). Such an egg constitutes itself as an inside, thanks to the outside that envelops and connects it to other spheres, to a common limit where it can begin to flee and to derail in complete abandon. We are now left with a recurring ebb flowing from one singularity to another, without ever returning to the point of departure – a breath of a univocal flow agitated by folds, and a silky desert of undulating waves where the smallest change in speed ends up creating a new distribution of singularities. It suffices then to clear one gradient in order to affix a new world and to light it under different affects that it had not pre-existed. In all cases, it is a question of going to the limit and breaking with the empirical use of our faculties, in order to constitute new multisensible figures and new alliances that the organism cannot tolerate without changes – changes that can be dangerous on occasion. The creation relative to a multisensible aesthetic does not occur without risk, and no creation can make the economy of such a leap to the inorganic, which makes all the associated worlds intersect as in a massive box of dice.

In this respect, what Melville's mariner begins to experience, in the brutal encounter with the calm that envelops him, is the intensification and the proliferation of all the affects that correspond to these floating singularities. The calm – the stillness of the calm – constitutes

a plane upon which our organs are placed in continuous variation and connect with the topological map that renders them possible. The stillness of the calm is a surface that has become *sensible*. It is a surface that cannot be tolerated by the oesophagus, the skull and the hollow of the bones that amplify the silence; a surface whereupon desire dislocates its most heterogeneous dimensions without reference to a common measure that is external to the plane. Each degree of such a plane of n dimensions unfurls an original space compliant with a suitable law, but without a superior horizon or home to manage the laws that correspond to the other spaces under consideration. The silence of the still calm is the site of another sensibility and by the same token of another aesthetic – a multidimensional aesthetic filled with the desert's hum, each degree and each tone of which takes an infinite distance with respect to those that follow. Each nuance of colour lives on a rhythm that is as distinct, slow, long and empty as minutes and eternities. These are the infinitesimal degrees that the Sahara renders sensible as it affirms their irreducibility.

In this experience, all the sensible qualities dislocate, reactivate the fibrous part of the event that articulates them, and affirm differential orders where $(dx)^2$ is to an inferior differential order dx , that which dx is to x . We are left with levels of worlds whose every part is divisible into an infinite number of elements, themselves divisible into an infinity of other elements, constituting infinitesimals to the second degree and, therefore, to infinity. The still calm designates the site of an inertia where all movement slows down and becomes palpable, as if from among them intervals of a cosmic dimension could be introduced. The living ossuary becomes an acoustic labyrinth according to the inertia model of the still calm – a line of flight that carries the organs to the farthest limit of their power in the direction of the indiscernible aspect of representation. The stillness of the calm renders visible every infinitesimal degree or vanishing quantity smaller than every given number. These microperceptual folds surface in an instant that lasts an eternity – in an instant where the least nuance, the least difference, distorts itself and invades the conceptual field: the vision of beatitude.

To take a trip does not mean to reach the other end of the world. The trip actualizes itself much more in the inertia of bodies. Compare trips by boat, or by rail, Proust's trips – metallurgical assemblages during which the immobile voyager connects the bits of space and the fragments of landscapes unravelling before him. These are strokes of colour, imbricated in the blue sky, in accordance with a variable speed

– slower and slower as we approach the line of the horizon, faster and faster when the scene plunges to the ground that devours the machine. During this immobile voyage where worlds of several speeds and colour-regimes unravel, along with the grey varieties of tones broken up by the speed discovered by the voyager as he watches, without focusing, on the verges of the road. In this relationship of the mobile and immobile, the connection between the subject and the object vanishes, leaving room for the modulable distances of the ‘objectile’ and the ‘subjectile’, as markers for speeds and slownesses in the intervals of a body without organs.⁸ The objectile designates the declination of a surface of variable curves with somewhat flexible points. As for the subjectile, it is a linear focus [*foyer*] and, from a certain point of view, is itself mobile-immobile where percepts change and vary with the variation of distances. In this very singular relation, subject and object come undone, the individual plummets to the inorganic life of objects, then retracts and dilutes itself upon its body without organs.

The body without organs, therefore, designates the open whole of transversal relations in their entirety, as well as transfinite summations, irrational cuts and disjunctive syntheses determined between fragments of a metastable surface. This also includes the totality of points of inflection – the rhizosphere – that touch in an infinity of points on an infinity of divergent curves. From this perspective, we could still compare the body without organs to a huge cone wherein the ellipse, the hyperbola, the parabola, the straight line and the point coexist as states of the circle’s projection on intersecting planes, in relation to the top of the cone, as an alternating series of conics developed by Girard Desargues’ projective geometry (Deleuze 1993b: 21). At the point on the cone at which the parabola, the ellipse, the hyperbola and the circle come together as so many variants relative to the inclination of the point of view responsible for the sliced section, a nomadic subject balances itself upon the line of an ideal time inside which all the events surface. At this point, one life assumes another, ‘at a different level, as if the philosopher and the pig, the criminal and the saint, played out the same past at different levels of a gigantic cone’ (Deleuze 1994: 83).

On this stationary voyage, inorganic life in its entirety suddenly surges when, thanks to one of its innumerable bends, the route finds its trees and its bell towers. For Proust, the bell towers of Martinville or the trees of Hudimesnil constitute the centre of a cartography that connects all events according to irrational associations. In each one of his visions and experiences, Proust is involved in a temporal

stereoscopy of sorts where present and past suddenly overlap and begin to coexist in such a fashion that their limits become completely indiscernible, unlocalizable and, by the same token, unassignable. With Huxley, who follows Bergson, we could say that there are privileged moments inside which memory in its entirety emerges all at once, leading perception to the divergent meanderings of pure time (Huxley 1954: 25–6). Here we see at work the fundamental indecision that renders us incapable of recognizing an assignable form – we see a rhizome where each singular point enters into divergent configurations, seized by all figures at the same instant, becoming at once parabola, ellipse, hyperbola, circle and straight line. It is as if all these forms coexisted virtually, so that no synthesis of recognition could ever impose its own rights.

In these moments, which Bergson associates with the labour of forgetting, consciousness loses itself, becoming incapable of choosing between all the figures that invade it simultaneously. This nomadic experience demonstrates a leap through which we join the state of pure past, the length of a cone whose every section contains the totality of the past, albeit on the basis of varying degrees of contraction or dilation. What Bergson's cone expresses is that everything coexists: our pasts play and repeat themselves all at once on every level that they draw from – the only difference being that the remarkable and ordinary points are distributed according to different rules from one level to the next, becoming more and more dilated as we plunge into matter. We would say that the Bergsonian universe designates a fabulous memory that is susceptible to an infinity of degrees of dilation. At the end of its expansion would be an extensive matter and, at the end of its contraction, an intensive memory that would contain the entire universe. Certainly, it is not easy to link up with this whole because the exigencies of practical life and the conditions of survival impose choice and sorting out. To survive at all costs entails a number of restrictions, including a screen and a selective filter capable of engaging the organism on its specific course:

To make biological survival possible, Mind at large has to be funneled through the reducing valve of the brain and nervous system. What comes out at the other end is a measly trickle of the kind of consciousness which will help us to stay alive on the surface of this particular planet. (Huxley 1954: 23)

To accede to the transcendental conditions of perception and, with respect to each faculty, to connect with the multiplicity that

must be filtered in accordance with common sense, to rediscover the plane of immanence – all these presuppose, as Huxley says, a reducing valve, a line of flight through which perception flows towards a silken desert of vanishing folds. These reducing valves are the proper object of art, and of very singular experiences that smash the strainer, the drainboard of consciousness. They are the lines of flight that Deleuze discovers in literature, music, painting and cinema, without which philosophy would be incapable of inventing concepts.

Be that as it may, on these reducing circuits, everything begins to coexist in accordance with an intense migration that descends the line of the fibrous cone where we encounter all countries, races, gods and men – the line of delirium that Nietzsche extends to the neighbourhood of the names of history. ‘I am Prado, I am also Prado’s father. I venture to say that I am Lesseps . . . I am also Chambiges, also a decent criminal . . . The unpleasant thing, and one that nags at my modesty, is that, at root, *every name in history is I*.’⁹ In this voyage in intensity, Nietzsche creates a body without organs with no more ‘I’ at the centre, but rather a set of courses and discourses existing in a disjunctive network of singularities; and this is a risky experimentation, occasionally imprudent, leading the residual subject to a shipwreck where cultures, continents and races surface. Kant is not very far from realizing their geography, in a curious text on the difference of the human races.

Capitalism and Schizophrenia does not wish to bring about the shipwreck of the subject in the disorder of an indeterminate chaos. *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus* are books of pure philosophy from which everybody can derive great emotions, and new ways of perceiving or conceiving in a sombre manner – an almost musical and incisive manner that pierces through the filters and the strata suited to the planes of organization. In this sense, philosophy is inseparable from art, the aptitude to create concepts in relation with a practice. A specific effort or experience unfurls the heart of things in order to allow their crystal to sparkle. Philosophy is an enterprise of creation submitting the individual to an unbearable torsion towards asubjective percepts and affects that brightly shine – traits of expression whose satin whiteness erases every outline and carries them onto an icy limit in an anamorphosis that renders thought necessary and fatal.

But not yet have we solved the incantations of this whiteness, and learned why it appeals with such power to the soul . . . Why . . . it is at once the

most meaning symbol of spiritual things . . . and . . . the intensifying agent in things the most appalling to mankind. Is it because by its indefiniteness it shadows forth the heartless voids and immensities of the universe, and thus stabs us from behind with the thought of annihilation, when beholding the white depths of the milky way? Or is it, that as in essence whiteness is not so much a color as the visible absence of color; is it for these reasons that there is such a dumb blankness, full of meaning, in a wide landscape of snows? . . . All other earthly hues – every stately or lovely emblazoning – the sweet tinges of sunset skies and woods; yea, and the gilded velvet of butterflies, and the butterfly cheeks of young girls; all these are but subtle deceits . . . the mystical cosmetic which produces every one of her hues, the great principle of light, for ever remains white and colorless in itself, and it operates without medium upon matter, would touch all objects, even tulips and roses, with its own blank tinge. (Melville 1925: 235–6)

Would there be thought without the collapse to combine all colours and return them to their whiteness, or without that epileptic patina to rediscover the bright outline of objects? Isn't philosophy the employment of a thought that draws its entire force from the unthought of thought to which it is led by the limitations of certain percepts? As Deleuze says, not without humour, 'it cannot be regarded as a fact that thinking is the natural exercise of a faculty, and that this faculty is possessed of a good nature and a good will. "Everybody" knows very well that in fact men think rarely, and more often under the impulse of a shock than in the excitement of a taste for thinking' (Deleuze 1994: 132).

We cannot open the reducing valve of which Huxley speaks, except with the help of a stroke that does not even remotely resemble the parsimonious draining that helps us stay alive. Similarly, as Valéry demonstrates, thought is forced to think its own lack of power, its own difficulty to think, its central collapse, its powerlessness to think by means of which the empirical use of thought nourishes itself. The return to the unthought of thought is an operation that has nothing deliberate about it. Thought accedes to its superior form under the shock of very violent affects and percepts – under the constraints of paradoxical events and impossible bifurcations or relations. Everywhere the exercise of philosophy bumps against the dust, the clouds that make the world visible, the winds that agitate the cloud, the microperceptions that decompose the golden velvet of butterfly wings and that restore their white particles. This is a frozen region that resembles the congealed minutes and eternities that make everything partake in their empty whiteness.¹⁰

Anti-Oedipus is not the apology of the groundless in the shelter of which the mute depths of schizophrenia and autism would subsist. On the contrary, if it is a matter of vanishing in the direction of the whiteness where all singularities begin to shine again and stretch out in all directions, it will likely occur through intensity. Intensity does not bring about confusion or indeterminate chaos. It comes from a superior order where forms do not mix, but are rather undone for the sake of a system with variable coordinates, a diagrammatic system perfectly determinable within the realm of multiplicities. In other words, that which brings about a de facto confusion at the deplorable level of a medicalized life, that which brings about the decay of all faculties in nerve pathologies, does not necessarily indicate a de jure confusion. The intensive order of the body without organs testifies to a nomadic ethics and aesthetics that *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* realizes as it explores and analyzes the compositions of the relations that envelop the plane of immanence and its delirium.

For Deleuze, contrary to myth and its narrative logic, which are given their orientation by terms transcendent to the plane of desire, delirium is world-historical and racial. Where myth produces its intrigues in the name of commensurable beginnings and ends, delirium opens up from the middle zones of intensity without common measure. These zones are located along the lengths of an irrational caesura that dislocates, in an intensive voyage, the organic organization of organs, and thereby recovers the problematic field of all becomings wherever singularities exist; and this occurs inside all the series that are punctuated by remarkable points, astride the diverging mutations of all races: 'I am Apis. I am an Egyptian. I am a red Indian. I am a Negro. I am a Chinese. I am a Japanese. I am a foreigner, a stranger. I am a sea bird. I am a land bird.'¹¹ This world-historical delirium, reconnecting all races that coexist on a plane of immanence, is the site of a creative becoming apt to mobilize the greatest number of affects and to associate all impossible worlds after carving their contours and carrying away their limits, in accordance with a widening deterritorialization. The motifs and geography of this affective delirium that creates associated worlds, of this ethics of power and force handled by the body without organs, and of this intensive realm of races and cultures – all are still found in Kant's anthropology.

Already in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, but mainly in the pamphlet, 'Of the Different Races of Human Beings' (Kant 2007b), Kant comes very close to a nomadic doctrine of the faculties, of an intensive distribution of all the dispositions of nature – to an entire

geography of pure reason to which, in the last analysis, he will prefer the verticality of history and the support of a ground given to euphoria. It is always in accordance with the ground that *the doctrine of right* considers as *substance* of all sharing, that a set of anarchic and virtually coexisting dispositions must be rooted. In other words, for all floating natural dispositions to be in a position of integrating organized genetic lineages, for this rhizome to assume the form of play with respect to coordinated faculties, Kant, in the last analysis, will appeal to the founding nature of a ground capable of developing and selecting them throughout history. For Kant, the ground designates a foundation for history, the substance and the rational principle as the foundation of the differentiated genesis of the races.

As Kant affirms in the ‘Conjectural Beginnings of Human History’, behind the sharing and the agrarian delimitation, an effective and irreversible fixation of natural dispositions can be conceived. Without such a principle, dispositions would continue to float in a system of virtually coexisting relations where each disposition would bifurcate to affirm its own difference (Kant 2007a: 171–2). In other words, it is with reference to a stable ground that the possibility of a judgement is conceived, becoming capable of distributing all the entangled faculties and of unravelling them in the exercise of a common sense. All the multisensible figures containing the vague essences of all races in an indecisive state, where each one leans towards all the others without rushing along a differentiated lineage – all these virtual configurations must be subjected to the sedentary power of the ground.

In a sense, these lineages of differentiation, actualized as they are with respect to the ground, presuppose the virtual existence of a geographic plane whereupon all the singularities distribute themselves and all the germs envelop the totality of natural dispositions:

The human being was destined for all climates and for every soil; consequently, various germs and natural predispositions had to lie ready in him to be on occasion either unfolded or restrained, so that he would become suited to his place in the world and over the course of the generations would appear to be as it were native to and made for that place. (Kant 2007a: 90)

But we can see that this topology is barely sketched out when it once again closes itself off inside the eschatology of the place and history to which it gives orientation. This adequation to a central place will haunt Germany after Kant’s time, in order to introduce a selection of characteristic types derived from the original genre based on the grounds of northern Europe. The appeal to have the dimension of the

ground understood as the substance of racial selection permits Kant to make Germany and the high blond the site of a race immediately derived from the original genre (Kant 2007a: 95).

To accept the ground as substance unfurls an entire sedentary logic that fixes human dispositions by determining the development of certain germs, while stifling other germs considered incompatible with the alleged purity of the race for which the ground represents both the filter and the drainboard. The race, 'once [it] has taken root and has suffocated the other germs, . . . resists all transformation' (Kant 2007a: 96). To this rational filtering of races, Kant will oppose the detours that circumvent 'the valve of reduction', as Huxley puts it. These are the lines of flight travelled upon by a nomadic subject who, unable to fix typical characters, develops the germs it envelops anarchically, as so many vague and fluid essences, stretched out over every heterogeneous dimension of a body without organs. The nomad, therefore, is the one who refuses to affix himself to a ground and who, astride the totality of natural dispositions, extracts an anarchic development incompatible with the decrees of common sense.

If the *Critique of Pure Reason* has 'need to clear away and level a ground to the insane vegetation' (Kant 1929: 733), it is from fear of seeing the enemy surge – the enemy for whom the island was already the rampart, and we find again in the transcendental dialectic in the form of a mole. Indeed, in this text, Kant proposes an endeavour of systematic cleansing, capable of 'clearing away and strengthening the ground which must carry the majestic edifice of morality, that ground where we encounter mole-holes of all sorts dug by reason . . . and which threaten the solidity of this edifice' (Kant 1929: 266).

This threat of the underground, of the subterranean mole, and of its bowels of derivation, finds its name definitively in a strange text wherein springs up the strange nomad against whom the first critique establishes its citadel:

[The] government [of metaphysics], under the administration of the *dogmatists*, was at first *despotic*. But inasmuch as the legislation still bore traces of the ancient barbarism, her empire gradually through intestine wars gave way to complete anarchy; and the *skeptics*, a species of nomads, *despising all settled modes of life*,¹² broke up from time to time all civil society. (Kant 1929: A ix)

In other words, whatever the State's despotic apparatuses and dogmatic administrations did not successfully delimit, territorialize and render healthy – this ground that the sceptical nomads incited to flee

from far and wide, their untimely mole-holes, and their inability to choose a domicile – must be reconquered and stabilized at all costs. In its own arena, the *Critique of Pure Reason* must, once and for all, vanquish these nomads, with their wild vegetation and their delirium, their rhizomes and their subterranean galleries prone to perforate or to pirate the despotic enclosure of the categories. Doing so will ensure that, in the cradle of the world, the victorious gladiator will come forward, having stifled the germs of this life-form that cuts across all human breeds, refusing the sedentary and irreversible development of one race in particular. But these nomads who rave about all the races have already moved on, immobile and soundless. It is impossible to understand, as Kafka says in *The Wall of China*, how they displace themselves: ‘They show up like destiny, without cause or reason, without consideration or pretext, there they are with the speed of lightning, too terrible, too sudden, too conquering, too *other*.’¹³

We could encounter this nomad almost anywhere – he who makes his faculties proliferate like wild grass, this transpositional umbelliferous subject. We will find him in the undergrounds of philosophy and art, reactivating the silent event of the battlefield, the hum of the flat calm traversed by sonorous particles, clouds, pests, swarmings, perceived only if we set upon a becoming-mole and initiate *lento* the new critique through which the strengthened affects will rise towards the empty whiteness of the starry sky.

I would like to end this chapter with an aphorism that announces the aurora/dawn with respect to which Deleuze’s philosophy would represent high noon:

In this book you will discover a ‘subterranean man’ at work, one who tunnels and mines and undermines. You will see him – presupposing you have eyes capable of seeing this work in the depths – going forward slowly, cautiously, gently, inexorably, without betraying very much of the distress which any protracted deprivation of light and air must entail; you might even call him contented, working there in the dark. Does it not seem as though some faith were leading him on, some consolation offering him compensation? As though he perhaps desires this prolonged obscurity, desires to be incomprehensible, concealed, enigmatic, because he knows what he will thereby also acquire: his own morning, his own redemption, his own *daybreak*? . . . He will return, that is certain: do not ask him what he is looking for down there, he will tell you himself of his own accord, this seeming Trophonius and subterranean, as soon as he has ‘become a man’ again. Being silent is something one completely unlearns if, like him, one has been for so long a solitary mole. (Nietzsche 1982: 1).

SECOND VARIATION

Three Poetic Formulas for Nomadic Distribution

‘The time is out of joint.’ Time is out of joint, time is unhinged. The hinges are the axis around which the door turns. . . . As long as time remains on its hinges, it is subordinate to movement: it is the measure of movement, interval or number. This was the view of ancient philosophy. But time out of joint signifies the reversal of the movement-time relationship. It is now movement which is subordinate to time. Everything changes, including movement. We move from one labyrinth to another. The labyrinth is no longer a circle, or a spiral which would translate its complications, but a thread, a straight line, all the more mysterious for being simple, inexorable as Borges says, ‘the labyrinth which is composed of a single straight line, and which is indivisible, incessant.’ Time is no longer related to the movement which it measures, but movement is related to the time which conditions it.

(Deleuze 1984: vii)

Time Out of Joint

The channels of the Kantian metaphors – from the island to the tower, from the tower to the mole, from the mole to the nomad and from the nomad to the arena of gladiators – form an entire allegory that mobilizes a process of dramatization, the central knot of which tightens around the figure of the heavy cinnabar. A wall of silence runs parallel to the development of concepts in this allegory, the weft of which spins out its play of continued metaphors in all directions. In the last analysis, the continued metaphor of the allegory allows us to dramatize the means to escape the alarming alternative proposed by the cinnabar's hypothesis. What we want to say and what Deleuze's philosophy conveys is that there are two critiques in one – *at least* two critiques – with Kant on one side, seduced by the power of images and of thought restored to its image and, on the other side, the Kant that Deleuze poetizes with the help of four formulas that produce another arrangement of concepts. We could say that the Kantian allegory is a question of juxtaposing four problematic points – four poetic formulas that draw in all the power of the outside and graft the conceptual chain of the three critiques onto Shakespeare, Rimbaud and Kafka (Deleuze 1984: vii–xiii).

The notion of formula often returns inside Deleuze's texts. The formula is not the metaphor: it is the statement by which a text develops a *subterranean* lineage with other texts – a series of lineages that reformulate concepts. The analysis that Deleuze devotes to Melville's 'Bartleby; or, The Formula', concretizes the notion of the formula as a unique breath or a breath-construction whose value leans towards the limits of a series of conceptual variations. '*The time is out of joint.*' Shakespeare's formula is not a metaphor for the Kantian analysis of time. Rather, Deleuze uses it as a limit in the series of significations that Kant attributes to time. Or rather, it tunnels a zone of indiscernibility between all the uses for a term in continuous variation. In short, Shakespeare's formula burrows into Kant's text – another text foreign to him. With respect to the text under consideration, the formula appears to be an event apt to produce an echo,

conducive to establishing another text as a limit or the other side of the original. The four poetic formulas are thus comparable to tensors that develop zones of indetermination, suspending texts within them, causing all virtualities to stutter, and carrying all propositions to the common limit that produces them.¹

Under these four grafts that put all Kant's theories in variation, the *Critique of Pure Reason* gives us something to read that no longer depends on the authority of dramatization characteristic of the allegory. In a way, Deleuze directs us to see the first critique as a geography of pure reason that disavows history: two poles between which the singularities of the Critique are undecided – two polarities that designate the problematic point of its writing when we relate them to the forces of the outside. It is as if we must now locate within the text an entangled history that, from time to time, allows two plays of singularities to coexist and two types of conceptual distribution to testify to a philosophy, hovering between two forms of actualization – a history of pure reason and a geography of reason between which all singularities remain undecided. It is a matter of reading the *Critique of Pure Reason* in its own environment, between two different solutions liberated by a formula.

'The time is out of joint' is the formula that associates with the textual machine, whose function is apparent along the length of the alternative that I revealed in my first 'Variation'. Be that as it may, the centre of dramatization, the figure of the cinnabar around which the Kantian allegory stitches its metaphors, appears to be decentred when we submit it to the breeze of the Shakespearean formula: the latter seems to allow for the possibility of another distribution of concepts to spring up within the critical economy, much like a foreign language running beneath the dominant language in order to carry it towards its outside, so that 'a great book is always the inverse of another book' (Deleuze 1997: 72).

Were we to make Kant's portrait, the only way to do so would be from within a formula-breath, in a non-figurative figuration, given which Kant would come to look at himself in a series of variations restoring the negative. 'The time is out of joint' is the strange formula that reacts with the body of the Kantian text, like a stylization connecting the heterogeneous states of the critical conceptuality as if they were several divergent poses. The formula produces effects whose style has nothing to do with theatre or with the plotting of a scenario. It necessarily links a series of postures, beginning with an outside point, an irrational point that corresponds to the unthought

of thought. This is the point towards which everything converges as a place external to thought, a reversal upon which the problematic position of the outside has been inscribed. The Shakespearean formula designates the event, starting where all elements of the text enter one another through a series of suspended poses. It is, therefore, the *Critique of Pure Reason* that breaks apart its rational articulations in an act of creative dismemberment, by means of which a text gives us its own impossibilities – the source, in the final analysis, of its most internal possibility.

The history of philosophy, in Deleuze's sense, mobilizes a style that includes the power of the false – a fantastic style that produces a play of textual variation, under the constraints of the outside. Hence, according to Deleuze, to trace the history of philosophy is to create portraits and maps with which we should 'not repeat what a philosopher said, but rather what he was necessarily presupposing – what he was not saying, and yet, what was present in everything he said'.² In Kant's case, although this presence is not very clear, it is nevertheless offered to being read according to the dimension of the open. It behoves the formula under consideration to dig out from under the depths of the allegorical contraction that which, in being open, never allows itself to be foreclosed at the bottom of the text as an unassignable totality. Indeed, if the allegory functions like a drama, it remains operational only on the condition that it dramatize the part of the alternative that it chooses to exclude. To this extent, it cannot help but exhibit the caesura that divides it – the origin of its process – by insisting on the disquieting aspect of the consequences tied to the left side of the alternative: we must choose in favour of a schematized rather than a 'fluctuating' cinnabar. Rather than bury the left side of the alternative, we extract from it the catastrophic consequences: 'The time is out of joint'! Unlike myth, the allegory establishes the conditions under which metaphors maintain their vivacity; it is the matrix for a live metaphors that a formula's impact can always defuse. And the formula, in *Bartleby's* view, must be repeated in such a way that the allegory may be delivered to the text that it strives to double. Under such conditions, the *Critique of Pure Reason* offers itself as a gateway between pure time, to which movement is subordinated, and measured time which, conversely, remains submitted to the metrical exigencies of movement.³

The most important question proposed by the Kantian Critique is therefore this: what would happen if the succession of phenomena was not submitted to number as the unity of synthesis? What

absurd consequences would have to be permitted on the succession of phenomena if this succession were to escape the rule of its necessary unity? Thus, in the second analogy of experience, Kant dramatizes by showing all the consequences entailed by the left side of the alternative. The concept that implies necessity in the sequence of phenomenal successions ‘can only be a pure concept that lies in the understanding, not in perception; and in this case it is the concept of *the relation of cause and effect*, the former of which determines the latter in time, as its consequence’ (Kant 1929: A189/B234). Nevertheless, Kant will never succeed in deducing the necessary submission of time to causality and in producing the concept of causality as a determination of time. We know that, for Kant, time is that in which everything occurs. But time itself is not something that has occurred. Time may well establish the originary layer of sensibility, where everything passes and succeeds itself – it may well establish the immutable form of change. However, by the same token, it is not able to guarantee a necessary order of change. Quite the contrary – time as an immutable form of change refers to a pure field of vectors without any determined orientations.

Within such a time, the world flies into pieces, and shreds in all directions at once that which traverses it. This is why it is imperative that the postulation of a determination of time, under the scheme of number, must supply an orientation targeting this molecular heap of variegated phenomena. What would happen if time had to be submitted unto itself? What would happen if time had not been subjected to the principle of causality? Would it rather not be realized? What do we have to fear? What is this drama from which the allegorical labour succeeds in purging us?

Let us suppose that there is nothing antecedent to an event, upon which it must follow according to rule. All succession of perception would then be only in the apprehension, that is, would be merely subjective, and would never enable us to determine objectively which perceptions are those that really precede and which are those that follow. We should then have a play of representations, relating to no object; that is to say, it would not be possible through our perception to distinguish one appearance from another as regards relations of time. For the succession in our apprehension would always be one and the same. (Kant 1929: A194/B239)

A little earlier in the text, Kant specifies that this subjective liaison ‘is altogether arbitrary [and] does not prove anything as to the manner in which the manifold is connected in the object’ (Kant: 1929,

A193/B238). In fact, rendering time unto itself, subtracting it from number as a measure of change, is to liberate the power of the false along with the force of the arbitrary.⁴ In this respect, the river that Kant uses as an example flows at several speeds, changes endlessly between upstream and downstream and reverses the events that flow in it, like the river that Valéry describes in the opening of *Eupalinos or The Architect* (Valéry 1932: 5). The house that Kant offers in the same passage becomes itself a labyrinth when the form of its apprehension no longer finds the rule to distinguish it, by providing orientation for the connection of the diverse. And so, we understand Kant's anger when, on his sixty-first birthday, on Mendelssohn's advice, his students presented him with an engraved medal, where on one side there figured the leaning tower of Pisa and, on the other, a plumb line (see Goulyga 1985: 144). The tower of Pisa on the verge of collapsing represents the thing against which Kant constantly seeks to forewarn himself. No number could prevent the spiral of time from leaning, from decentring itself; no plumb line would know how to control the force of the declinations that run through time. '*The time is out of joint!*' Under the shock of the formula, time manifests everywhere as the presence of an element of curvature, of declination, a branch of inflection, which for Deleuze we can designate as irrational *point-folds* (Deleuze 1993b: 18) or, if we prefer, points of flexion bringing to bear on a straight line rational points and the fall of an arc of a circle. For example, 'between the two points A and B – no matter in what proximity they may be – there always remains the possibility for carrying out the right isosceles triangle, whose hypotenuse goes from A to B, and whose summit, C, determines a circle that crosses the straight line between A and B' (Deleuze 1993b: 18) (fig. 4).

From this perspective, the plumb line will never succeed in authoritatively measuring the intervals that decentre the spiral and, with every new twist and turn, involve different principles of repartition and distribution. Nor will it succeed in introducing, with every declination, a difference of nature whose curve length cannot be divided without changing its coordinates. The pure form of time is the mould that subordinates movement and ceaselessly inflects it towards a turbulence, which itself is nourished by turbulences. From this point of view, what such a time causes to pass and shreds in all possible directions refers to a pure diagrammatic matter that no number can ever bring under the control of any categorical stratification. Pure time, therefore, can be subtracted from schematized time, in a nomadic distribution by which the cinnabar would reach the foamy crest and

SECOND VARIATION

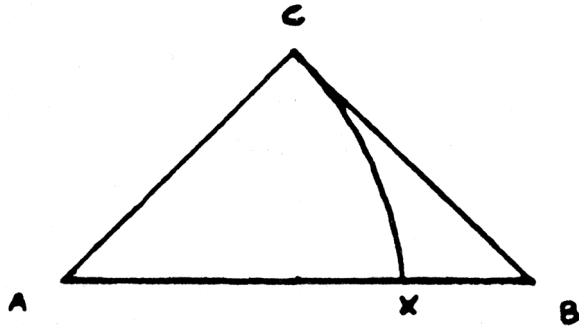


Figure 4

thereby restore its divergence. It is clear that, with Shakespeare's formula, time becomes disjointed – displaced from its central axis – and ascends to its superior form. Hence, '*the time is out of joint*' is about the most intimate possibility of time – time as the form of that which is not stable, an immutable form of change and movement, and a form of the metastable confined by the Kantian text to the depths of the allegorical dramatization. Such a form, made autonomous under the impact of the formula, asks for a new definition of time that Deleuze must either discover or create. This, it seems to me, is what his book on cinema has accomplished. The liberation of time from its subordination to the sensory-motor scheme and from its dependence on the rational movement that rules over causality seems to be the exact sense of a project that impacts on the establishment of a direct time-image.

Indeed, since Aristotle, time has given itself to thought as the number of movement. In a secondary way, movement always determines our recourse to the measure of time. In this respect, time necessarily submits itself to movement, whose measure it continually represents. In order to achieve a direct comprehension of time, one must in some way suffer the scandal of the aberrant movement, and endure all these aberrant movements that join forces and escape number relations. The postwar cinema proposes this opportunity. Cinema becomes the site of a precious experimentation that renews the question of transcendental empiricism uncovered by Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition*. In many respects, cinema gives time the opportunity to directly surge and avoid the subordination of a stratified movement to a categorical dispensation. As Deleuze indicates with extraordinary tact, this direct presentation of time – time after the subtraction of the unity of the category, the transcendental

nucleus of sensibility – in no way implies that movement has stopped; rather, it marks a new promotion of all those aberrant movements that are as much of thought as of cinema proper.

What makes this problem as much a cinematographic as a philosophical one is that the movement-image seems to be in itself a profoundly aberrant and abnormal movement . . . not only speeded up, slowed down and reversed sequences, but the non-distancing of the moving body . . . constant changes in scale and proportion . . . and false continuities of movement . . . The movement-image does not reproduce a world, but constitutes an autonomous world, made up of breaks and disproportion, deprived of all its centres, addressing itself as such to a viewer who is in himself no longer centre of his own perception. The *percipiens* and the *percipi* have lost their points of gravity. (Deleuze 1989a: 36–7)

Here, there is pure time, liberated from the form of identity of the object and from the unity of transcendental apperception – time on display for a spectator, where movement, having been released from the weight of rational chains, ascends to visibility. It is true that this form of pure time will be both obliterated and exhibited in Kant's text, whenever he attempts to remove himself from the changes of a harlequin cinnabar and when Deleuze finally seeks the transcendental conditions of real experience in Bergson. This is why all of Deleuze's work on cinema is inscribed under Bergson's sign. Ever since his essay on Hume, Deleuze strove, in every experience, to single out the presence of something that does not reduce itself to experience – this same something that Hume discovered in the logic of relations, which are necessarily external to the corresponding terms. Thus, 'if we call "experience" a collection of distinct perceptions, we should then recognize that relations are not derived from experience. They are the effect of the principles of association, namely of the principles of human nature, which, within experience, constitute a subject capable of transcending experience' (Deleuze 1991: 108). And, in many respects, it is this exigency that Deleuze will rediscover in the transcendental investigation proposed by Kant's philosophy, where 'if we go beyond that which is given in experience, it is by virtue of principles which are our own, necessarily subjective principles'. Hence, 'the given cannot be the basis of the operation by which we go beyond the given' (Deleuze 1984: 12).

But, if we must be thankful to Kant for having raised the transcendental problematic, the fact is that this discovery is constantly compromised by the image of thought that, under the influence of

common sense, reduces the transcendental to the conditions of a simply possible experience. 'The elementary concepts of representation are the categories defined as the conditions of possible experience. These, however, are too general or too large for the real. The net is so loose that the largest fish pass through. . . . Everything changes once we determine the conditions of real experience, which are not larger than the conditioned' (Deleuze 1994: 68). Indeed, in its search for the conditions of real experience, the theory of sensibility – the transcendental aesthetic – changes: instead of giving itself ready-made sensations and simply relating them to the a priori form of their representation, it plunges into sensibility to rescue the transcendental character. Deleuze's transcendental investigation hopes to release a preindividual plane that no longer resembles the domains it conditions along with their corresponding empirical fields.

In the last analysis, whether in Kant or in Husserl, the conditions for experience resemble the general form of the conditioned, to the point of mistaking the one for the other. The condition is copied from the conditioned and submitted to the generality of the principle of contradiction, which extracts the transcendental from the empirical, as well as the possible from an already individuated real. This is why the transcendental preserves all the familiar features of the corresponding empiricities, and why the form of the 'I' – the personal form of consciousness – reinjects itself into the domain of conditions. For Deleuze, the transcendental is no more individuated than it is personal and does not retain the characteristics of the empirical domains it conditions. From the empirical to the transcendental, it is the centrality of consciousness and of the principle of contradiction that begins to melt in the process of liberating the play of impersonal and asubjective singularities. 'The foundation can never resemble what it founds. It does not suffice to say of the foundation that it is another matter – it is also another geography, without being another world. . . . The transcendental field of sense must exclude the form of the general and the form of the individual' (Deleuze 1990b: 99). This is the geography Deleuze discovers within a time free from the weight of rational and categorial connections. This pure geography is the image-time whose crystal it presents, according to Bergson's profound intuition.

The issue, with Bergson, is squarely a matter of a transcendental exigency. Kant is certainly a great explorer. He discovers an underground world that is not a world behind the world in Nietzsche's sense – in other words, a world within this world that nevertheless

should not be confused with its empirically constituted reality. Kant, however, does not manage to discover or produce the genesis of the world. He does not accede to the constitution of sensibility and its transcendental layer, although he indicates it, under the pure form of time – under the immutable form of change, the entire creative force of which, unfortunately, he subordinates to the category of causality. For the first time with Bergson, philosophy reaches beyond the encircling of experience and

this going-beyond does not consist in going beyond experience towards concepts. For concepts only define, in the Kantian manner, the conditions of all possible experience in general. Here, on the other hand, it is a case of real experience in all its peculiarities. And if we must broaden it, or even go beyond it, this is only in order to find the articulations on which these peculiarities depend. (Deleuze 1988a: 28)

What this ‘going beyond’ affirms is that we can always consider duration in terms of causality, but this only reflects change at the risk of losing all the differences of nature that permeate the real in a creative dismemberment. Obviously we can drop a cube of sugar in a glass of water and interpret any causal relations we want to between the two elements under consideration. But, from this point of view, we grasp only the differences of degree in a homogeneous space where the quantity of matter remains constant. In other words, within a system that subordinates time to number, we pass from one state to another in a process that does not indicate a single essential change in the order of quantities. Nothing here ‘becomes’ in an essential way, and that which it transforms can always be referred to a set of invariants, carried away on a homogeneous space whose variation remains subordinate to the same metric principle.

Under these circumstances, even the second principle of thermodynamics fails to express a single great defeat, since it contents itself with measuring the homogeneous growth of disorder and with translating a loss of information consistent with the spatial model of expansion. At any rate, the principle of a uniform degradation can never account for the improbable establishment of systems and for the creative transformation of matter. In a universe that follows the entropic slope of the cosmos, in a world where everything leans towards an increasing disorder, we can never account for the local increases along this slope (Deleuze 1994: 255). Here, what escapes from number as the measure of change and from the rational quantification of movement involves the qualitative process of both an

incomprehensible becoming and an irrational mutation that reconnects differences of nature.

As we consider the qualitative transformation of the sugar cube, and we follow its natural articulations, what is at stake is necessarily a little bit of time in the pure state. Watching the sugar dissolve is a veritable exercise in *patience*, a pure patience that exposes the labyrinth of time, the *Istigkeit* or the eventual content of things. Bergson's sugar is the site of an intensive experience comparable to Van Gogh's experience in the context of the acceleration of perspectives. Hence, 'I must wait for the sugar to dissolve' designates the recruitment of a formula that, in a subterranean fashion, corresponds with Shakespeare's 'The time is out of joint!' It establishes the site of a superior patience within which 'my own duration . . . serves to reveal other durations that beat to other rhythms that differ in kind from mine' (Deleuze 1988a: 32). The sugar cube marks the point of divergence for a fibrous duration that intuition renders tangible – nature's passage, within which a radical plurality of durations manifests itself. This intuition, quasi-mystical and yet rigorous, bears witness to a pure time, free from the intellectual simplifications that had previously schematized all divergent articulations.

Here we are perhaps confronting a time that already may be found in Kant, as the immutable form of change; but it is Bergson who envisages it in an intuitive mode free from the all too empirical constraints of the schematic apparatus, which used to subordinate movement to the unity of a unique self-consciousness. Therefore, it is with Bergson that time accedes to its superior form – the asubjective condition of all changes and creative bifurcations, the multiplicity of time that sustains heterogeneous and, by the same token, impossible speeds of flow. In a time liberated from the primacy of consciousness, we reconnect with the singular *Istigkeit* of things free from the weight of the category. We rediscover the aberrant movement of the disjunctive cinnabar, manifesting the multiplicity of fluxes that traverse it in all possible directions:

A single duration will gather up the events of the whole physical world along its way; and we shall then be able to eliminate the human consciousness that we had at first laid out at wide intervals like so many relays for the motion of our thought; there will be nothing more than an impersonal time in which all things will pass. (Bergson 1965: 47)

We are faced with one and the same duration for all events – a labyrinth of multiple, heterogeneous footpaths astride a completely

impersonal intuition that connects the floating lines of every haecceity and marks the asubjective individuation of an *élan vital*. In this respect, the intuition appears as a veritable transcendental method suitable for being raised to the conditions of a real experience that does not resemble the tranquil stability of the actualized empirical orders, but rather develops a terrible, unbearable world where the winds of the Dionysian lacerations blow: 'The time is out of joint!'

The cinema is created around such experiences, carrying off the stability of perceptive orders towards the aleatory points that produce their differential genesis. Cinema sends us over to the establishment of a transcendental field that rises from an experiment capable of deducing its accident-dotted topology. There are exceptional experiences that render the pure form of time visible in a direct image. These are experiences that, without being philosophical, demand all the power of thought that only philosophy produces. It is not a question of subordinating cinema, but rather of creating with it a multilinear map within which common sense would lose its points of reference, making room for the conditions of real experience and real conditions which no longer imitate the assurance that good sense and common sense procure.

Such an alliance is not self-evident, given that cinema itself is not exempt from the clichés with which the image of thought nourishes itself. Be that as it may, there are cinematographic creations that extract, even from clichés, a dimension of time that only cinema can cause us to think about. Transcendental empiricism is a thought of time presupposing multiple alliances in the midst of which cinema appears as a novel and special effort, even if it inscribes itself within a non-philosophical dimension. It is true that cinema propagates common, often mediocre places, distressing clichés, but this is not the real issue. As Godard says, images have probably become clichés. Nevertheless, we must learn how to release a simple image from this unformed mass (Deleuze 1986: Chapter 12). The cinematographic exploitation of the cliché is tied to a deep crisis of the action-image – a crisis where the force of the sensory-motor site, action-situation and action-reaction linkings, reaches the point of rupture. In fact, that which definitely breaks up is the measured line that stretches one event into another within a narrative content, to develop its action between commensurable beginnings and ends.

And so, with Cassavetes, for example, both space and plot organise all actions in accordance with decomposing tight logical bonds. Every element of plot is progressively dispersed under the sudden rise

of any-spaces-whatever, abandoned warehouses, marshalling yards, and deserted urban networks. And this dispersive, lacunary variety only remains together thanks to slogans and publicity posters that reconnect the leisurely stroll, or promenade, across the undifferentiated fabric of the city. The function of all these clichés that inspired postwar Italian neo-realism is to piece together the portions of space within weak links, whose leading thread is revealed only by chance. This is an irrational stroll, without any avowed goal, that the rain suspends or whose direction it changes. 'In these we see the birth of a race of charming, moving characters who are hardly concerned by the events which happen to them – even treason, even death – and experience and act out obscure events which are as poorly linked as the portion of the any-space-whatever which they traverse' (Deleuze 1986: 213). Only from this disconcerting bric-à-brac, with its aberrant movement and irrational cuts – only from this heteroclitite heap – may the pure form of an autonomous time rise, liberated from the scheme of causality that disciplined and normalized movement by measuring it. In such a time, the synthesis of recognition will literally collapse, unless we distinguish, with Bergson, two forms of recognition: the recognition in which we associate images in a horizontal way, with the end result that each representation prolongs itself causally in the one that follows it; and the attentive recognition that does not prolong itself in a linear causal order. The first form of recognition extends itself on a very homogeneous plane where, for example, a cow grazes from one patch of grass to another in a horizontal pattern. On the other hand, attentive recognition deals with an object in an unexpected manner – in a repetition where it deviates onto different planes. We must, therefore, distinguish two orders of perception: the first extends itself in a straight line, along the length of which the mind is distanced from the object never to return; whereas with the second perception, the mind constantly returns to the object, instead of passing on to other associations, albeit in accordance with different planes.⁵ In the first representation, we associate with the object several other objects that resemble it by remaining on the same plane, whereas the attentive recognition always carries this object to its essential singularity and to its asubjective explosion. This is reminiscent of the obstinacy with which Huxley examines the same flower in the space of a lively rhythm, and of the repeated flow by means of which we pass from one beauty to another, brought out in circuits of ever increasing intensity. For example, Huxley's chair in *The Doors of Perception* not only relates to the office with a horizontal connection,

but constantly passes through heterogeneous planes and diverging circuits, like the armchair that Van Gogh distorts in the obscurity-turned-palpable of a suffocating room. This is the state of dead time that interrupts the sensory-motor connection in a singular moment, and whose consistency spans centuries. It is an individuation based on haecceity, upon which our perception begins to stumble against always deeper and wider circles separated from each other by veritable abysses. The impersonal character of the object, to which this perceptual stuttering refers, corresponds precisely to a pure optical image, in the same sense that Deleuze gives this term.

But the pure optical image is a completely different type of image, a different type of perception . . . a zone of recollections, dreams, or thoughts corresponds to a particular aspect of the thing: each time it is a plane or a circuit, so that the thing passes through an infinite number of planes or circuits. . . Each circuit obliterates and creates an object. But it is precisely in this 'double movement of creation and erasure' that successive planes and independent circuits, canceling each other out . . . forking, will simultaneously constitute the layers of one and the same physical reality, and the levels of one and the same mental reality. (Deleuze 1989a: 45, 46)

The direct time-image corresponds to a pure optical situation, to an image that can no longer be resolved through an horizontal extension, but bends back on itself, passing again through the same, lightly decentred circuits, forcing heterogeneous layers of the same object to coexist. Take, for example, Van Gogh, who unites two completely divergent views of Saint-Rémy on the same canvas (*Starry Night*, 1889). We encounter the power of these images in Mankiewicz's films, sprung from pure time, where they coexist virtually.⁶

As Deleuze rightly says, for Mankiewicz, the *flashback* accedes to its superior form, since it is a question 'of a fragmentation of all linearity, of perpetual bifurcations as so many ruptures of causality'. Mankiewicz's proposed treatment of the *flashback* leads to the multiplicity of circuits that we have encountered in Bergson and to a stuttering of perception that arouses the pure form of time. What flashes in such flashbacks is the oscillating rhythm between a present and its own past, a past that has never been lived as a present – an impression of a *déjà vu* and of false recognition. In the phenomena of paramnesia, perception, surprised by a pure past that cannot be realized, hesitates between an actual given image and a virtual image that cannot be assigned, and between the present and its contemporary past that sits on the tip of our tongue as something we recognize and

yet have lost forever. We would then say that to each actual image there corresponds a virtual image as its immediate past and that the actual perception turns always double, overtaken by the pure past that is strictly contemporary with its present. From the depths of this junction, the present and the past immediately begin to coexist in a circuit, which is the crystalline essence of time already divided in every instance, into incommensurable presents and pasts.

We find this entire circuit in *Remembrance of Things Past* when Proust, with Madame de Villeparisis, engages on that shortcut to which 'all the similar roads that I was to take . . . would at once attach themselves without breach of continuity and would be, thanks to it, able to communicate immediately with my heart' (Proust 1961: 774). This road with its multiple bifurcations leads Proust, at the bend of one of its many elbows, to an intense happiness, to a sudden and very distinct pleasure that the writer connects to the affair of the bell towers of Martinville. But whereas in Martinville happiness was complete, now it isn't. This happiness arouses a peculiar pleasure, an incomplete one that cannot be totalized, since it will never find the resolution, finality, or interruptions necessary to fulfil it, because it is comparable in this sense to the desire analyzed in *Anti-Oedipus*. Filled with a deep happiness, this very distinct pleasure does not successfully interrupt the flow of joy developed by an unlimited plane of immanence. Whatever had taken place so suddenly on this road in Hudimesnil? We shall never know! It will remain a mystery, a secret that we can only sense and experience through the modality of joy, something whose individuation cannot be found under a thematic form – yet something very singular.

I had just seen, standing a little way back from the steep ridge over which we were passing, three trees probably marking the entrance to a shady avenue which made a pattern at which I was looking now not for the first time; I could not succeed in reconstructing the place from which they had been, as it were, detached, but I felt that it had been familiar to me once; so that, my mind having wavered between some distant year and the present moment, Balbec and its surroundings began to dissolve . . . that pleasure, the object of which I could only dimly feel, that pleasure which I must create for myself, I experienced only on rare occasions, but on each of these it seemed to me that the things which had happened in the interval were of but scant importance. . . (Proust 1961: 543, 544)

It is no longer a question of memory or of reminiscence. This experience of time does not serve in the associative mode of the famous madeleine, primarily because the madeleine is connected with a past that can be assigned and reactivated in line with the

process of resemblance. It is also incapable of being organized within a collective individuation, thereby establishing a machinic arrangement, without reference to the lost past. By contrast, the three trees in question illustrate an arrangement and involve a form of individuation based on *haecceity*. Instead of one madeleine, we now have several trees coming into the variable configurations, hinging on the perspectival point that we engage on this winding road. This singular experience has nothing to do with memory, would it be involuntary; on the contrary, it renders its exercise possible. We find an entire composition of relations, of distances, intervals, speeds and decelerations that should be brought closer to the rhythmic step of that group of young girls in the middle of which Albertine succeeds in arranging her molecules in a particular collection. The sudden awareness of the three trees in question is an affair of movement – aberrant movement – tied in with the topological bifurcations of the leisurely stroll held responsible by the narrator for that ‘mythical apparition, dance of witches or of norms’.⁷

Remembrance of Things Past develops a form of strolling on a topological network, the junctions of which do not offer any solution of continuity – a spider’s web whose threads the narrator seeks to develop in order to launch a set of incommunicable worlds into orbit.⁸ At any rate, all the memories that the *Remembrance* reactivates are themselves submitted to a higher authority, to the pure time that affects movement and allows the flashes of reminiscence to be possible. The bell towers of Martinville, the madeleine and all the illuminations of perception, designate the many phosphorescent singularities that the *Remembrance* recounts to the rhythm of an immobile voyage – carriages, railways, automobiles, etc. This is why I chose to preserve the episode of the trees of Hudimesnil following the indications of the author himself, who rightfully considers that crucial moment as the dividing line of an immense ‘geomnesic’ cartography. Indeed, Proust tells us:

For as soon as the carriage or the motor-car turned into one of these roads that seemed to be the continuation of the road along which I had driven with Mme de Villeparisis, the matter to which I found my consciousness directly applying itself, as to the most recent event in my past, would be . . . the impressions that I had had on those bright summer afternoons. . . (Proust 1961: 546).

In other words, actual consciousness must prop itself against the event of the three trees, as its immediate though distant past. This

event, as we will see, designates the birth of a pure past and the feeling that the concrete present permanently belongs to the past. Proust, therefore, conceives reminiscence as a secondary factor whose immediate past propels us towards an episode that was never present – a paramnesiac event irreducible to the actuality of any given present.

According to the author's own words, the carriage that brings him to Hudimesnil must be 'a lodestone to which all the similar roads that I was to take . . . would at once attach themselves without breach of continuity' (Proust 1961: 546), as if at this point the *Remembrance's* topology found its initial exchanger, bifurcating in any old direction in the vicinity of the shining singularities that trace its divided course. In fact, the instantaneous vision of the three trees marks the site of a very particular paramnesia and of a stumbling of perception, which is not the affair of recognition, but rather a type of inexplicable temporal stereoscopy:

Had I indeed never seen before, did they conceal beneath their surface, like the trees, like the tufts of grass . . . a meaning as obscure, as hard to grasp, as is a distant past, so that, whereas they are pleading with me that I master a new thought, I imagined that I had to identify something in my memory? Or again, were they concealing no hidden thought, and was it simply my strained vision that made me see them double in time as one occasionally sees double in space? (Proust 1961: 545)

It is here that all perception stumbles upon a present that also offers its contents as a distant past. And this distant past is not a memory or, if we prefer, an ancient present that is now past. There is probably an illusion of memory (*souvenir*) in paramnesia, but the issue really concerns a past that is not an ancient present – a pure past that we occasionally confuse with an ancient present, in the form of memory (*souvenir*). Paramnesia is the result of a confusion in referring that which manifests itself as past to an ancient, somehow unlocalizable, lived state. But, in fact, it is the actual moment that divides itself into an entirely contemporary present and past, in a stereoscopic vision that is internal to time itself.

The best illustration of this way of seeing double in time, and of this perception which, in Proust's words, begins to 'stumble', is in the portrait of Marie-Thérèse Walter, made by Picasso in 1937. This portrait bears witness to an essential deformation and aberration of movement and perspective subject to pure time. And in the portrait of Dora Maar, from the same period, we especially feel time's capacity to produce the constant return of perception onto the object itself.

Here, the canvas' equilibrium is constantly menaced by the simultaneous presentation of both profile and face – of a disjunctive visage – involved in the play of a diverging colour. Picasso's work leads us to harmony's split through the imposition on each bifurcation of a return of perception whose circuits no longer correspond to those preceding it. Each time perspective offers a new turn, a new deviation, perception stumbles as a direct result of a non-linear repetition that refers to circuits of an increasing depth.

Such a circuit – carving everything out of diverging planes, between which perception begins to stutter – establishes the best expression of Proust's work yet. In the middle of the 'geomnesia' developed by the *Remembrance*, this lingering and jumping on the spot ascends to its superior form and plunges into the pure form of time. The whole of this 'geomnesia' actualizes, or rather counter-actualises, itself in the affair of the three trees:

I looked at the three trees . . . my mind felt that they were concealing something which it had not grasped, as when things are placed out of our reach, so that our fingers . . . can only touch for a moment their outer surface. . . Then we rest for a little while before thrusting out our arm with refreshed vigour, and trying to reach an inch or two farther . . . then with my thoughts collected, compressed and strengthened I sprang forward in the direction of the trees, or rather in that inverse direction at the end of which I could see them growing within myself. (Proust 1961: 544)

What is related here is both the real and the imaginary, the physical and the mental, the outside and the inside, the actual and the virtual, according to terms that mirror one another, without our ever being able to tell which precedes the other. These crystalline images, these mirrored percepts, bring about circuits where, to the various aspects of the object, there correspond different zones and layers of a developing thickness. It is therefore the same object that begins to stumble, according to different coexisting circuits, in line with Bergson's schema of attentive recognition, 'in which all the elements, including the perceived object itself, hold each other in a state of mutual tension as in an electric circuit, so that no disturbance starting from the object can stop on its way and remain in the depths of the mind: it must always find its way back to the object whence it proceeds' (Bergson 1910: 127).⁹ What we must retain from Proust's essential intuition is that it incarnates the event that, for all other experiences of reminiscence, establishes their 'most recent . . . past' (Proust 1961: 546).

In other words, the totality of souvenir-images and of dream-images distributed by the *Remembrance* will eventually come to lean against something that no longer relates to memory and is time itself. The souvenir-image must obtain its necessity from elsewhere. Something else must impose or authenticate the reminiscence: a leap on the spot that suspends the chronological order imposed on time.

Again we sense the full power of a leap of this nature in de Chirico's paintings, where there are dead times that last for centuries; torrid and torrential surroundings that accelerate perspectives and bifurcations, so that everything stops, immobilized, in the middle of a suffocating street, where a young girl pushes a hoop for long, slow, empty minutes and eternities (*Melancholy and Mystery of a Street*, 1914). In this crucial instance, duration congeals while the perspective of houses bifurcates and accelerates in keeping with an absolute speed. The movement goes wild, becomes aberrant, liberates itself from every measure in favour of a chronological interruption, and in favour of the rise of dead time as an immutable form of change: a little bit of pure time, the time where everything happens and does not happen, immobile and without sound, the length of which movement complies to a furious madness, bifurcating in every possible direction without reason, being irrational. The entire reminiscence, the involuntary memory itself, does not return to the state of pure time and does not deploy its accidental images except through that fantastic collision that lifts everything in its passage, the collision of the event where 'the time of the event comes to an end before the event does, so the event will start again at another time . . . the whole event is as it were in the time where nothing happens' (Bernard Groethysen, quoted by Deleuze 1989a: 100).

Bergson, according to Deleuze, continues to highlight the insufficiency of the souvenir-image and reminds us that this image embodies the mark of the past. He emphasizes thereby that we must seek the past where it has always existed in itself. Memory (*souvenir*), even when it is involuntary, never delivers the past. It is enough for it to represent the ancient present that the past 'has been'. It is not the souvenir-image that allows us to ascend to the pure past, as it exists in itself; rather, the disturbances of memory manifest its power whenever memory begins to stutter and stumble. In other words, the past as such cannot be based on memory (*souvenir*), we cannot extract the proper condition from the conditioned without deforming the transcendental through an appeal to the already measured base of experience. The vision of the three trees of Hudimesnil

demonstrates that memory instructs us on the nature of time when it effectively fails much more than when it succeeds. Only then will it connect with the pure form of time, which, in being anachronic and immoderate (*démesurée*), cannot be attained by number's scheme. There is therefore a fork of perception and of attentive recognition that causes us to see double in time whenever this recognition begins to limp. There is a fork of perception confirming the division of the actual moment as a strictly contemporary present and past that paramnesia renders indiscernible. At the centre of the paramnesiac experience, the coexistence of the present and its own past imposes itself. As a result, we may as well admit that we agree with Deleuze – that the past is not simply a present with a past, but that it obstinately persists in the form of a pure past, of a past that has never been given as present, a past continuously lived as a past contemporary with the present itself.¹⁰

As a general rule, memory moves from an actual present to a present that 'has been'. This memory never directly grasps the past. It contents itself with the retrieval of the sense of memory (*souvenir*) from the succession of presents, as if the past could establish itself after having been present! If the present and the past differ in nature, then we must maintain that, in its stumbling, paramnesia accedes to a past as the latter coexists with its present. Bergson correctly defines this being in itself of the past as something virtual that, without being actual, is nonetheless very real. This virtual-real corresponds to the essence of a time that escapes the empirical principle of contradiction and also of causality. And this gives us a non-pulsating time, stirring aberrant and divergent movements that liberate the space of metre and number. Plunging into a pure past, being contemporary with the present that actualises and constitutes itself simultaneously with the given present, perception suddenly stumbles in front of the unexpected arrangement of the three Hudimesnil trees. Everything begins to bifurcate at the same moment, in the two senses/directions of present and past, bringing about a double vision from the perspective where these actually perceived trees contain a sense 'so worn, so faded that it seemed to me to come from somewhere far more distant' (Proust 1961: 544).

With this temporal stereoscopy, unique in the entire history of literature, we are led straight to the crystal of time that Deleuze discovers at the centre of the cinematographic creation. The crystal of time is the shortest circuit between the present and its immediate past, between the actual and the virtual. The crystal-images designate

the mutually reflected images that are doubles by nature.¹¹ Certainly, there is a *de jure* distinction between the two faces of the crystal, but *paramnesia* renders them *de facto* indiscernible, in the illusion of the *déjà vu* and the very vivid feeling of recognizing the pure past as if it were an old present, although one is faced with two mutual and yet disjunctive images. The crystal-image verifies the coalescence of virtual and actual, designating its shortest circuit and the ideal limit between immediate past and present – a limit that flees in the caesura of time:

What constitutes the crystal-image is the most fundamental operation of time: since the past is constituted not after the present that it was but at the same time, the time has to split itself in two at each moment as present and past . . . it has to split the present in two heterogeneous directions, one of which is launched towards the future while the other falls into the past . . . Time consists of this split, and it is this, it is time, that *we see in the crystal*. The crystal-image was not time, but we see time in the crystal. We see in the crystal the perpetual foundation of time, non-chronological time, Cronos and not Chronos. (Deleuze 1989a: 81)

The crystal-image is the point of divergence, the diffraction of time – not its unveiling. It makes time visible, neither as a presentation of the unpresentable nor as an unveiling secured by means of a withdrawal. I have already had the occasion to say that, between the virtual and its actualization, the relation is immanent.¹² Thus, we find in the affair of the trees of Hudimesnil, the crystal-image as a minimal circuit, restarting all the other itineraries that Bergson's schema illustrates, in keeping with twists and turns that constantly increase in breadth. In this respect, Deleuze is perfectly correct in affirming that, regarding the novel, 'it is Proust who says that time is not internal to us, but that we are internal to time, which divides itself in two, which loses itself and discovers itself in itself, which makes the present pass and the past be preserved' (Deleuze 1989a: 82). My hypothesis simply involves making the Proustian *paramnesia* the divided and acented centre of the *Remembrance* and of the crystal-image of the massive 'geomnesia' it develops. It is true that Proust strives but still finds himself restricted to connecting all the circuits, singularities and zones of the past that he experiences in the course of the *Remembrance* to the episode of Hudimesnil. There must be something episodic in order to experience the pure form of time; there must be a forked event or a minimal bifurcation to underscore the shock of time. For example, the new poetics is essentially

episodic. Aristotle constantly hunted down the episodic; but we must restore the rights of the episode as the mark of the event. The event, Huxley aptly says, is a fork, a succession of doors separated by abysses – a labyrinth of labyrinths. It is a good bet that an event of this nature necessarily involves a new form of poetics. In a text dating back to the period when Proust was beginning to write his *Jean Santeuil*, the nature of the event is clearly manifested: it incites percepts, affects and concepts to go beyond their own doors:

The poet stops and stays in front of everything that does not deserve the attention of a well-balanced man, so that people wonder whether he is a lover or a spy and would like to know what he is looking at really during all the time that he is staring at this tree . . . He is in front of this tree but what he is looking for is definitely beyond the tree because he no longer feels what he felt before and when all of a sudden he feels it again, he can no longer dwell in it, or go any farther. (Proust 1988: 1378)

This unusual pause of the poet, which raises the event to the point of the bifurcation it shelters, establishes the site of a new visibility, a mysterious look, an exercise of pure seeing (*voyance*) from the depths of which what is sensed largely overflows what common sense renders sensible on the basis of the harmonious apparatus of the faculties. The poem stops everything in its place and makes it accelerate or decelerate in accordance with a line of hysteria that brings each faculty to its saturation point. In the strict sense, the poet is no longer a man. And if we still have to define him as a man, if we must still use this specific label, it will be done only on the condition that we follow the volcanic chain that interrupts the conjoined exercise of faculties for the discordant accord and the irrational distortion of all natural dispositions that carry the human form towards its most external outside, and to relate it to inhuman forces sensitive to the imperceptible consistency of the event. The poet manifests a very particular, plastic sensibility, an uncommon patience, and a distortion of the play of the faculties such that they all beat a different rhythm, and follow variable speeds in their flow. The poet therefore has no relation to the regulated form of the ‘square’ man. From this point of view, he is seriously suspect. In loving, he develops shortcuts and transversals whose profit in voluptuousness marks a process of subjectification of outside norms. In spying, she betrays the law of the milieu that she straddles. The poet is the traitor, she displaces the limits of our knowledge and practices – a lunatic who remains planted like a tree in front of other trees, as if she had never seen trees before, calling the

others to bear witness and, from the bottom of her jubilation, inviting them to listen, to understand, to see, to imagine in an incomprehensible language, in the asyntactic cry of a hunted beast. Arrested in the middle of all milieus, she obstinately occupies that intermediary fringe where all discourses intersect, statements decode, as they tear off particles, contaminate each other and transmit their respective codes that are consistent with a volcanic transversal.

Thus, what is in question in this strange pause, in this paramnesiac spasm, is an experimentation with the pure form of time – an essentially aesthetic experimentation whose art and sensibility are reconnected. This pure form of the crystalline dimension establishes a circuit in which all germs adopt the structure of the crystal, and where all orientations coexist. As a result, perceptions and memories begin to stumble, and remain at a virtual standstill in front of an object while molecularizing the object without being able to integrate it in a series that would extend it horizontally – fires and fogs, points of present and sheets of past. Leaps on the same spot liberate the power of time – a whole network of diverging points, of bifurcations in a superfused space, an oversaturated solution that is no longer derived from the uniform logic of categories, but from a differential topology that dives into free material – a field of preindividual, inactual and thereby transcendental vectors. For example, cinema, literature and painting have quickly taken hold of this type of *episode* that classic poetics endeavour to limit and exclude. All these episodes refer to the suspension of *Chronos* and they succeed in liberating the aberrant movements against which Kant's philosophy strove to forewarn itself. It is, therefore, under the very constraints of sensibility and art that the critique is forced to switch orientations, to lift the security bolts that had previously held the pure form of time behind a categorial domination.¹³

Art is not dead. Its extraordinary critical vitality raises the storm of bifurcation, displaces the sky in all possible directions and resembles a fog-like, opaque vapour. In this vapour, all singularities know the dead and empty time where they float in all the heterogeneous directions of a river with countless currents. 'The time is out of joint!' – a poet's pause! The formula's shock!

The Dice Throw

If the critique finds itself forced to change course under the constraints of a new transcendental aesthetic, the entire system of judgement to which time had to submit will break apart. ‘Every thought is a roll of the dice’: this is another formula for a new principle of distribution and a new system of judgement, whose impact snatches the constellation of a nomadic distribution from the sky. No doubt, Kant’s *Analytic of concepts* presents itself as a systematic concern, a configuration that ‘affords sufficient guidance as to the proper location of each concept, while at the same time indicating which divisions are still empty’ (Kant 1929: A83/B109). This project, which aims to lay out the land of pure understanding, is not so difficult. There is no dispute over the purification of the soil needed to place every concept in a fixed position. Nothing is simpler than this *Analytic*, for the reason that it was developed as a direct result of a perfectly determinable recognition. In the last analysis, it is enough ‘to recognize the place that properly suits each concept’, assuming that the concepts are subordinated to a system of places with stable coordinates. Perhaps recognition through the concept, as the third synthesis of the imagination, is the indicator marking a concept’s function – that renders its location viable. And so, recognition in the concept is the exercise of a synthesis whose function, by means of an after the fact foundation, resembles the recognition of a concept, without which ‘concepts and, therewith knowledge of objects are altogether impossible’ (Kant 1929: A104).

In the end, declares Kant, ‘the word “concept” might of itself suggest this remark. For this unitary consciousness is what combines the manifold, successively intuited, and thereupon also reproduced, into one consciousness’ (Kant 1929: A104). The unity that creates the concept of an object reveals the simple modality of a recognizing consciousness, the strange and sometimes obscure regulation in accordance with which something is offered to the apprehension and reproduction of the sensible manifold. This something = x is extracted from the pure form of time and also slips away from it,

moving in the direction of a categorial stratification. But according to a doubling proper to representation, this rule, which is the foundation of the conceptual synthesis – the recognition in the concept – must itself be open to recognition. It is therefore possible that the Analytic of concepts is but an analysis of the modalities and general orientations of recognition. This is why the concepts that serve as the unity of synthesis in the manifold through which objects become recognizable – the concepts, in other words, that bring about the unity of space and time – must, in turn, escape the turmoil of diversity and the undesirable bifurcation of the categorial dispensation. The concepts themselves must be submitted to both the *catharsis* produced by recognition and to a sieve that helps them resume their flux. It behoves recognition to define the categories of recognition, and it is incumbent upon the critique itself to calibrate its own power. The critique of reason through itself, or rather in itself, is the correlate of an acknowledgement quick to trace the hem of its own exercise and to delimit its own internal possibilities.

In this respect, to the extent that recognition designates the agreement of faculties with regard to an object conceived under the form of the same (common sense), it also serves as a leading thread for the agreement of concepts among themselves through the establishment of a table that allows them to be redistributed and familiarized with one another, in accordance with the principle of sedentary distribution (good sense). Recognition, understood as the articulation of common sense and good sense, designates the general form of a mode of distribution as that which takes for its coordinates the axes of the Identical, the Same and the Analogous. The Analytic of concepts is the operational site of common sense, the table upon which the orientations of recognition are marked; that is, the easiest directions to follow and the obvious options shared by all. But when war rages in the land of recognition, when the strata of recognition are liquefied under the constraints of time, the circle extending from the synthesis of recognition to the table of categories, from common sense to good sense, is permeated by syncopes that testify to the force of another principle of distribution and other constellations, wherein eternal circumstances will never enable a dice throw to abolish chance. Certainly, this war is not waged on its own. It requires all the resources of the *critique* – a radical critique that carries away territories and deterritorializes them on the basis of a *clinical* movement that integrates the labour of its own catastrophe and its own crack within the confines of thought.

There is nothing but good sense in thought, where a strange fascination with chaos is manifested, brought about by the critical act. In the tranquil circle travelled by Kant, that goes from an empirical synthesis to a direction-giving analytic, it is always possible to mark a formula's flaw – a virus of thought that causes the rise of another distributive power's delirious breath. 'A dice throw will never abolish chance.' How does this formula allow the unfolding of the tortuous hem of recognition? Under which conditions does the unfolding of a formula allow the variation of a text?

Of course, Mallarmé's formula does not have much to do with the textual economy of the Kantian critique. But this difference between the formula and the Kantian text does not prohibit the transcription of its code by lateral contagion and the rise of an unnatural alliance that could affect the equilibrium of established structures. The formula could incubate inside the text in question to produce a mutation of its codes. It could pass from Mallarmé's text to that of Kant, transporting seeds that may well cause an evolution or an involution of the critical statements. Under certain conditions, we know that a virus could possibly be connected to other cells and be transmitted by bringing with it the cellular genes of a complex species. This is an operation of genetic transcription, a transcription of code. A virus can pass from one host to another, bringing with it the genetic material of the former and introducing it to the cells of an altogether different species. Perhaps Mallarmé's formula could inoculate the body of a Kantian text with the mutogenic forces of transcription. What if all writing was such an operation of transcription? Would philosophy and literature continue to assume the form of a story? If thought functioned through the simple transcription of codes, what would happen to the history of thought and to its alleged translations?

For Deleuze, there exist becomings that pair a formula with a text in an aparallel relationship from which no genetic descendant based on filiation is ever expected. This is similar to the aparallel evolution of the wasp and the orchid, where the wasp becomes an instrument in the reproductive system of the orchid that, in turn, deterritorializes itself upon the image of the wasp.¹ Are there, perhaps, becomings that recognize a formula and a text in an aparallel evolution as a principle of deterritorialization? There is no reason to privilege the historical transformations of the Western ontotheology or, at any rate, the principle of its dispatch or the thread of its strategic reappropriation to the detriment of topological transcriptions. After all, a text does not have to be overtaken if we consider its production in

terms of transcription, which precedes it through a parallel evolution rather than genetic lineages. As Deleuze states in a letter to Cressole, we do not sire children by penetrating texts, since the children we spawn by taking someone from behind are like mules – untimely and without genealogical future. Nothing can come from an alliance of this nature, but everything evolves through groupings, bordering diffusions and geographical distributions. This is a system of proliferations not unlike the becoming that transpires between the cat and the baboon, whose alliance is forged by the C virus. Such a becoming creates in an anhistorical and anti-genealogical approach.

Why should a text have to define itself according to the genealogical requirements of genres and specific differences? There are no poetic genres, only textual populations that vary greatly from one milieu to another. A text does not reproduce merely through filiative generations – that would definitely inscribe us within the hypothesis of an infinite reappropriation of the borrowing kind. Rather, a text proliferates through transversal contagions that occur between heterogeneous populations. Deleuze's philosophy, for example, is never preoccupied with genesis and filiation, but with the analysis of texts by epidemic groupings, rhizomes and intertextual transcriptions that seize everything from the middle – *intermezzo!*

We would never ask what a book means, signifier or signified, we would not look to understand anything in a book, we would ask with what it functions, in connection with what does it or does it not pass its intensities, in which multiplicities does it introduce and metamorphose its own . . . a book exists only by the outside and from the outside. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 4)

This is what Nietzsche achieves when he proceeds through aphorisms in his attempt to write a new kind of book. Aphorisms, like formulas, correspond to a textual practice in relation with an outside. Nietzsche's aphorisms, in opening up writing to the outside, always begin from elsewhere, rather than from themselves: 'An aphorism', says Deleuze, 'is a play of forces, a state of forces which are always exterior to one another. An aphorism doesn't mean anything, it signifies nothing, and no more has a signifier than a signified. Those would be ways of restoring a text's interiority' (Deleuze 2004: 256). It is not a question of exegesis, but rather of becomings and contagions, of populations and proliferations that scramble all the codes as they carry them away. Therefore, it is not a question of restoring the interiority of the Kantian text that endures the shock of a formula,

but, on the contrary, it is a question of following the force of dispersion that is introduced under the labour of mutual deterritorialization. This will be an aparallel becoming from which Kant's text and Mallarmé's statement would tear particles off one another and emit other regimes of signs: regimes without descendants or lineage – resulting in a transformative rather than a generative semiotics.

It is certainly not easy to introduce the interstices of the formula to the circle of recognition and to the interiority of the critique, where common sense and good sense articulate themselves. The only possible means to do this is through the ventilation of texts in accordance with a collage that no longer respects genres and specific differences. Rather, based on irrational connections that are considered absurd from the perspective of genesis, it would extend from the speculative to the anthropological and pass from one genre to the next in line with the fold that unfolds the formula, refusing all genealogical heritage, to fabricate a muddled history coiled inside a reduced analytic.

For instance, consider the Analytic's opening text and that which produces the principle of distribution of *the different human races*. Let us bring these two texts into the unfolding of the formula that also folds them atop one another.

We shall therefore follow up the pure concepts to their first seeds and dispositions in the human understanding, in which they lie prepared, till at last, on the occasion of experience, they are developed, and by the same understanding are exhibited in their purity, freed from the empirical conditions attaching to them. (Kant 1929: A66/B91)

A throw of the dice will never abolish chance.

The human being was destined for all climates and for every soil; consequently, various germs and natural predispositions had to lie ready in him to be on occasion either unfolded or restrained, so that he would become suited to his place in the world and over the course of the generations would appear to be as it were native to and made for that place. (Kant 2007b: 90)

These two texts fold themselves atop one another at the level of a preliminary germinative logic that the dice throw disperses diagrammatically. It is towards this diagrammatic semiotic that I intend to move the body of the Kantian text. Indeed, if the transcendental analytic presupposes a system of empty places that, given a closed combinatorial, can turn around itself, it is no less true that the double movement evoked by the two aforementioned texts can become synopated and allow a momentary flash of the shiny dust of an analytic

that is otherwise distributed. Nevertheless, within the two texts, a system of homogeneous settings succeeds in finalizing the development of certain preexisting seeds and, accordingly, imposes on them empirically directed orientations and functions. For the germinal diagramme, Kant substitutes the labour of finality. Between this finality and the preexisting character of natural disposition, Kant establishes the same circular relation as that which exists between recognition and concepts. Here, the table of categories is to concepts what the soil is to races – a principle of distribution founded on recognition and finality; that is, on the recognition of ends. Should the table of categories – ‘on the occasion of experience’ – be a probabilistic sieve that filters out a genesis of concepts, a veritable strainer that resumes their flux along axes that are compatible with empirical life? Could it be that recognition is nothing more than a sedentary requirement for a life condemned to provide the restrictive conditions for survival? Whatever the situation may be, in this circle where life grounds recognition and recognition renders the development of a certain life possible, a dice throw does not refrain from unfolding the interstices that decentre the circle.

In this respect, it is always from a cluster of preexisting seeds, from their anarchic and undirected distribution, that experience produces its controlled distribution in compliance with the necessities of an agrarian life.² Thanks to agriculture, Kant says, soil renders the development of the races irreversible and definitive. Likewise, it is through experience that concepts discover the necessary occasion for their pure exposition, enabling concepts to subtract themselves from the generative anarchy that folds them every which way. In other words, the categorial differentiation that makes the regimented dispensation of concepts possible is itself deduced from a form of differentiation to which Kant refers constantly, without ever intending to trace its diagramme. The table of judgement, therefore, is merely the sedentary imposition that leaves behind the networks of a nomadic distribution; it is the dice throw that rolls on to infinity. In the circle of Kantian differentiation, one still suffers the shock of a topological and generative differentiation, of a distribution that sows its singularities in a field of vectors incapable of assigning a polarity for convergence. Case in point: Simondon’s saturated solution, which runs through all the heterogeneous planes of the virtual before actualizing itself in a determined structure.

Kant is able to create these concepts and categories as a result of this obscure diagrammatic zone, which he enters without

understanding its logic, but ends up leaving in categorial stratification. This is why, beyond the petrified matrix developed by the table of judgements as the exclusive model for all other tables of his philosophy, we must retrieve the infinitely subdivisible fold of differentiation: we must recover the differentiated modulation, the continuous production of signaletic matter comprised of assorted sensory, kinetic, intensive, affective and rhythmic seeds.³

In the last analysis, the germinal diagramme that Kant stratifies in one standardized table faithfully corresponds to this material within which Deleuze tosses dice that could be indefinitely modulated; that is, to a variable matrix with innumerable constellations, each figure of which could be the object of a particular analytic or semiotic. If there are as many semiotics as there are constellations, it is on the condition that we follow the fall of the dice in 'a plastic mass, an a-signifying and a-syntactic material, a material not formed linguistically even though it is not amorphous and is formed semiotically, aesthetically and pragmatically' (Deleuze 1989a: 29).

In short, before producing the unique formula of a sum total being formed, one must, obviously, throw the dice in order to go through the diagramme that the dice thin out and unfold during their roll and modulation. In other words, before tossing the dice and obtaining the fateful result, several differently folded combinations intersect and overlap. The judgement table's four orientations mark the actualization, or the differentiation, of a specific figure. But this actualization, along with the germinative web it traverses, is never taken into account. The moment the four orientations become fixed on a game table restricted by its closed combinatorial, all virtual combinations will continue the exchange between a problematic and nomadic differentiation, in view of the tenuous edge of the final solution. It is perhaps in this real world, before the solution – in the world that the unique winning number folds back – that the philosopher installs herself as she fashions concepts. Once again, the impossible becomes possible. The possible itself comes from the impossible. All formulas, all combinations unfold their differences and begin to overlap and coexist in the crazed head of the thinker: 'A dice throw will never abolish chance.' Nothing here is simple; nothing conveniently offers itself to recognition and its intensification. Instead, all things collide: as in the dice whose trajectory could be filmed in slow motion in order to count every constellation that unfolds in its interminable fall, before the final combination folds everything back, with the dice fatefully falling once again to the table. It is this unfolding that

Deleuze disperses throughout his book on Nietzsche. And it is again with respect to this folding back that we must understand the univocity of being that Deleuze retrieves from Spinoza.

Indeed, if judgement in Kant proceeds with its distribution in compliance with the modality of common sense determining the agreement of faculties in recognition and the modality of good sense defining the orientations of the categorial table, then we must confess that we are given a paltry principle of distribution and distinction:

The difference 'between' two things is only empirical, and the corresponding determinations are only extrinsic. However, instead of something distinguished from something else, imagine something which distinguishes itself – and yet that from which it distinguishes itself does not distinguish itself from it. Lightning, for example, distinguishes itself from the black sky but must also trail behind it, as though it were distinguishing itself from that which does not distinguish itself from it. (Deleuze 1994: 28)

The flash of lightning may well distinguish itself from the black sky, but the fact is that the latter remains coiled inside that from which it distinguishes itself and succeeds in rousing the thunder of the virtual. In other words, not all coexisting planes of the virtual are eliminated, nor do they withdraw before the actualization process is established; on the contrary, they obscurely and secretly *insist* on the shiny surface of that which distinguishes itself. Neither hidden in nor withdrawn from the generous depths of the abysmal ground-less, they subsist within the result and within the refolds that trail behind the successful solution.

From this perspective, the sombre will never be mistaken for the hidden. The sombre is the refold. It is the invisible and non-actual aspect of that which necessarily expresses itself in the roll of the dice – an altogether real expression from a set of virtual expressions that would not exist beyond the fateful number in the making. If the dice throw is unable to abolish chance, it is because chance is counter-actualized, echoing an expression of the virtual, in the coil-back of the actualized number. A final result distinguishes itself from this expression, but the expression is not distinguished from its result. We are left with the dust of the expressed that resembles a comet's tale as it trails behind the actualized formula. In other words, if the virtual is the expression of the winning number and would be unable to exist without it – if the latter essentially distinguishes itself from the virtual through its inevitable actuality – it becomes clear that there would be nothing to actualize without this invisible aspect from which the

actual is distinguished and that obscurely envelops it. This non-actual aspect, which needs a state of things in order to be actualized, is precisely that in which something occurs. But what is essential in it remains folded, in the manner of a menacing and foreboding albeit ineffectual entity, a cloud of discrete expresseds (*exprimés*) of which we may not even say that they are: *eventum tantum*.

In this sense, the event is the consistent set of the dice that clink together – the endless interlacing only the highest figure of which becomes tangible. Of course, this is not a question of a dialectical process. The dice throw does not occur in accordance with a negative mode. The fateful number in the making is in no way the dialectical sublation of the dissemination that inhabits it.

As Labarrière fittingly states: in Hegel's usage, *aufheben* signifies 'to put an end', 'to make a final point' (Labarrière 1986: 105). This logic of the final point may well redeploy an expression of figures, but actually an 'expression' of this nature determines nothing but a negative condition.⁴ Indeed, the universal that Hegel discovers alongside the immediacy of *sensible certainty* mobilizes the logic of expression in its entirety, within the relationship between 'milieu' and 'properties'. The universal, for Hegel, is the 'Here and Now . . . a simple togetherness of many Heres and Nows. But the many . . . are in their determinateness themselves simply universals' (Hegel 1931: 164). This signifies that each of the multiple terms obtains its univocal simplicity through expressing – each for itself – the universal univocal simplicity. Each property expresses, for itself, the simple totality of the universal milieu. But, as Hegel explains, the milieu is at once univocal and equivocal (*one* and *such*). The milieu, as an exclusive unity, is equivocal, in so far as it limits itself in relation to that which it is not. It is *one* by delimitation and its properties are *single* (*unes*) and determined, understood as expressions of the exclusive *one*. They distinguish themselves from one another through a gesture of mutual exclusion; and the principle of this distinction is negative. A property distinguishes itself from the milieu only by consigning the others to nothingness, even if this delimitation negatively presupposes the 'being other' that it is not. There is a fateful number in this perspective, only on the condition that the multiplicity that thins out the middle is eliminated.

In the end, Hegel would never accept the middle as a multiplicity. It is already posited in the mode of exclusivity and delimitation. On the other hand, in Mallarmé, and especially in Deleuze, the principle of distinction has nothing to do with any dialectic. The flash of

lightning and the black sky distinguish themselves in an affirmative mode. In this sense, the comet generated by the interminable fall of the dice hovers over its own accomplishment so that no exclusion dislodges the set of impossible formulas. This comet dominates the fateful combination, resembling a retinue of droplets – a vanished *spatium*, folded in intensity, that the number in extension will inevitably express, without being able to actually eliminate it.⁵

There is then no final point to punctuate the aleatory process of the fateful number. This fatefulness lies in finding, within that which is distinguished, everything that is not distinguished, in connecting with all the expressed which necessarily express themselves in a winning combination. The fated is the retinue of droplets, the cloud: *eventum tantum*. We must sense the ominous insistence of a diffused entity that hovers over its actualization as it counter-actualizes itself, incapable as it is of being actualized, not unlike the white smoke that Stendhal's hero cannot decipher, or the continuous roar that Fabrice traverses in a vertiginous and hallucinatory manner, seized as he is by the mobile element that crosses the battlefield at top speed – a curtain of aerial lumps, a silky desert of intersecting folds! An entity of this nature does not tolerate a final point. It is an affirmation – not a negation – of all that is expressed. This consistent entity refers to a multiplicity that the fall of the dice, in one triumphant constellation, never succeeds in 'oversuming'⁶ – a multiplicity inevitably expressed by the winning number in a very real fog that will never distinguish itself.

Deleuze invents a new principle of distinction and distribution that concerns neither the universal nor the individual, neither the one nor the same, but rather the singular. Of difference, therefore, we must say that it is essentially something that occurs, and that fatally distinguishes itself from an entity that does not distinguish itself, but rather obstinately insists on the surface of the events under consideration. Each event plunges into its non-actual aspect where it relates virtually with the others. In this respect, there is no question of knowing which combination will come up, since the winning toss affirms all combinations without involving exclusive or negative delimitations. The winning toss trails behind it all singularities and virtual figures from which it is distinguished, without the interlacings it tangles up being also distinguished from it. The dice throw has no ground. Being neither ground nor ground-less, it is deployed on the surface upon which several singularities coexist. All singularities enter series, thereby generating determined constellations, without

all being visible. This is the Vasarely surface, the Vasarely effect. Only one formula distinguishes itself, albeit other geometries insist on the surface of the visible, in the vein of constellations that cannot be distinguished from those that distinguish themselves from them. On this unique surface, diverging forms appear. Everything happens within it. There is no plane of transcendence and no ideal separate world. Everything is on the same plane, but not everything is visible. Inside every actual, tangible constellation, there is the surreptitious and the virtual. Folded in the individuated form on Vasarely's surface are several other formulas and propositions that can be actualized in different occurrences. And these remnants do not exist elsewhere, in another world. On the contrary, all coexisting worlds exist inside a univocal surface of immanence.

'The dice throw will never abolish chance' – Mallarmé's beautiful formula carries no negativity with it. It concerns the construction of an immanent plane, unleashing Vasarely-like effects. Perhaps we should no longer ask what is to befall each of the fragments of chance as we follow the roads of attributive judgement. In a way, all dice throws win. There is no exclusivity, there are no losers when we contemplate the surface upon which all members of chance are reflected. There is a victorious line forming *a single* continuum where the diversity produced by all singularities approximates the equality that envelops them. The One, therefore, positively affirms the multiple. The One is said of difference, the equal of the unequal, and being of becoming, in the vein of the unique vapour that hovers over the battlefield, and that resembles the constant clamour deployed over the immanent and univocal surface of 'the unique number which cannot be another' even if all the others actively express themselves, they are 'instantly dispersed in mist' (Mallarmé 1965: no page).

At any rate, in this dice throw that disposes its singularities upon a surface where we find folded the divergent configurations issued by its infinitely subdivisible trajectory, we do not come across the regulated arrangement of an ordinary parlour game. It is desirable at this stage to distinguish between two versions of play, even if in the last analysis the second model is but an arborescent stratification of the first – its line of abolition – or, as Deleuze says, of reterritorialization. Parlour games may well be games of chance; however, it is still true that, from among the games we know, the aleatory game is held in check by a set of exceedingly restrictive rules that distribute chance in accordance with a fixed sedentary distribution and under statistically

foreseeable circumstances. Moreover, the necessity of chance is recognized only in a few of the game's crossroads, whereas the rest of the round is left to the determined development of the consequences. As a result, a game of this nature mobilizes an extremely restrictive ethics: 'Whether it be Pascal's gambling man or Leibniz's chess-playing God, the game is explicitly taken as a model only because it has implicit models which are not games: the moral model of the Good or the best, the economic model of causes and effects, or of means and ends' (Deleuze 1990b: 59).

To this customary game, Deleuze superimposes an ideal game modelled after Nietzsche's. We are often told that it is not enough to know the last combination in order to win. On the contrary, one must follow, in the vein of Mallarmé, the fall of the dice on an infinitely subdivisible surface, in the least amount of thinkable time. One must affirm the asymptotic curve traversed by the dice as they drop back onto the table – the primitive function whose result we obtain can only represent a derivative function. On this surface, where all possibilities are reflected without having to distinguish themselves from the formula that distinguishes itself from them, on this absolutely flat surface, all rolls win. When considering only the final result, we lose everything, we end up holding a simple form of content whose expressive form has been amputated. This is why the inferior player counts on several tosses instead of holding his breath for the fateful number. The poor player does not know how to wait: he lacks patience and flair for waiting. And he is condemned to play again and again, only to eventually lose, because he is insensitive to the plastic force of waiting that distorts and subdivides the fall of the dice.

Evidently, we can contemplate the dice throw from its most tangible results, by remaining at the empirical level of statistical probabilities, blinded by an exclusive calculation that attempts to deny the less favourable occurrences in order to coldly target the space of the probable. We can always play from a distance, leaving the institutions to manage the players' anticipation, and thereby missing the game's critical and clinical moments when time warps itself and the subjects feverishly plummet to a surface oversaturated by asubjective coordinates.⁷ Whether with Balzac or Dostoevsky, the player enters a world where subjects lose their centre of gravity amidst a suspension that disarticulates them. In Balzac as in Dostoevsky, the players' waiting at the gambling table, where the dice unfailingly fall back, establishes the surface of a libidinal economy:

The Dice Throw

Of one thing you can be certain, however: hardly will you have taken a step toward the green cloth when your hat no longer belongs to you any more than you belong to yourself. You now belong to gambling – you, your money, your hat, your cane and your cloak. . . . Our young stranger was besieged by a thousand such thoughts, bits passing through his mind, like tattered banners flattering over a battle. If he forgot for a moment the heavy burden of thoughts and memories to pause before some flowers swaying gently in the breeze against the background of greenery, he would be gripped almost at once by a spasm of life, kicking back against the oppressive thought of suicide; then he would lift his eyes to the sky, where the grey clouds, the gusts of the wind, heavy with sadness, the threatening atmosphere, once more urged him to die. (Balzac 1963: 7–8; 15)

We see that this game is a battle from which the subject emerges broken, terrified by everything that refuses to distinguish itself from among the objects that distinguish themselves, submerged in indecipherable arrangements, arrested by the presence of a flower, a striking constellation of flowers, balanced by the wind in slow motion, as long and as empty as an eternity. Practising a violent game of this nature, the constituted subject is wiped out in a plural death, encumbered by uncontrollable dimensions and impersonal velocities and slownesses that he attempts to sew together like he would torn flags – between red and black, always hesitant, anticipating an impassible formula that is already there, upon its ideal surface, with its retinue of insistent combinations and vanishing fogs. This game has nothing to do with parlour games.

Indeed, the only possibility that ordinarily preoccupies us and prompts us to play, is our hope to link gain with the triumphant configuration that represses the others. We only ever play to repudiate chance, rather than affirm its fragments. A game of this nature is built upon the negative, upon the negation of the sphere of expression that trails behind the roll of the dice: dialectical economy. But, for the one who knows how to play by patiently following the elements of the forming unique number, for the one who knows how to affirm the asymptotic curve of the roll, with a short breath held in the middle of an impersonal vertigo, where the subject is liquefied in its association with unperceived spaces, a dice throw will never abolish chance, but will rather manifest in its fall the univocal surface of those configurations it fatefully crosses. From this point of view, the end-formula has no real advantage over those it disperses and drags behind it. This inactual virtual part hovers over the concrete actualization of the given figures. And this is why it is not important to know which

combination will come up, since the winning toss trails in its wake all the constellations whose unique number and unique expression it designates. Thanks to the consideration of all the expresseds that it jointly affirms (and which insist in it), the surface of a higher game is adumbrated where one wins with every roll – a surface where all possibilities coexist, as in a Vasarely canvas. Thrown to chance, the dice necessarily produce twelve tosses, regaining the right to move the toss that expresses them all and calls for repetition.

It is through the strength of Deleuze's book on Nietzsche that the dice throw connects to the thought of the eternal return:

The game has two moments which are those of a dice throw – the dice that is thrown and the dice that falls back. Nietzsche presents the dice throw as taking place on two distinct tables, the earth and the sky . . . But these two tables are not two worlds. They are the two hours of a single world, the two moments of a single world, midnight and midday, the hour when the dice are thrown, the hour when the dice fall back . . . It is not a matter of several dice throws which, because of their number, finally reproduce the same combinations. On the contrary, it is a matter of a single dice throw which, due to the number of the combination produced, comes to reproduce itself as such. (Deleuze 1983: 25)

Midnight, the moment we throw the dice; midday, the moment a distinct formula has exhausted the twelve powers of chance that persist in the splendour of the moment. From this perspective, necessity no more abolishes chance than *the one* abolishes or negates the multiple.

For there is only a single combination of chance as such, a single way of combining all the parts of chance, a way which is like the unity of multiplicity, that is to say number or necessity. There are many numbers with increasing or decreasing probabilities, but only one number of chance as such, one fatal number, which reunites all the fragments of chance, like midday gathers together the scattered parts of midnight. (Deleuze 1983: 26)

The scattered, agitated members of midnight obstinately insist in the splendour of noontime. Midday, with its twelve strikes, randomly folds back upon its incorporeal and shadowless patina all virtual expresseds whose unique affirmation it designates – an affirmation of difference and a difference affirmed.

Such a game, situated beyond good and evil, has nothing to do with Pascal's wager or the ludic God of Leibniz. Instead of dividing chance into several tosses consistent with several impossible

The Dice Throw

worlds for the purpose of *conserving* the best, we display all its fragments on one and the same surface and we declare all chance in a singular consistency. The dice throw instantiates the principle of heterogenesis as it affirms the complete spectrum of chance, midday's steady whiteness expressing the shredded worlds of midnight. This heterogenesis mobilizes a very specific logic of distribution where what is distinguished trails behind it an entity with a tail that cannot distinguish itself – namely, nomadic distribution. This is a matter for a mode of impersonal subjectification or individuation to affirm in a single moment the multiple figures of chance, without which the triumphant combination would never know how to distinguish itself from among those that insist upon not distinguishing themselves. This is why, for Nietzsche, it is a matter of playing dice with the gods, of tossing dice on the broken tables of the Earth and entrusting chance to each roll, to one single moment. In all probability, there is only one possible combination for chance – any combination whatever – to disperse its multilinear spectrum by arranging all its figures.

Perhaps I need to be clearer. It is not a question of passing judgement over cases of sedentary distribution, or of determining good tosses from bad in accordance with probabilistic statistics. On the contrary, we must know how to wait long enough and possess the superior patience that would enable us to suspend the fall of the dice in order to follow the articulation of its members, which are scattered across the univocal surface of immanence. Only patience could help us penetrate the oversaturated milieu whose crystallization is affirmed by the dice throw. Exercising patience renders tangible the unique transversal that reconnects the heterogeneous bands of an uncertain spectrum with the asymptotic curve that disperses them. But this single line, in fact, is susceptible to infinite modulation. Its modes are infinite in variety, even if their affirmation remains univocal from the perspective of the fateful toss that expresses them.

We could assume that this modulable line or this metastable surface unfolds exceptionally rich differential orders that could always be dismantled, resulting in an order of superior forces. It is a line that may be divided into an infinite number of infinitesimal parts, themselves divisible *ad infinitum*. On this line, every division is compelled to direct us to an order of magnitude that has nothing in common with its predecessors. By dividing the line into infinitesimals of the second, third and fourth order, we bring about a unique game, marking an intensification of chance that allows the world to continuously break up into irreducible orders.

No one knows how to produce a similar division of the indivisible better than Borges.⁸ Indeed, 'The Lottery in Babylon' was established precisely on the mode of ramification that, in a minimum of thinkable time, enabled all heterogeneous occurrences of chance to coexist. In this aleatory ramification, all possible and impossible configurations correspond to one fateful toss that expresses them on a single dimensional line. The latter may always be unfolded and be infinitely subdivisible in minimal thinkable time – a polymorphic surface, each division of which offers a new metric order. On a line of this nature, all possible worlds intersect in accordance with virtual coexistence, where one life can always assume another on a different level of distinction. It is as if Pythagoras, Pyrrho and Euphorbus had been playing the same game on different levels of a single line in perpetual mutation or, perhaps, as though Pythagoras could not distinguish himself from the others except through their indiscernibility – thereby distinguishing himself only on the surface of that which does not distinguish itself:

Heraclides Ponticus tells with amazement that Pythagoras remembered having been Pyrrhus and before that Euphorbus and before that some other mortal. In order to remember similar vicissitudes I do not need to have recourse to death or even to deception. I owe this almost atrocious variety to an institution which other republics do not know or which operates in them in an imperfect and secret manner: the lottery. (Borges 1962: 30–1)

To the reminiscence that follows the exclusive order of time schematized in accordance with causality, Borges often opposes the layered dream, where the dreamer himself is the product of a dream in which he is incorporated, in the manner of an infinitely machined dream. 'The Circular Ruins' perfectly expresses this ramification of the dream; or rather, it expresses an interlocking continuation whose every term is merely a negatively integrated appearance in the dream of another, itself delimited by a dream that endlessly overflows it. In this respect, Borges has not yet crossed the threshold of pure time because each dream under consideration rests on principles of reciprocal exclusion. On the other hand, the multiplicity of 'The Lottery in Babylon' is far more complex. Here, one single life is enough – any single instant whatever – to be in the presence of an entity that involves Pythagoras, Pyrrho and Euphorbus within an impersonal becoming where Pythagoras provides an opportunity for us to perceive the insistence of Pyrrho and Euphorbus, caught as they are in

universal variation. To the repetition through successive nestings, Borges opposes a linear repetition through simultaneous coexistence. Based on the mobilization of a principle of nomadic distinction – lightning and black sky – the game is, in one sense, superior to dreams, to simulacra and to phantasms replete with abysses and depth, transcendence and descent. Its machination causes Pythagoras to continuously stutter between Pyrrho and Euphorbus, as if one could not be distinguished from the other without the one expressing himself indistinctly and insistently. During its innocent meanderings over a pure and infinitely subdivisible time, the principle of distinction – difference and repetition – acquiesces to its superior form, to its plenitude or to its surface, but only on the modality of the game.

At this point, we could see a deep connection develop between Nietzsche and Borges, since it is on a unique line and along a univocal roll that a plane of immanence is constructed and that chance distributes its heterogeneous members in a fibrous course. Such a game, collective as it is, has nothing in common with parlour games, to the extent that, instead of submitting itself to a preexisting morality, it produces a collective organization in the extra-moral sense. Moreover, this is a game that submits social formations to itself, not the other way around. If chance intervenes, generally speaking, at the beginning of the game and then unfolds along the lines of preexisting mechanical rules, Borges conceives of a game lacking in ethics and justice; a game, at each of its stages, prepared to devise new rules that are immanent in the aleatory course of elements and singularities.

If the lottery is an intensification of chance, a periodical infusion of chaos in the cosmos, would it not be right for chance to intervene in all stages of the drawing and not in one alone? Is it not ridiculous for chance to dictate someone's death and have the circumstances of that death – secrecy, publicity, the fixed time of an hour or a century – not subject to chance? (Borges 1962: 34)

To the extent that we are now confronted with a game in the extra-moral sense, it becomes clear that the game can proceed only by constantly inventing new rules, without ever submitting itself to an external and preexisting code or to restrictive laws liable to ward off chance. In this way, instead of relegating chance to the beginning of the game and circumscribing it with exogenous laws, instead of employing chance at the beginning of the game when the ball lands on the roulette wheel, one would have to imagine a ball that rebounds from one compartment to the next so that, at each stage of

the game, chance could cause the ball to deviate and project it onto other game tables – in this manner sowing trouble in the general compartmentalized distributions of the other games at play. Such a game is animated by a transversal that crosses all parts, a unique toss that unfurls orders of magnitude and variable distribution on its trajectory, without anyone intervening to exclude the poor player, who has little respect for rules and practices.

‘The Lottery in Babylon’ establishes a machination of social formations en route to producing the kind of aleatory transversal where every singularity produces new order words and new political dispositions saturated with chance.

Let us imagine a first drawing, which decrees the death of a man. For its fulfillment one proceeds to another drawing, which proposes (let us say) nine possible executors. Of these executors, four can initiate a third drawing which will tell the name of the executioner, two can replace the adverse order with a fortunate one . . . , another will intensify the death penalty (that is, will make it infamous or enrich it with tortures), others can refuse to fulfill it. . . . In reality *the number of drawings is infinite*. No decision is final, all branch into others. Ignorant people suppose that infinite drawings require an infinite time; actually it is sufficient for time to be infinitely subdivisible. (Borges 1962: 34)

If no decision and no imperative has categorical value, it is due to an infinite ramification of order words. In this respect, every sentence represents an intensification of the others. No sentence can be distinguished without trailing behind it the totality of order words from which it was extracted. Each decree forms a series in a time smaller than the minimum thinkable time.⁹ ‘The Lottery of Babylon’ produces an impersonal rumbling, a free indirect discourse that accounts for all the sentences present in an order word, and for all the voices in the one that distinguishes itself. Here, each decision, each order word, emits a distribution of singularities, a roll of the dice where the rumbling of all sentences resonates in an indirect discourse – free, metallic and machine-like, along the lines of Charlus’ timbre, plucked by Proust from the loud voices inhabiting it. Glossolalia! It is in an infinitely subdivisible time that the countless series of order words drone on in the middle of an actual sentence. Yet, in this lapse of infinitely subdivisible time, there is something unthinkable that Deleuze defines as the difficulty to think – the difficulty to think the release of the dice throw, the indistinct murmur and the free indirect discourse where all sentences distinguish themselves in a time smaller

than the minimum thinkable one. There is a minimum of thinkable time within which an order word distinguishes itself from the din of statements that trail along behind it, having become hoarse from all the decrees that speak from within it – decrees that no longer distinguish themselves from it.

Thinking is not easy. We think only when incited by shock, when the voice of the sentence poses a problem, when an order word allows a multiplicity of divergent voices to be heard, when faced with a free indirect discourse and a polyphonic rumbling under the gyrating parts of an immense machine of collective enunciation. The pure form of time, the abstract machination developed by the process of the lottery, strikes thought head on and redirects it to its own impasse. But if every sentence is the site of a dice throw, how does one think of the immense gyrating sphere whose every declination is produced in an infinitely subdivisible time?

For an infinitely subdivisible time, there cannot be an analytic without thinking of this analytic as a battle against chaos, as an analytic that can be infinitely modulated, with the lottery of Babylon as its model. Indeed, Borges thinks of time as an interlocking structure on an infinitely divisible line, a line of the dice throw passing through *clinamens* and crystals of time smaller than any assignable quantity. Borges' ideal game confronts us with temporal levels each part of which splits and divides into an infinite number of elements, themselves divisible into other infinite parts, so that $(dx)^2$ is to a differential of a lower order – dx – what dx is to x .

To an aesthetic that liberates time from the categories, we must reintegrate a fluid analytic that thinks vague essences and vanishing fluctuations. Perhaps, there are as many differentiated analytics, tables of distribution and principles of distinction as there are divisions of time into heterogeneous differential orders. At any rate, from this angle Deleuze conceives the necessity to think. Instead of, in the vein of Kant, reducing the germinative diagramme through a categorial polarization, instead of abandoning the anarchic game of indiscernible and indistinguishable seeds whose turbulence Kant anticipates almost everywhere, we must breathe new life and consistency into all nomadic distributions: 'The dice throw never abolishes chance.' 'Every thought emits a roll of the dice.'

The dice keep rolling, like a wave that does not divide without changing its nature at each stage of the division. Each stage of the division establishes a particular logic that lacks a common measure with those preceding it. Instead of developing through filiation, the

dice throw divides into constellations and populations, each one of which evolves on its own borders and creates a new unfolding. The dice throw is a multiplicity of superimposed planes traversed by a single continuous diagonal. Although all the planes that hover over the fateful outcome insist, the diagonal does not produce a genetic filiation, as we will soon see in Borges' 'Garden of Forking Paths'. Planes diverge, but we still find vague essences straddling each of them.

And so, like Deleuze, perhaps we should distinguish between several semiotic styles. At the level of pragmatic logic, we certainly find at work a semiotic of a generative nature proceeding through filiations and dual stratifications. But stratifications of this nature, with their generative components, have no particular privilege. Instead, they reveal that semiotic productions have run out of breath. We can conclude that generative semiotics is coherent only on the condition that we ascertain the force of transformational and diagrammatical semiotics within it. The diagrammatic designates a logic of multiplicities – the regime suited to the *diagonal* that crosses various planes; at its surface, everything coexists virtually. But as soon as we examine the development of each plane on its own and analyze its *lateral* progression, we abandon the diagrammatic regime for a transformational semiotics. How does each plane evolve on its own borders? This is a question for the transformational regime. We have, therefore, a single line whose every division offers a new analytic that owes nothing to the previous one, but uniquely composes orders of lateral relations between otherwise constituted elements. This line – this *diagonal* – defines the regime of *transversality*. A semiotic of this quality thins out every plane that it intersects, each one of which evolves *laterally*.

Diagrammatical semiotics naturally extends itself into a transformational semiotics. Within each of these planes, we finally have *points* of collapse, localized breakdowns that establish the object of generative semiotics. On each plane, we must ask how the diagonal can possibly intersect the lateral, and how this particular intersection can arrange a specific distribution of points.¹⁰ The assemblage of these three semiotics outlines variable configurations, a veritable pragmatics that must be reinvented through every semi-aleatory roll of the dice. This is why transcendental analytics must be rewritten under the programme of general semiotics. With the latter, along the lines of Kant, we must consider not only the formation of a generative component, but also the formation of a transformational and

a diagrammatical component that attest to a new distribution of the empirical and the transcendental. ‘The analysis of assemblages, broken down into their component parts, opens up the way to a general logic: Guattari and I have only begun, and completing this logic will undoubtedly occupy us in the future. Guattari calls it “diagrammatism”’ (Deleuze: 2006: 177).

This diagrammatic logic and this pragmatics that prefigure and announce *A Thousand Plateaus* evidently find an immediate extension in *The Logic of Sensation* and especially in the semiotic analyses that Deleuze consecrates to cinema. But *The Logic of Sense* and *Difference and Repetition* already contain important aspects of this. Each of Deleuze’s books establishes an apparatus wherein there intersect semiotic components, regimes of signs, of affects and of percepts, differing widely according to the concepts whose map they trace. The diagrammatic, transformational and generative variables that these components and regimes intertwine are also intersecting inside the apparatus. As R. Bellour and F. Ewald correctly say:

From *The Logic of Sense* on, it seems you’ve always been at pains to produce a whole battery of concepts for each new book. One does of course notice concepts migrating, intersecting. But, on the whole, the vocabulary of the books on cinema isn’t that of *The Logic of Sensation*, which is different again from that of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, and so on. As though, rather than being reworked . . . your concepts had each time to form a distinct grouping, a specific plane of invention. (Deleuze 1995: 145)

Deleuze’s work effectively presents itself along the lines of a roll of the dice, with planes and dimensions differently extended in accordance with the singular concepts articulating its lines and remarkable points. In this work, we come across an assemblage of lines, networks, points and segmentations whose connections are at once diagrammatic, transformational and generative, in accordance with the perspective we adopt, and the empirico-transcendental distribution with which we experiment. The extreme coherence of this dice throw leads us to think that, if philosophy is the creation of new concepts rather than a metaphysical envoy overdetermined by the Western tradition, it becomes necessary to recognize that Deleuze inaugurates a pragmatics that places him alongside the greatest philosophers, given that such conceptual inventiveness has not existed since Bergson.

Deleuze’s philosophy produces an expressionist pragmatics of concepts. This philosophical expressionism, inclined to connect a

heterogeneous multiplicity of semiotics on a plane of immanence, constitutes the principal concern of his thought and inspires his book, *What is Philosophy?* This becomes evident as we return to Borges: in an infinitely divisible time, we can conceive of as many modes of distribution as there are divisions of time. Each division can produce a circulation of new order words and establish new structures with no common border. The world is an immense lottery, an intensification of chance, in a time that does not divide without changing its nature at each stage of its division. This is why it is critical to distinguish as many different analytics as there are divisions of time into fragments smaller than the minimum of continuously thinkable time. From this perspective, a concept may define the *clinamen* of time as much as time may define a division of thought. As Deleuze reveals in his analysis of Lucretius, in keeping with the nature of the atom, the minimum of time or the *clinamen* always refers to the apprehension of thought, to the extent that it expresses the shortest thought and also the smallest bifurcation – the smallest interval of duration (Deleuze: 1990b, 269). The *clinamens* of the dice throw give simultaneously to think and to sense, in a form of content and one of expression – indiscernible though quite distinct facts. Every thought emits a roll of the dice and every roll emits a thought! In his book on Foucault, Deleuze ventures furthest in his articulation of aschematic and asubjective forms of content and expression appropriated by the same roll of the dice. The forms of pure time and pure thought weave their *clinamens* on the surface of a single dice throw, which is infinitely divisible in time and the mind.

Aside from the deep friendship between Deleuze and Foucault, as attested by Didier Eribon's biography, there is an extraordinary intellectual affinity between the two. This is why Deleuze's book on Foucault engages as much of Deleuze's philosophy as of Foucault's, as he demonstrates that the strength of Foucault's post-Kantianism is in the micrological (diagrammatic) plane that it actualizes; that is, in the differential plane that Kant foreclosed on through his decidedly ordinary game of categorial dispensation. To find another game inside that of the categories, in an unusual connection with Kant, is one of the gambles of this book (Deleuze 1988c: 47–69). To address what is essential, we can say that Foucault's problem lies in determining the relationship between visibilities (space-time) and *statements* or order words (concepts). Which lines could intersect this relationship? Indeed, if what we see can never inhabit what we say, the conjunction appears to be impossible. There is a radical cut and

The Dice Throw

yet a relation in a non-relation. Deleuze's response to this problem is to declare that the visible and the sayable – these two forms – are insinuated in one another along the lines of a battle, or better yet, in the vein of a toss of the dice.

Indeed, if we accept light as the condition for the visible, and if we think of language as the condition for statements, then we can create a web with four terms, with four dice, wherein statements slide between the visible and its condition (light); whereas visibilities insinuate themselves between a statement and its condition. We are left with a group of *clinamens*, a line of singular points caught in a flash-enclosure or in a process of stitching that is similar to what Van Gogh developed along the line of binding the tatters of the outside to the agitated surface of a metastable canvas, in a succession of brush strokes – brush strokes interrupted by the wind and yet reconnected by thought in accordance with a semi-aleatory process that resembles Markov's chains. Deleuze foregrounds these reconnected fragments when he readjusts the motif for the dice throw:

The dice-throw does in fact express the simplest possible power . . . The relations between forces, as Foucault understands them, concern not only men but the elements, the letters of the alphabet, which group . . . at random . . . Chance works only in the first case; while the second case perhaps operates under conditions that are partially determined by the first, as in a Markov chain, where we have a succession of partial relinkings. This is the outside: the line that continues to link up random events in a mixture of chance and dependency. (Deleuze 1988c: 117)

Deleuze discovers the general logic of his pragmatics in this roll of the dice that spins out its semi-aleatory lines; that is, he discovers the polymorphic principle of a nomadic distribution. The analysis that Foucault consecrates to historical formations is inseparable from the one proposed by Deleuze and Guattari with respect to strata and their becomings. Innumerable strata develop on one and the same roll of the dice. A stratum therefore would be unable to distinguish itself without the others being expressed in it. The thread of the diagonal intersects all lateral threads and produces another arrangement of points on every level. We cannot hope to understand the organization of a stratum if we amputate it from the principle of asymmetrical distinction that Deleuze developed in *Difference and Repetition*. A stratum does not distinguish itself from the others unless the others fail to distinguish themselves. This mode of differentiation designates the principle of every pragmatics. Only on this

condition does something become visible upon a surface where all possibilities mirror themselves and something becomes sayable by dragging with it order words engaged in polyphonic rumblings – in other words, glossolalia and boundless white.

The strata, therefore, are historical formations comprised of expanses of visibility and fields of utterability. Visibilities refer to actualized *contents* that virtual expresseds – from which they distinguish themselves – trail behind them. Statements relate to the *forms* of actual *expression*, bathed in virtual ramblings and inhabited by a free indirect discourse from which they are derived. These two forms that Deleuze borrows from Hjelmslev – content and expression – establish the very dimensions of pragmatics, to the extent that content and expression no longer correspond to the distinction signifier/signified, but lead to the fluctuating game of complex semiotics. In fact, the forms of content and expression designate the functives of a highly rigorous new distribution. Content is not a signifier that can be intuited nor is the expression a formalized, categorically structured signified, but both plunge into a plane of immanence, indistinct rumbling and becalmed whiteness.¹¹ And this means that to adapt one to the other one must pass through a very tight game that interlocks diverse semiotic constituents.

An arrangement of this nature accurately defines what Deleuze calls a stratum, a semi-aleatory doublet possessing irrational connections. In this respect, the formalization of contents and expressions does not consist in extracting the signifier from a word and the signified from the object that conforms to the word. Rather, it consists in finding the diagrammatic multiplicity within the order word and within the statement expressed at the surface of their legibility. Moreover, as Deleuze says in *A Thousand Plateaus*, the form of content is not reduced to the object, but spreads out a state of purely composite affairs. The form of expression does not designate a word's space, but unfolds a discursive multiplicity that threads its points with those possessing a non-discursive multiplicity of content – a web of points, counterpoints and irrational tatters (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 66–7).

From this perspective, we must distinguish at least three semiotic regimes to account for the arrangement of strata. The way in which content and expression intersect to form a stratum, their extension, and their lateral concrescences define the game of a transformational semiotic. But a stratum does not only propose regimes of correlative transformations. In fact, the way in which a stratum inflects within

converging points, central knots and rigid segments, stems from generative semiotics. But we are not finished yet. On each stratum, we encounter vague essences, points = x , that express their positions on other strata – a whole echo of possibilities, a proliferation, a saturation of their reality is assumed by other organizations and other coordinates: points = x , vague subjects where ramblings are expressed and also echoes which belong to other voices and to other worlds. This diagrammatic logic cannot distinguish itself from actual components, as we will shortly understand.

Thus, from the generative perspective, a stratum is a particular way of filtering light in a determined historical formation. The Romanesque style, for example, does not produce the same lighting as the Gothic. It is neither the same look nor the same visibility, because, between light and visibility, statements will be interpolated differently from those characterizing the Gothic. The relationship between content and expression defines another pragmatics. Light is not distributed in the same way between the two, and what the Gothic offers to be seen, what it stages, is the function of an articulation of the inside to the outside across a meandering line and differently disposed walls. It is up to generative semiotics to discover the fixed and hard elements that compose a stratum. It is also up to the stratum to analyze the order words and the rigid prescriptions that organize the elements of hard segmentarity. It behoves the transformational semiotics to discover the fine segmentations and to follow the seam that arranges visibility and discursive formations in order to demonstrate the way in which a statement transforms content, how they intersect and snatch from one another particles within a complex apparatus. On the contrary, the mutation of strata along the diagonal, the metamorphosis of historical formations, the passage from the Romanesque to the Gothic on a line of flight that redistributes regimes of signs and visibility – each of these characterizes this diagrammatic semiotics whose transversal passes between all strata.

Multilineal pragmatics in its entirety seems to complement Deleuze's philosophy, even if it was Foucault who laid down the principles of discursive and visibility formations. Deleuze asks: How does one deduce a stratum from the surface of a dice throw? How do the line of flight, the line of supple segmentarity, and the line of hard segmentarity intersect and begin to overlap? Which articulations? Which becomings? These questions are closely linked to the one raised by Foucault, who asks about truth procedures. The same problem preoccupies both Foucault and Deleuze when the former

enters the clear-obscure regions of history, whereas the latter tries to follow the semi-aleatory diagramme that disperses them and causes them to fluctuate:

But what constitutes a procedure? Perhaps it is a pragmatism, broadly made up of a process and a method. The process is that of seeing, and poses a series of questions for knowledge: what does one see on such a stratum or threshold? We are not asking only about the objects with which we begin, the qualities we follow and the states of things in which we are located (a perceptible corpus), but also how can we extract visibilities from these objects, qualities and things, how do these visibilities shimmer and gleam and under what light, and how does this light gather on the stratum? Furthermore, what are the variable subject-positions of these visibilities? Who occupies and sees them? But there are also methods of language, as different from one stratum to the next as they are from one unusual author to the next. . . . [Which is the corpus of words, phrases and propositions?] How can we extract from them the 'statements' which traverse them? What system of language is used to disperse these statements, what families and thresholds are involved? And who speaks, that is to say who are the variables, the subjects of the statements, and who fills that place? (Deleuze 1988c: 63)

But Deleuze's programme goes beyond this truth procedure. Beyond truth and falsity, Deleuze is interested in points of bifurcation, in the *clinamens* of time and in the division of thought from which a single and unique roll of the dice falls inside the garden of forking paths. The essential for philosophy is to follow the dice throw, layered in tiers, on a plane of immanence, and on the surface of which a point becomes saturated with a halo of possibilities that are assumed by other circumstances of time and place, on other strata and scattered about by a unique player.

‘The Garden of Forking Paths’

Schelling’s beautiful formula – ‘All possibilities are realized’ – is both promising and deceiving if we consider the trajectory that supports it and dismisses it in one peremptory sentence serving the dispensations of a philosophy of envoy. If Schelling rejects Leibniz’s idea that the world is the result of a selection or of another learned combinatorial of an infinity of possibilities, he too nonetheless subjects the world to an ontological dispensation where there can be no question of an aberrant or irrational movement. ‘All possibilities are realized’ also means that ‘everything rational is real and everything real is rational’. Behind this formula, however, we hear the grumblings of another form of distress to the extent that, as Xavier Tilliette says, the formula defies

the countless armies of unrealized possibilities, of efforts nipped in the bud, the endless process of eventualities, uncertainties, utopias, virtualities, irrealties, potentials, future contingencies – everything that could have been and was not, the realm of the conditional, with its shadow of regret, the halo of deceit and disappointments, and the mirage, extended as far as one can see, of scintillating possibilities this side of and beyond the present. (Tilliette 1987: 215)

This curious list, with its menaces and shadows, is quickly brushed aside by Hegel’s unhappy declaration: Futuration, written in regret and deceit, becomes parturition. Instead of affirming shadows and halos, we now make allowances. Moreover, if everything possible is real, it is so according to ‘time’ – the time that regulates becoming and determines that which belongs to each moment in line with the distributive justice that Schelling symbolizes in *The Philosophy of Mythology* by the goddess Nemesis.

In the final analysis, the time in question is that of the ongoing revelation that rids the hidden of its rags. Time of this nature is capable of exhausting all possibilities and of slowly opening the carapace that dispenses myriad existences disciplined by evil. But, in fact, nothing can assure us that time has been placed under Nemesis’ jurisdiction,

or that time is the simple number of movement. Nothing entitles a conception of time to regulate becoming. Perhaps, then, we should remove Schelling's formula from the figures of mythological separation, transplant it onto the episodic, and find other becomings and other metamorphoses for it. Indeed, if myth develops a chronological division between commensurable beginnings and ends, if myth applies an orientation to everything that occurs and integrates it into the bosom of an organic chronic, then a story, like a novel, restores the lightness of the episodic to Schelling's formula. The novel, more so than a continuous anecdote, designates the strength and the potentiality of episodes. 'All possibilities are realized!' It is within the novel that Chronos' suspension resonates and where time begins to beat in accordance with a pure rhythm. 'All possibilities are realized!' This is the very formula of the novel, whereas a story raises questions about what is to be realized. In the novel, something is always in the process of happening: 'What happened? What on earth could have possibly happened?' The novel is highly problematic. Something has happened, but we do not know exactly what. Is something happening? What? What is an episode? An hour? A day? What happens in the singular and individuated forms of an episode? There is hesitation in the novel, a wavering in the episode, a caesura within which 'all possibilities are realized' and overlap. In this moment, in this season, possibly everything has happened, the best and the worst, without our knowing what, without our knowing if this is something more than merely a manner of being. The episode is not of being, it is a *way* of being, a haecceity – a singular, yet impersonal event.

In this respect, Paul Valéry's *Eupalinos or The Architect* follows the structure of a novel, even if this novel is also a dialogue. What happened for Socrates to become a philosopher? What event? What episode? Indeed, everything becomes consistent around the strange object – thing = x – that Socrates discovers on a beach, an object whitened by the sun and the sea – but we will never know what this object is. Yet, it is because of this encounter that everything happens, and something snaps in Socrates' head. And at this point, Socrates is thrown into turmoil – losing his footing, molecularizing himself into a host of possible Socrateses, into a retinue of very real and very disquieting possibilities, thanks to the lasting halo they embody. The episode is the conjunction of all these 'ands', the *Istigkeit* of their asubjective consistency, the halo of their encounter. As Deleuze says, with respect to the novel, something happened under the enigmatic form of an entity, something insists like a past – a past so immediate

'The Garden of Forking Paths'

and so close that it is contemporary with the present and reveals an agitated proliferation within it – a halo that, without being assignable, is coextensive with the present itself, a molecular life in its entirety that attests to a pure form of time (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 192–5).

The novel, along with the episode that characterizes it, presents a crystalline form of the time-image and describes gyratory networks that grow around the event that inhabits it. It necessarily splits from the middle into a pure past, contemporary of the present that is comparable to phenomena of paramnesia, whereas the story (*conte*) describes the process of futuration that animates time.

Perhaps fiction, in Borges' meaning, is fashioned after these two models that continue to reactivate the caesura of a crystal of time, whereby time is repeated in a past, a present and a future, in simultaneous bifurcation. The formula, 'all possibilities are realized', has never rung truer than in Borges' strange fiction bearing the eloquent title, 'The Garden of Forking Paths'. Inside this imaginary garden, time accedes to its higher power and to an intensification that attests to its crystalline structure. Borges' fiction, a very particular literary genre, somehow invites thought to think a minimum of thinkable time that, at the same point, unites the halo of virtuality surrounding it without reducing it to its proper actuality – a volcanic spatium of possibilities trailing behind it, as if they were its shadow. The garden of forking paths is a point of the present squeezed inside a sheet of the past. Everything starts with a terrible secret, with the imperceptible form of the secretive. How does one impart a secret? How does one induce a secret to take flight? 'If only my mouth, before a bullet shattered it, could cry out the secret name so it could be heard in Germany. . . . My human voice was very weak. How might I make it carry to the ear of the Chief? (Borges 1962: 20). This is the problem: something happened, something happened secretly, something imperceptible happened that must nevertheless be rendered tangible in the flight – 'I must flee!' This is the principal formula. There must be a flight and this flight must cause the secret to flee, as if a pipe had burst. But along this line of flight, Yu Tsun must encounter other secrets. Along this line, a number of unrelated events occur that cause him to forget who he is and force him to abandon the reference points of an all too human subjectivity. To flee and to become clandestine are operations associated with worlds and things that no longer have a connection with being human, but rather awaken in us becomings where the form of determination (I think) completely dissolves into something that is a purely impersonal determinable.

I thought of a labyrinth of labyrinths, of one sinuous spreading labyrinth that would encompass the past and the future and in some way involve the stars. Absorbed in these illusory images, I forgot my destiny of one pursued. I felt myself to be, for an unknown period of time, an abstract perceiver of the world. The vague, living countryside, the moon, the remains of the day worked on me, as well as the slope of the road which eliminated any possibility of weariness. The afternoon was intimate, infinite. (Borges 1962: 23)

The desire to flee corresponds with an urgent situation. To bear a secret in order to deliver it, betrays a grave urgency that cannot wait. But, inevitably, in the worst-case scenario, when time is of the essence, there will be something more urgent to attend to. Under the urgency of flight, there runs a series of intermediary urgencies, other lines of flight that interlace and draw us to other secrets, in a dimension where everything is indefinitely delayed, put off until later. 'I calculated that my pursuer, Richard Madden, could not arrive for at least an hour. My irrevocable determination could wait' (Borges 1962: 24).

The decision to have the secret flee by murdering Stephen Albert had to be suspended under the impediment of another secret that Stephen Albert was about to reveal. Such a deferment, such a suspense, represents an unusual hesitation, a faltering thought while a marching in place, where everything slows down to a point of coming to a stop: now, the imperceptible becomes tangible, and accedes to a light so violent that we no longer have the obscurity to render things clearer. At the point of this unbearable suspension, Yu Tsun surrenders a second secret enveloped in the first: the secret of the infinite labyrinth within which he is enclosed and which determines the flight of a higher coefficient. This labyrinth imagined by Ts'ui Pên, the uncle of Yu Tsun and friend of Stephen Albert, presents itself as a novel, as an extraordinary philosophical thesis on temporal bifurcation. This labyrinth, rather than producing its bifurcations in space, produces them in time – the pure form of time, the labyrinth of all possibilities, given a zebra-like pattern by the *clinamens* and branches of inflection that constantly diverge in a minimum of thinkable time:

In all fictional works, each time a man is confronted with several alternatives, he chooses one and eliminates the others; in the fiction of Ts'ui Pên, he chooses – simultaneously – all of them. He creates, in this way, diverse futures, diverse times which themselves also proliferate and fork. . . . Fang, let us say, has a secret; a stranger calls at his door; Fang can kill the intruder, the intruder can kill Fang, they both can escape, they

'The Garden of Forking Paths'

both can die, and so forth. In the work of Ts'ui Pên, all possible outcomes occur; each one is the point of departure for other forkings. Sometimes, the paths of this labyrinth converge: for example, you arrive at this house, but in one of the possible pasts you are my enemy, in another, my friend. (Borges 1962: 26)

In an unstable system (a liquid in superfusion, oversaturated solution) critical thresholds exist beyond which the variety of possible stable states introduce an element of uncertainty – a problem. We have, therefore, at a certain distance from equilibrium, not only a possibility, but several possibilities before which the system remains undecided. We call bifurcation the critical point in whose presence a new state becomes possible. According to Prigogine and Stengers' eloquent statement, 'the points of instability around which an infinitesimal disturbance suffices to determine the regime of the macroscopic functioning of a system are points of bifurcation' (Prigogine and Stengers 1986: 229). Given this infinitesimal disturbance, we can easily imagine the world in which we live. It is not very different from Ts'ui Pên's labyrinth, despite the fact that a rigorous description of the phenomenon leads to the simple enumeration of the encountered bifurcations and the fluctuations that, among all possible histories, determined the actual history.

In Ts'ui Pên's labyrinth, the distinction between the real and the possible is completely broken down because Ts'ui Pên builds his description on the critical threshold that strips the bifurcations of all stability. No longer is it a question of calculating the metastable fluctuation of a system by pinpointing, from among all possible histories, the determination of the true one.¹ In fact, in this fiction, the inscrutable Ts'ui Pên adopts them all at once. Therefore, in Borges, the idea of an infinity of possible histories exists, with the understanding that all possibilities are real. 'All possibilities are realized!' Hence, the question: In which world would Fang come to expand his singularities? Who is Fang, exactly?

Borges' labyrinth unfolds the fibres of the universe; that is, the pathways or lines of time upon which a constantly changing world is launched into orbit. All possible worlds coexist, but they coexist in accordance with series of diverging singularities and infinitesimal fibrous disturbances. For example, Fang harbours a secret wherein a world is expressed and his singularities converge with this world. Each world is a curve of convergence. In a given world, Fang encounters the stranger and decides to kill him so that the secret he attempts to express through this gesture becomes, under the same relationship,

expressible by his chief. Between Fang, the secret, the stranger, the murder and the chief, there is convergence, where a curve that actualizes a world is traced. But this is not the only curve possible. In another world, Fang would be killed by the stranger. In short, this new singularity is incompatible with the curve under consideration. It can no longer be extended to those expressing the previous world. It bifurcates and diverges on its own. But it is not impossible to have it converge with a new order of singularities in order to establish another world in which Fang is no longer a murderer, and the stranger no longer a victim. In other words, the garden of forking paths designates the totality of possible worlds, each one of which diverges in the exercise of its own convergence. It is a single universe, a single field of vectors with multiple worlds and diverging curves.

That all worlds are possible and each one succeeds in making its own singularities converge in accordance with an order of possibility does not alter the fact that series diverge and constitute impossible worlds. To the extent that it is a question of one and the same garden, Fang will be present in all impossible worlds, even if in one of these worlds he is a friend, in another an enemy or even a murderer, accomplice, spectator, witness, traitor, and so on and so forth. These worlds, over and beyond their profound divergence, have an unusual univocity, something in common – an ambiguous sign runs through them, a vague essence inhabits them: Fang = X, Fang vagabond, nomad, straddling all possible worlds, spectral Fang. No particular Fang will come to actualize this spectral Fang, encompassed as he is by a lingering halo comparable to the shadow that trails behind the triumphant combination of a unique roll of the dice. ‘From that moment on, I felt about me and within my dark body an invisible, intangible swarming. Not the swarming of the divergent, parallel and finally coalescent armies, but a more inaccessible, more intimate agitation that they in some manner prefigured’ (Borges 1962: 27).

This swarming is that of all the virtual Yu Tsuns that were not successfully cancelled by the present actualization – namely, the irreducible halo and the sheet of time that the actual present squeezes onto its mobile point. All the Yu Tsuns begin to communicate from within a nebula of many forms. ‘Once again I felt the swarming sensation of which I have spoken. It seemed to me that the humid garden that surrounded the house was infinitely saturated with invisible persons. Those persons were Albert and I, secret, busy and multiform in other dimensions of time’ (Borges 1962: 28). In such a moment, everything

'The Garden of Forking Paths'

slows down and becomes agitated to an extreme degree as it liberates, in this unique trajectory, the form of pure time wherein a thought infinitely divided is introduced. This pure time is not Newton's uniform and absolute time, but rather Bergson's duration – a vertiginous network of times that diverge along a unique cone whereupon approaching lines intersect one another, become divided, bifurcate and ignore one another for centuries afterward. This is Deleuze's universe: the same universe that he patiently created between the two mirrors, where its image proliferates for as far as we can see between Borges, Bergson, Nietzsche and Leibniz; and that he reinvented with Spinoza, Lucretius and so many others. Without returning to the disjunctive syntheses developed by the *Anti-Oedipus*, it is with his Leibniz that Deleuze carries the world, with its fibres and its crystals, to the garden of multiple faces.

Indeed, Leibniz brings an altogether original determination to the concept of the world that is in some sense the expression of an infinity of converging series continuing one another through singular points. According to Deleuze, that which characterizes the world of Leibniz is a continuum of inflections and events. The inflection is the event that occurs in this continuum in order to be inflected in all possible directions. On the other hand, there are no inflections without predicates to include them inside a concept. For example, 'to cross the Rubicon' is an event included in the notion that defines Caesar, and this predicate-event necessarily extends itself to the neighbourhood of predicates that belong to other individual notions along the lines of 'Sextus raped Lucretia', 'Saint Peter renounced our Lord', and so on. In other words, every predicate included in an individual notion is related to the totality of predicates from which a world is inflected. Certainly, this world does not exist beyond the monads that express it. This world is nothing more than this particular relation of predicates included in individual notions that mutually express one another. This is why a world can be thought only around the singularities that occupy and fill it as they express it.

That God creates the world before the monads – even though this world does not exist beyond the monads that express it – means that God produces a prior harmony by choosing an order of differential relations within which we can move from one singularity to another in such a way that the world is inflected, thanks to a totality of inclusions that mutually express one another. For this reason, each individual monad expresses all the singularities of this world and includes the inflections compatible with degrees of variable clarity. From this

moment on, what God creates refers to the order inside which a certain individual notion includes a certain predicate in a way that allows the predicate to be extended to the neighbourhood of predicates related to another individual notion: pre-established harmony. As Deleuze says, God 'creates the world in which Adam sins, and also includes it in every individual that conveys it' (Deleuze: 1993b: 60).

Let us return to Fang, who can be defined through several singularities: harbouring a secret, encountering an individual, murdering him, remaining at the service of a foreign nation, and so on. Clearly, each of these four singularities can be extended to the neighbourhood of others in order to precipitate a converging series. Let us take a very different singularity: 'Don't kill the stranger!' How would this singularity establish a relationship with the first? Perhaps there is no simple contradiction here with the singularities of killing a stranger. Something even more serious takes place: the lines of extension that had crossed the vicinity of the former singularities do not converge with the latter. There is impossibility. The Fang who does not kill excludes the world of the Fang who kills. From one singularity to the next, worlds that bifurcate are inflected. We have, therefore, an infinity of possible worlds in Leibniz, each one of which constitutes for itself a plane of compossible inflections. A certain number of singularities are excluded from this plane which will find elements of convergence in other worlds.

In this respect, when a singularity begins to diverge, the world it envelops in its entirety must bifurcate. Remarkably, however, despite the impossibility differentiating them, all these possible worlds are necessarily crossed diagonally by vague essences of the Adam = X type – straddling all worlds, realizing an odd consistency, a proliferation attesting, in this world, to the irreducible and non-actual aspect of the events that it actualizes.

These worlds are all here, that is, in ideas. I will show you some, wherein shall be found, not absolutely the same Sextus as you have seen (that is not possible, he carries with him always that which he shall be) but several Sextuses resembling him, possessing all that you know already of the true Sextus, but not all that is already in him imperceptibly, not in consequence all that shall yet happen to him. You will find in one world a very happy and noble Sextus, in another a Sextus content with a mediocre state, a Sextus, indeed, of every kind and endless diversity of forms. (Leibniz 1957: § 414)

Sextus' halo, sharing its iridescence between this world and all possible worlds, leads Leibniz to imagine the multiple echoes and the

'The Garden of Forking Paths'

sheet of future contingencies within which each individual notion is squeezed, under the form of a curious fiction where several floors caught in a crystal pyramid bump against each other.² In one of these floors, Sextus becomes the King of Thrace; in another, he tends to his garden in Corinth, neglecting to go to Rome; and then in another he goes to Rome and seizes power, and so on. In short, in such a pyramid, all possible worlds come into being; they coexist in a worrisome way inside a game where no rule of exclusion ever intervenes. 'All possibilities are realized!'

With a text of this nature, we must revise our idea of Leibniz. It is true now that the game of such a world occurs, in the last analysis, around the convergence of series demanded by the pre-established harmony. It is true that this game is restricted by the principle of the best and by the exigency of compossibility. But, as Deleuze notes, these rules attest to a very deep crisis in the theological image of thought and to a landslide thanks to which extraordinary principles begin to proliferate: a *hybris* of principles and an excrescence of possible worlds with their halos of virtuality. Leibniz, it is true, did not attempt to have divergence become an object of affirmation; nevertheless, he had displayed all the conditions. Beyond their profound divergence, the impossible worlds inhabit the same garden of many pathways and they unfold an obscure community wherein infinite stereoscopic agitations rise to the surface in the shiny concertinas of impossibles, reminiscent of the rare player who rolls the dice to an extreme degree. This ambiguous sign designates a vague Sextus, suitable for all worlds – a nomadic Sextus who straddles the multi-form group of possible worlds.³ This is why Leibniz's impossible worlds are not far from becoming the variants of the same muddled history, of the same Baroque architecture where many Sextuses will come forth from the temple of Jupiter and follow diverging courses.

In this respect, God's infinite understanding forms a massive brain-world with heterogeneous regions whose connection is the object of an exceptional logic. Before choosing the best possible world, God's understanding is brought to a boiling point and reaches an intensity that far surpasses the extension of the possibles, properly speaking. God's brain-world holds together completely separate universes in accordance with a diagrammatic logic that preexists the actualization of the best. God's infinite understanding must be traversed by a diagonal that disseminates all possible worlds. 'Moreover all these operations of the divine understanding, although they have among them an order and a priority of nature, always take place together, no

priority of time existing among them' (Leibniz 1957: § 225) It is here that all worlds begin to bifurcate simultaneously, like so many chains of neurons that the thought of God ties together, despite their deep divergence. This thought 'goes beyond the finite combinations' in order to make 'of them an infinity of infinities, that is to say, an infinity of . . . creatures. By this means . . . [it] distributes all the possibles it had already contemplated separately. . . ' (Leibniz: 1957, § 225).

This swarming of worlds inside God's infinite understanding, this massive cerebral system animated by an infinity of continuing divergences, is the site of a thoroughly impersonal thought, since it does not come from divine creation; it is an uncreated thought that accounts for the difficulty of thinking – for the vertigo of thought. Here, a transcendental logic in its entirety, without resorting to the principle of reason, no longer comes from the undifferentiated abyss. Rather, it unfolds roads of the universe wherein each singularity enters into syntheses associated with each road. As Deleuze says, this is a world of captures rather than of closures, a fibred world that the actualization of the best does not generate without tightening its point in a halo of possibles – a mirage, as far the eye can see, of shining eventualities below and beyond the present, in an untimely proliferation (Deleuze 1993b: 81).

But Leibniz will never go to the ends of this Baroque intuition. Instead, he will always invoke a God to provide rules for this unprecedented proliferation of forking paths: 'The rule is that possible worlds cannot pass into existence if they are impossible with what God chooses' (Deleuze 1993b: 63). We must confess then that in his system Leibniz did not want to breathe life into chance, and to intensify the world's game in a succession of aleatory tosses. He intended to distribute all divergences onto other non-realized worlds, mere ideas in the infinite understanding of God. Although he has come a long way in his conception of game and singularities, Leibniz had not really laid down the transcendental conditions for a nomadic distribution.

In this respect, we must wait for Nietzsche, Mallarmé, Whitehead and Borges to appoint divergence as the unique event in a violent cosmos.

The play of the world has changed in a unique way, because now it has become the play that diverges . . . with the neo-Baroque, with its unfurling of divergent series in the same world, comes the irruption of impossibilities on the same stage, where Sextus will rape and not rape Lucretia,

'The Garden of Forking Paths'

where Caesar crosses and does not cross the Rubicon, where Fang kills, is killed, and neither kills nor is killed. (Deleuze 1993b: 82)

This space, sheaved with heterogeneous pathways in perpetual heterogenesis, that holds beings and objects open and stretched out upon several forked worlds – this fibrous topology – unearths pathways in the universe. From each of these trajectories, associated syntheses emerge whose echoes and worlds are possible to capture. Such a thought is not foreign to the thought of the cinema.

Let us examine Orson Welles' celebrated film, *Citizen Kane*, where Kane dies with a perplexing secret. When questioned on the conditions of his death, witnesses evoke their souvenir-images in a series of subjective flashbacks. And with each probe into his past, Kane's life divides into a circuit of incompatible curves, where the sheets of the relatively diffused past are actualized into non-totalizable points of the present. The slices of life coexist throughout the actual present (the death of Kane), which is interpolated between the witnesses' disjointed accounts like a fissure. In relation to death, diverse sheets of the past begin to coexist in accordance with non-chronological relations. And hovering over each of these sheets is the enigmatic 'Rosebud', the subject = x that indicates inside each course the confused rumbling, the universal lapping where all possible worlds intersect.⁴ Kane's death, on the other hand, constitutes the micro-cracks that interpolate themselves between the sheets of past and the points of present in such a way that the assemblage of memories and evocations loses its footing and is unable to pull itself together in an organic plot. These micro-cracks, these imperceptible intervals, disturb the visible, and address themselves in thought to that which cannot be thought. Here, thought is made to confront its own impossibility, as in Welles' film, *Macbeth*, where the indiscernibility of good and evil, earth, sky and water imposes a micrological plane that, from one torn piece to another, constitutes the archaeology of conscience in its entirety, an archaeology of thought and of its own difficulty.

Thought then must be interpolated between these pure images of time in order to invent and produce a drawing from which a continuum of sorts could be extracted, a lining that would pass between the different cuts and the different sheets of time to bring them together. We are perhaps in the same situation as Balzac's player, in the situation of absolutely restful mood where similar thoughts 'pass in fragments through the mind' 'like tattered flags fluttering

above the combat'. Here, Balzac intends to tear the lining that passes between the tatters and the sheets of time, to distance the folds in order to retrieve the outside and its stifling void. Between all these small tattered flags, the micro-cracks of death slide as many little deaths and imperceptible micrological collapses as the quiet mood renders visible. Between the cracks of thought the outside slides, 'the gusts of the wind, heavy with sadness, the threatening atmosphere, once more urged him to die' (Balzac 1963: 15).

In this diffuse death, everything is torn – thought no longer insinuates itself into the souvenir-images and their conditions, between the visibilities and the light that illuminates them, any more than the visibilities come to interpolate themselves between the absences and hiccups of thought. Death, the absolute outside, progressively wins the lining of the inside, as in Resnais' film, *Van Gogh*, where 'between the apparent death from inside, the attack of madness, and the definitive death from outside as suicide, the sheets of internal life and the layers of external world plunge, extend and intersect with increasing speed up to the final black screen' (Deleuze 1989b: 209).

In the misery and despair of the world, to think is perhaps to create a space of transversal communication between the disjointed sheets of time and the layers of the external world; it is to weave – with the pure form of time and the visibilities that time causes to bifurcate – the links that enable us to traverse the abysses and the micro-cracks that crack ideas and worlds alike. If the souvenir-images and the movements of the world plunge into the sheets of the past – coexisting and yet impossible – thought is the assemblage of irrational links between all sheets, the mobilization of mutagenic strata, audiovisual strata where free statements glide in between images and their conditions in the manner of a backbone. The line of caesura endlessly runs between images and thoughts like an outside farther than all external sites – an outside that implies that all souvenir-images are necessarily a leap, that we can but leap into the past, that the sheets into which we plunge are themselves assumed by this gap where all things trip over themselves, taken on as in sewing in the comings and goings of the needle and the stuttering of thread. Thought is nothing other than a zigzag line that stumbles against its own synapses and breaks in the network of time, cerebral micro-cracks that make of thought a leap, hiccups to cross, a broken line that must be infinitely reconnected. 'The world has become memory, brain, superimposition of ages or lobes, but the brain itself has become consciousness, continuation of

'The Garden of Forking Paths'

ages, creation of growth of ever new lobes, re-creation of matter as with styrene' (Deleuze 1989b: 125).

Cinema experiences the intersection of the visible and the sayable in a brain agitated by worlds of non-given fibres – worlds that must always be made again beyond the synaptic micro-cracks, the micro-logical deaths and silences – an event, a semi-aleatory succession of gates interspersed with bottomless abysses. The cinematographic image, given the aberration of movement that it prompts, follows the dismantling of worlds, the caesura of pure time and the event that renders tangible all lines of bifurcation from which forms and substances arise. The episode of paramnesia, the test of the dice throw and the proliferation of possibles constitute – each for itself – an intensification of divergence and an experimentation with the bifurcation that characterizes the mode of propagation and the population of nomadic distributions. Literature, cinema, and even music and painting, are agitated by events that we can no longer prolong through actions, and that the sieve of consciousness does not successfully schematize. Rather than extending itself into actions, perceptions fall short here in the presence of exceptionally intense situations difficult to sustain. Rather than extending itself into actions and in operations of survival, rather than following the diagrams and riddles that consciousness pours down the drain, the percepts and the affects enter into other apparatuses. In Proust, for example, there are episodes and moments of suspense where the percepts no longer find motor extensions, no longer unfold into actions, but, rather, enter into relations with another thing – a pure past contemporary with its present, a virtual image diverging from the actual in an unexpected detachment. Contrary to a linear extension of percepts and actions, we assist a diffraction of the real, caught in the diverging circuits of attentive recognition. Similarly, in Borges, Yu Tsun causes the world itself to flee with each step of its own declivity. In fact, Yu Tsun experiments with a line of flight at the end of which the universe is ramified ad infinitum and opens up abnormal transversals (vague essences) between all possible worlds, which transcend the reductionist usage of the sensori-motor consciousness. Here, swarmings, populations and worrisome overlappings constitute episodes – so many shocks that summon thought in a manner which is original, aschematic and traumatic.

In a universe where pathways and incompatible strata bifurcate, in a universe where all possibles are realized, it is up to thought to establish pathways that connect fragments and impossibles, that

SECOND VARIATION

weave, beyond the voids and the interworlds, anexact, vague and irrational continua, the retinue of which no diagram can ever trace without undoing itself. The question is how to launch concepts as if they are arabesques and ritornellos that would restore our belief in the world. Creating concepts for philosophy, producing fiction or blocks of space-time in cinema – this has no other sense than recreating a world, stumbling upon a world – even if it is mythical – by rolling dice in the extreme. In the final analysis, every thought where ‘all possibilities are realized’, necessarily emits a roll of the dice.

THIRD VARIATION

Multiplicities

It was a decisive event when the mathematician Riemann uprooted the multiple from its predicate state and made it a noun, ‘multiplicity.’ It marked the end of dialectics and the beginning of a typology and topology of multiplicities. Each multiplicity was defined by n determinations: sometimes the determinations were independent of the situation, and sometimes they depended upon it.

(Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 482–3)

The Image of Thought

Rembrandt, *Philosopher in Meditation*, Amsterdam, 1631. Emerging from a pitch-black wall, a half-open window admits the diffusion of an uncertain glow. We can see nothing beyond the window. And yet, coming from it there is plenty of light, ample incandescence, illumination, a whole world of fires and glowing embers – a diaphanous and yet impenetrable burst of universal light reflected on a white façade. Here, in the hollow of this artificial opening, the eye witnesses something brilliant, each particle of which explodes in the vicinity of all the others. In the centre of the room, a flight of stairs unfurls its shell-like helix in silence. Positioned between the intangible light and the spiral staircase that carves out the space of the ascending steps, the philosopher composes himself – folded hands resting on legs covered by his dimly lit coat. We do not know whether this person is dozing or lost in thought. Could he, perhaps, be contentedly fixated on the wrinkled lines leading from one hand to the other over his interlaced fingers? Or, perhaps, with unfocused eyes, he is absorbed by any point whatever on the intersecting slabs of the floor. At any rate, the angle of his head reflects a redistribution of shade and light upon his face that exactly mirrors those chiaroscuro areas that shape the curve of the staircase. From bottom to top, towards the vaulted summit of this peaceful room, a crack contorts the visible space. Its S-shape arabesque unfolds as it exhausts the entire spectrum of light that diagonally expands. Along the length of this modulating line, this winged, spiral staircase, every step offers a new incline, a fresh face towards the window from which the light unfolds. In its contorted expansion, the flight of stairs traverses the entire spectrum of the chiaroscuro on its inner border, as it advances from one step to the next, either in a smooth and twisted groove, or in fitful, discrete and successive stages. And as such, two kinds of light surface: one smooth and continuous, the other scalar and discontinuous. On the slope of a typical spiral, all the degrees of light and all the stages of visibility are exposed. A staircase: the spiral of the visible with a border in continuous variation and isles disposed in a scalar progression. On

one side of the room, we have the spectral white, a burst of white that displays in its intensity all the degrees of which it is capable – all the colours, pale and dimly lit, that the vaulted walls of the room reflect. On the other side of the room, we have the flight of stairs, every step of which liberates a threshold – a gradient actualizing in extension the degrees that the light is enveloping in intensity. Still and silent, the philosopher waits for midnight, when, one after another, the illuminated steps of noontime will disappear as the descending ray silently retreats, from top to bottom, along with the receding sun and moon. Rembrandt develops an image of thought around the staircase, which borrows its material from the traditional image of philosophy, an ascetic image, whose uplifting character he preserves, but only after substantial modifications.

As Deleuze so beautifully says, a *propos* of Nietzsche, a force would not survive if it did not first borrow the face of previous forces, against which it had struggled (Deleuze 1983: 5). A new image of thought wears the mask of its predecessor, given that it is to its advantage to be mistaken for its forerunner in order to survive the opposition and resistance it will encounter.

At first glance, Rembrandt's painting says nothing new. A philosopher meditates at the side of a staircase that leads him to the heights and the true. This is Plato's ladder, symbolizing elevation, purification, transcendence. We know it already: thought presupposes the axes and orientations that draft its image, even before one begins to explore it. The exercise of thought, therefore, is subjected to an entire geography and to a system of coordinates that is vertically organized. Philosophy cannot escape the clichés that overdetermine its proper exercise (Deleuze 1990b: eighteenth series). Before painting, Rembrandt must assess the proliferation of prejudices which he has at his disposal. The white canvas is, in fact, already teeming with orientated vectors and polarities that direct the system of places distributed by the double axis of the canvas, and which predetermine the painter's actions. Unless he follows the orientation of this geometry with the intention of perverting the game, Rembrandt must fight a preconceived image of thought, if he aspires to create, which is why it is necessary for him to purge the canvas of the clichés and the polarities that haunt it.

At first glance, if philosophy is confined to an objective that stands for both ascension and conversion to the principle from which thought emanates, the flight of stairs that Rembrandt places around the philosopher is bound to relate to the traditional image of

thought.¹ But to this image of the Epinal, other forces are superimposed – forces that would be immediately neutralized, had they not borrowed the appearance of a cliché. Beneath the mask of ascension and elevation, Rembrandt has another vision in mind: the crack of thought in front of the S that lines the space of the visible with a zebra-like pattern – smooth and slithery like a serpent whose scales reaffirm the continuous variation of light – whereas individual steps convey the discontinuity of the light's spectrum. Leibniz translates Rembrandt: there is no opposition expressed between the continuous and the discrete. There is no arithmetical dualism found between the principle of indiscernibles and the principle of continuity. There is no more incompatibility between the continuous and the discrete than between the internal border of the spiral and the external, serrated border extended by the suspended staircase. A unique and continuous S gives a zebra-like pattern to the visible space, like a diagram, despite the fact that on this helix no two steps can receive light from the same angle. Being unequal in terms of their iridescence, they are *ipso facto* always singular.

The fold, Deleuze says, is the genetic element of a Baroque thought, a line of variable curvature from which one can deduce many differentiated points of view, much like in a suspended staircase, the interior space of which would be dilated, after being exposed and hollowed by means of a disquieting and inordinate outside.² It is then that a new image of thought is portrayed on Rembrandt's canvas devoted to philosophy. And this image resembles neither that of de La Tour nor Velasquez, even though they each suggest a rupture in the orientation of thought.³

If Velasquez inaugurates the representational apparatus, Rembrandt to the contrary invents the power of continuous variation. From one image to the next, a complex arrangement unravels the thread of its dispersal, the principle of its distribution, even if the historical distance between Rembrandt and Velasquez is negligible. The arrangement of Velasquez's *Las Meninas* and the apparatus of Rembrandt's *Philosopher in Meditation* do not obey the same geography, even if they belong to the same era. We are so much in the habit of thinking of historical mutations over long periods that are hard to move, that we become deaf to the din belonging to a definite moment of history. In fact, each age constitutes an inextricable tangle of flows that are very erratic in its distributions – resulting in a multilinear map with a variety of different apertures. It is true that the Velasquez' painting develops an image of thought suitable to the

novel distribution of subjects and objects in the constitutive process of classical representation; but this image is only one particular vector on a large map of an entire era. It necessarily enters into a relationship with other images that inevitably capture it, transform it, or weigh it down, according to strategies the modalities of which must be individually defined.

Between Velasquez and Descartes, de La Tour and Pascal, Rembrandt and Leibniz, there are interferences and exchanges that render the idea of a homogeneous history obsolete. One can certainly discern procedures of exchange and follow the articulation of sign regimes specific to a period, but one is incapable of saying upon which axis and following which semiotics the rhizome is provided with an orientation. One can always identify the vanishing points and interpret them in terms of results and goals, but it is on a different line that the rhizome is able to resume its growth and recompose its forces.

From this point of view, it is inconceivable that history reflects upon itself and orientates itself towards absolute knowledge. We do not have absolute knowledge. History is a surface in flux upon which things can be distinguished and become visible at the same time that certain expressions become readable. Velasquez makes an image of thought visible by tracing its axes and coordinates – representation of representation.

Perhaps, there exists, in this painting by Velasquez, the representation as it were of Classical representation, and the definition of the space it opens up to us. And, indeed, representation undertakes to represent itself here in all its elements, with its images, the eyes to which it is offered, the faces it makes visible, the gestures that call it into being. But there, in the midst of this dispersion which it is simultaneously grouping together and spreading out before us, indicated compellingly from every side, is an essential void: the necessary disappearance of that which is in foundation . . . This very subject – which is the same – has been elided. And representation, freed finally from the relation that was impeding it, can offer itself as representation in its pure form. (Foucault 1973: 16)

One can always follow this image of thought in order to see how it expands in an apparatus where general grammar, natural history and economy of wealth amalgamate. But such an image of thought is not alone: other forces may disguise themselves within it to expose themselves in another cut-out. There are many clashing images of thought on the same geo-historic stratum. Even if a historico-discursive

formation distinguishes itself on a stratum, this is not done without dragging along a procession of forces that refuse to distinguish themselves from it (principle of asymmetric distinction). On the labour of representation, one can superimpose other forces, another history, another image. Baroque staircases, folds, Rembrandt, Leibniz – another semiotic, another apparatus. Let us pay homage to Deleuze for his Baroque machines! Indeed, from Velasquez to Rembrandt, the distribution of elements and signs is not the same. The Baroque regime of the fold profoundly modifies the status of the subject and object. The space that it inaugurates belongs to perspectivism more than to the domain of representation.

To the space of representation, the Baroque superimposes the twist of the fold. The continuous fall of a circle's arc along which discrete fields of visibility expose themselves, resembling planes laid out in tiers, differing greatly in the way they sparkle, and in their way of gathering the light. Where Velasquez distributes objects in a space of stable coordinates, and marks the place of a withdrawn subject setting up the possibility of a coherent representation, Rembrandt's flight of stairs deploys a surface with variable curvature, each power of which proposes a threshold of new visibility. From the height of its obscurity, a continuous helix drops down, caressing the light of its shell – a spiral tangential to an infinity of points and to an infinity of curves. Under such circumstances, no object can be conceived in reference to an essential form. There is no longer an essence for things. There is no essence on the basis of which one could determine the accidents of things by referring them to their necessary form; rather, every object describes a fold, a singular inflection, a series of variable declinations in a state of incessant modulation.

This is a new understanding of the object, one capable of supporting a becoming where sounds and colours are flexible, on a voyage in the same place comparable to those Lowry's consul experiences on his capsized skiff. From the represented object, one passes to the inflections of things, to the folds that carry it off – an *objectile*! But we are not yet done. With respect to the subject, the Baroque produces a similar mutation. In a way, we could say that the subject itself, instead of founding the process of representation from its missing place, becomes a linear focus and a viewpoint. The mutation seems negligible and imperceptible if by 'viewpoint' we understand the preexisting orientation of a subject capable of unveiling the view of what Heidegger inscribed within the horizon of transcendence.⁴ If we must think of the viewpoint as a constitutive element, as the act of

THIRD VARIATION

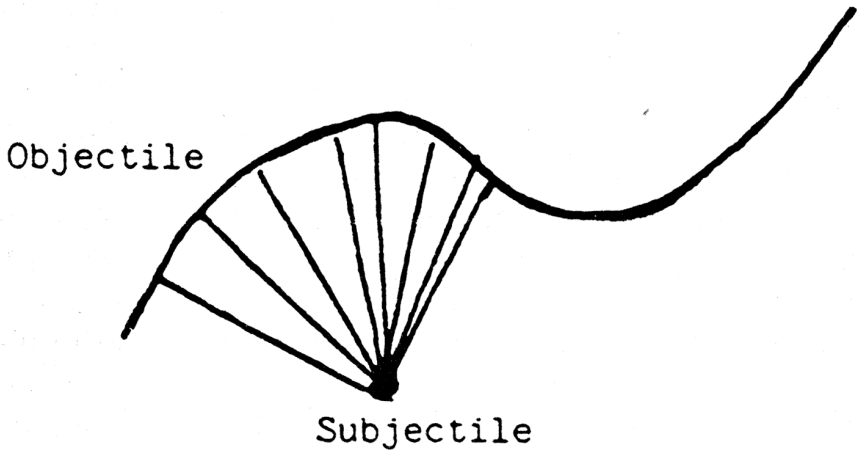


Figure 5

objectification understood as a preexisting openness in a horizon of visibility, we have not yet left the apparatus of representation behind, but, on the contrary, we have sunk deeper into the orientated space that makes representation available. (fig.5)

If the subject must be conceived as a linear focus, it is in a very special sense. Subject, says Deleuze, is what comes to a viewpoint. The subject is not at all the opening of a horizon or the fundamental orientation of representation. It is not the origin of perspectives, but rather, it designates the point where all perspectives intersect: the singular point where, beginning with a branch of inflection, all lines perpendicular to the tangent meet one another (Deleuze 1993: 25–6).⁵

Subject is what comes to a viewpoint – in our case, the point where the variation of light on the staircase becomes tangible. Rembrandt places the subject where we can follow the spectrum of light that fades on the sequence of steps with the fluid colours. The subject is nothing but a product, the focal point of a lens where the entire fan through which the light passes is reflected; the site from where the luminous spectrum is decomposed, and spreads out in a crescent of coloured spikes. No one has done better than Rembrandt in revealing these forces of becoming in the register of the chiaroscuro. With Rembrandt, the qualities of objects also become flexible, while the object exists only through the declination of its profiles in Baroque anamorphosis. Perspectivism is an image of thought that enters into a war against the forces of representation and can be extended to

The Image of Thought

the vicinity of a network of lines where philosophy, architecture, projective geometry and painting come together in a multilinear ensemble, the reverberations of which can also be heard in molecular biology, embryology, morphogenesis, ethology, and so on. At any rate, the concept of the fold allows Deleuze to follow the display of a map whose axes extend themselves with a great deal of suppleness. Everywhere, the branches of inflection cancel out the copies of representation as well as the masks of sedentary distribution. There is no reason, therefore, to privilege the process of representation at the expense of other sign regimes, whether diagrammatic or transformational that make up a geo-historic stratum. That one among them becomes dominant during an entire epoch is beyond doubt! But, in taking hold of other regimes of signs, in scaling the variable possibilities of visibility that agitate a stratum, the dominant semiotic necessarily submits itself to the powers of treason that it harbours. If such a semiotic system deploys endless strategies of reappropriation and structures that resist change, the forces it orientates and tries to mobilize remain nevertheless very active.

This is exactly what Deleuze and Guattari mean to say when, into the genealogical and arborescent logic, they inject the grass-like existence of rhizomes. One can understand nothing of rhizomes if one opposes them unceremoniously to centenarian trees. Evidently, opposition is not a good concept and it would be difficult to conceive of a history that corresponds without further ado to the dialectic of opposition, negation and sublation. Hegel is a poor historian. The real is no more rational than the rational is real. Such a belief confirms that an image of thought is extremely poor, and reactive to boot. Besides, the idea of leaving Hegel behind, of overcoming his dialectic, which feeds on oppositions, is not worth much. To exit Hegel is a false problem. This image of thought contributes to the idea that there is something to overcome, whereas becomings are made elsewhere and according to other procedures. For a long time now, biology has abandoned the model of teleology in order to expose evolution as a question of mutation rather than one of overcoming. We must stop thinking of our history in terms of cumulative progress or revolution, but rather as the mode of mutation and metamorphosis. Every civilization mutates. The West itself is a product of treason, the result of a contagion that places heterogeneous codes in variation. Like a virus, there are always minorities that take hold of the Roman Empire and the Judeo-Christian culture, in order to fuse them together – year one thousand! The barbarian is comparable to the virus that takes over

the cat or the baboon. As it transports the genetic and semiotic material from one to the other, it creates an alliance against nature. It is on this new image of thought that Deleuze and Guattari elaborate: *A Thousand Plateaus* – the book of treason!

Be that as it may, it cannot be a question of opposing the rhizome-like existence of multiplicities to the arborescence of representation. Deleuze's philosophy does not tolerate dualisms. The images of thought do not oppose each other, but rather, they sketch orientations and assembled vectors, according to *clinamens* and unpredictable declinations. In fact, thought is always involved in the topological network of countless courses with irrational branches and multiple crossroads. How can one travel on this changing map, along which axes, following which lines of flight? This is the problem. No itinerary precedes the peregrination limned by the course, and this map extends itself uniquely according to the problems that we encounter. An image of thought is nothing but the sum total of bifurcations that draw the line of a problem.

I think there's an image of thought that changes a lot, that's changed a lot through history. By the image of thought I don't mean its method but something deeper that's always taken for granted, a system of coordinates, dynamics, orientations: what it means to think and to 'orient oneself in thought'. . . . It's the image of thought that guides the creation of concepts, It cries out, so to speak, whereas concepts are like songs. (Deleuze 1995: 148)

A complete geography of problems exists, pulling thought along diverging paths. Thought, sooner or later, stumbles against singular points and problems that require a new image, a network of cases demanding heterogeneous solutions. The image of thought is certainly not the solution to a problem. Rather, it is the geometric projection of a plane, following which a problem is disarticulated along incompatible lines. It is the composition of a mental space that has nothing to do with ideology. And it is derived from an art of problems that Deleuze defines as noology. Indeed, an image of thought surges whenever thought encounters a problem, whenever chance is born in thought, compelling thought to choose and to distribute itself among many examples of solutions. We never think while under the influence of our good will, but rather, while under the constraints of the outside. Whenever thought stumbles against a problem, a map with forking paths is necessarily designed. A moment of great uncertainty arises, in which all possibles are realized at the same time,

according to a number of trajectories whose violence is experienced by thought in its entirety. At this moment of indecision, all issues are drawn in an image that divides thought, according to the capacity of the issue, on an extended surface of the map.

It is clear that the problem sketched by representation does not have the same map as that created by the problem of perspectivism. From one image to another, we do not deal in the same way with the labyrinth that unfurls at the forefront of our thought. Not every problem takes hold in the same way. It is not the same geography that carries us away, nor the same wind that pushes us from behind. The fact is that, on each map, we find the moment of uncertainty responsible for its dimension. Each map has its suspense, its point of uncertainty, its line of flight. Each thought has its own image and each image digs its own dimensional line, despite the fact that the issues are neither the same, nor equivalent.

Every image, according to Deleuze, exposes the suspense of its dimensional line and makes an appeal to thought; every image proposes its own problem and question. This is the way to experience both the difficulty and the lifestyle, and these are not the same. There are two ways for thought to trace its burrow and to experience its labyrinth: one finds as many images of thought as one wants. But there is a way of living these images, whether active or reactive, affirmative or negative, intensive or extensive, without installing this difference in a metaphysical dualism. There are two ways of experiencing the labyrinth that do not oppose each other. Deep down, it is a question of the differences between Ariadne-Theseus and Ariadne-Dionysus that Deleuze already thematized in his book on Nietzsche.

As long as Ariadne subjects herself to Theseus, he needs a guiding thread to help him through the labyrinth – a thread that reduces to nothingness the other paths that thought represses: ‘As long as Ariadne remained with Theseus, the labyrinth was interpreted the wrong way around, it opened out onto higher values, the thread was the thread of the negative and resentment, the moral thread’ (Deleuze 1983: 188). It is enough for Ariadne to turn her back on Theseus for the labyrinth to no longer be a source of knowledge and morality, for the thread to become useless and for every point of the labyrinth to repeat all the others, taken up by other roads in the process of the eternal return. The labyrinth is no longer the road on which one risks losing oneself; it is now identified with the road that returns. Yet these two experiences of the labyrinth do not oppose each other: it is the same labyrinth envisaged either as standard or as

singular. Ariadne considered every point of her thread as a regular instance, prolonging itself analytically over one and the same series. When she loses the thread, every point becomes singular and, from then on, finds itself in other series without common borders, in which case, every point will be absorbed by diverging series. In this respect, all roads lead to the same point where, if we prefer, every point finds itself on all roads, much like a vague essence or a nomadic singularity.⁶ To follow the thread does not oppose the affirmation of all paths. What changes from one to the other is the use of synthesis, and we are reminded of Yu Tsun that Borges placed in a labyrinth. With each gesture, Yu Tsun feels echoes taken from other worlds proliferate around him, disjunctive syntheses with all points having become singular and surrounded with a halo of virtuality that expresses their positions in other series and their repetitions in other spaces.

A labyrinth, therefore, can be lived in different ways. One can make one's way much like one moves from one tree branch to another, but one can also follow it according to an analytic extension, like a rhizome, not from one point to the other, but rather by encountering new roads at each point, and by forming on each spot an association with the new worlds. This would be to jump on the spot across all possible worlds – Fang = X, and to be astride all the planes of the real. We encounter experiments of this nature everywhere – in Vasarely, Proust, Huxley, Mallarmé and so on – at points of flight, lines of transit and voyage. This is what coming to the viewpoint means: leaping on the spot where all worlds in a neo-Baroque perspectivism are torn.

From Rembrandt to Leibniz, by way of Spinoza and Nietzsche, an image of thought sketches itself, and it is difficult to rediscover in it Velasquez, Descartes or Heidegger. We owe this noology – that marks the mutation of images of thought and the endeavours to follow their entanglement – this geo-historic cartography that renews our relationship to philosophy, to the work of Deleuze and to his gallery of portraits. With Deleuze, every philosophical epoch stumbles and stutters. Philosophers are related to one another by substituting for their usual figure a singular form that bleeds in all directions – Spinoza and Nietzsche, Nietzsche and Spinoza, both cocooned within the same aura and under the same halo.

It does not matter if we lose the thread, because from one philosopher to the next a number of singularities coexist in a geographic way, rather than in an historical one. To the histories of philosophies, a topology that connects with them also superimposes itself the way

one travels from one road to another, with the possibility of rediscovering the same road a little farther along, at another intersection, with new crossroads. On this map, one can see zones with speeds and slownesses, roads and landmarks each one of which reveals another image of thought, so that none of these images is capable of offering a definitive orientation to the process of connections. There are styles of thought that we can locate in Antiquity that are less classical than those we qualify as modern. In this respect, *The Logic of Sense* offers a typology of images and a noology erected around three stylistic variables. A style is a variable, a spatio-temporal ensemble made consistent within a block whose harmony is not given; it is sought after and can always unravel. This is why, in every style, we find bendings and flexions that carry a block of space-time, concepts and networks of concepts, towards new becomings. A style always defines a series of heterogeneous connections between concepts, as a diagram. As such, noology as the study of stylistic movements must account for two factors: on the one hand, it is indispensable to think of how styles that vary can coexist in sufficiently narrow, even unique regions. We must also note, on the other hand, that not all styles develop in a homogeneous manner in the various concepts to which they apply, and that to each concept we must associate another charge of affects and another form of visibility. Each style lives according to an internal logic and external encounters. Considered according to its internal development, each style produces a solid chain, a block of space-time, and a consolidated arrangement that extends itself much like a curve. But at each of these sensitive points, each curve is associated with numerous experiences that function like a shock of the outside that reverberates on affects and to new percepts. Viewed from this angle, the logic of the percept, the concept and the affect do not necessarily overlap and can come loose in a Baroque or expressionist way.

The divergence of these three types of logic can be attributed to the various states of the life of styles. In the experimental state, these three dimensions search one another and are endlessly relaunched in the form of hesitant consolidation. On the contrary, the classical state manifests the rigid moment of style – its forced equilibrium. But each style is marked by a Baroque or flamboyant slope, which unravels the equilibrium and destroys the unity of affects, percepts and concepts, at which point Ariadne will have lost her thread.

The Logic of Sense analyzes many images of thought that are distributed according to three categories of style. In a way, everything

begins with Plato and the Platonic equilibrium on which the popular image of the philosopher in the clouds depends, as much as that of the philosopher taken up on the wings of the intelligible world and made to account for sensitive appearances. This style is based entirely on height, with its retinue of rising and falling, with its cyclothymic, manic-depressive affectivity, and its blind-blinding perception. This version of the sun, this heliocentrism, this orientation according to height – the centre-height – already displays a hardening of style, a segmentary dual stratification, and the breathlessness characteristic of the classical moment of style. In fact, this dimension is not alone. There is an experimental state of style and a flamboyant state that cannot be reduced to the classical equilibrium that the duo, Socrates–Plato, had imposed:

There are dimensions here, times and places, glacial or torrid zones never moderated, the entire exotic geography which characterizes a mode of thought as well as a style of life. Diogenes Laertius, perhaps, in his best pages, had a foreboding of this method: to find vital Aphorisms which would also be anecdotes of thought – the gesture of philosophers. The story of Empedocles and Etna, for example, is such a philosophical anecdote. It is as good as the death of Socrates but the point is precisely that it operates in another dimension. The presocratic philosopher does not leave the cave; on the contrary, he thinks that we are not involved enough or sufficiently engulfed therein. In Theseus' story, he rejects the thread: 'What does your ascending path matter to us, your thread leading outside, leading to happiness and virtue. . .? Do you wish to save us with this thread?' (Deleuze 1990b: 128)

This is another way of conceiving, experiencing and perceiving, a new vital articulation, another lifestyle. What the Platonic height had in some way stratified is the experimental state of the Presocratic depth – another philosophic vector, a complete style of multiple and lacerated images. But we can also find a different orientation, a new style between height and depth, a conquest of surfaces inhabited by the Megarians, the Cynics and the Stoics. It is the image of height and the image of depth that change in this reorientation of thought. Depth now becomes the index to mixtures of bodies – Diogenes strolling, while a herring dangles at the end of his string; Chrysippus' behaving like a pig; Thyestes' devouring his own child. In all that, height is liberated from the weight of ideas and basks in the incorporeal lightning and thunder, the pestiferous haze and fog, while, between the sky and the earth a strange art of surfaces subsists. Likely, each epoch of history must be read as a combination of the three styles:

the experimental, the classical and the Baroque. Of course, we never deal with the same experimental or the same Baroque style. The flamboyant is not to be confused with the Baroque *strictu sensu*, and the Baroque does not allow us to understand the development of expressionism. Nevertheless, as we move from one to the other, we discover the same singularities, but according to another block of space-time and situated on other layers of style. Between the Stoic reorientation of thought, for instance, and that which Nietzsche rediscovers when he redistributes the relations of surface, height and depth, we encounter the spurt of flamboyant gesture that perverts both the tiered dualism of the Cartesians and the depth of transcendental philosophy.⁷

This original understanding of philosophical style offered by Deleuze is close enough to the one that Focillon attributes to the life of artistic forms.⁸ It is important to distinguish between two planes of style that run through every moment. Each style traverses several epochs and moments and is able to actualize itself in accordance with many images. The states that it realizes successively can be fairly intense, fairly swift, according to the geo-historical conditions that the style encounters. This resembles what Deleuze stresses with respect to cinematographic transformations:

There is a whole history. But this history of images doesn't seem to me to be developmental. I think all images combine the same elements, the same signs, differently. But not just any combination's possible at just any moment: a particular element can only be developed given certain conditions, without which it will remain atrophied, or secondary. So there are different levels of development, each of them perfectly coherent, rather than lines of descent or filiation. That's why one should talk of natural history rather than historical history. (Deleuze 1995: 49)

The history, therefore, that Deleuze paints with bold strokes should not be based on evolution understood as genealogy. The way in which a filmmaker or a painter reorients the elements of style, with its particular geography, cannot be understood as an eclectic recapitulation of the regimes that succeed one another in history. No doubt, we must rediscover the same elements and their differing arrangements on the strata under consideration. A classification of images and signs should then strive to account for two lines of confrontation between which the styles are able to develop: a line of the outside and a line of the inside, an external logic and an internal logic. From this point of view, the way in which Bacon traverses the history of painting is instructive.

On any of Bacon's canvases, there are numerous semiotic regimes, many elements that can be found in each painting, to the extent that a work always distinguishes itself from that which does not distinguish itself from it, according to a principle of asymmetric distinction. Artwork cannot be actualized on the surface without other elements refusing to distinguish themselves from it, and following it like a comet's tail or a halo of virtuality. Bacon's paintings are pervaded by an untimely din, the first element of which is Egyptian. There is an Egyptian style in Bacon, in virtue of which form and ground, related to each other by means of the contour, constitute a unique plane capable of producing a near vision and a planar perception. This style is the first insistence – a transcendental determination that escapes history and is counter-effectuated in painted works of art.

Aside from the Egyptian line, Bacon's work brings about the coexistence of other a priori elements of style. We can even find in him the *malerisch* treatment of the chiaroscuro, with its capacity for realizing an optical world founded on a difference of values. But to the relations of values, Bacon juxtaposes relations of tonality within an arbitrary colourism. From the Egyptian element to the *malerisch* by way of colourism, Bacon rearticulates all the tendencies that run through painting like a curve, and left behind remarkable masterpieces (Deleuze 2003: 111–14). There is an internal logic in the development of painting, permitting tendencies that follow one another, in an almost necessary and continuous way. This curve of regulated progression, however, and this movement of tired stratification, are swept away by events and catastrophes that represent *clinamens* and points of bifurcation.

As we consider the Egyptian side of Bacon's style, with his near vision and haptic perception, we are bound to discover an unusual declination. We could say that the Egyptian element spreads out to neighbouring post-Cubism, to the extent that the ground-form relationship acquires a little depth. From this point on, the form no longer presents the contour as if the former were an essence; rather, it is randomly produced where the dimensions of the foreground and the background intersect. Likewise, as we study the interactions between chiaroscuros, we inevitably notice a similar declination. A new catastrophe forces the *malerisch* treatment towards an expressionist tendency that cancels the optical coordinates through an aleatory sweep of the canvas. As for the rest, Bacon is one of the greatest colourists since Van Gogh, and in his work, the art of modulation accedes to a completely oversaturated dimension that carries

painting along a Byzantine line. The curve upon which the moments of style have been stratified constantly challenges accidents that cause it to split. The artist, as a result, always reaches back to the molecular plane where all the elements of the painting coexist virtually, in order to extract from it another draw. The history of painting and cinema develops like a natural history with its internal and external, organic and inorganic logic. Wörringer and Focillon were the first to consider art under the appearance of natural history, where an organic and genealogical regime confront a crystalline and inorganic one according to orientations and dynamisms that involve new images. On this confrontational line between the inside and the outside, the organic and the inorganic, we find many stylistic regimes that never deplete themselves in a specific work of art that will rediscover them in another constellation of the semi-aleatory dice throw. This will be the nomad line that Deleuze discovers in his analysis of the barbarian arts – the line that crosses the ages in order to expose them to the non-actual and to the power of the untimely. In fact, we find in every site and in every period of our history constellations and arrangements with the same formal characteristics, the same constitutive elements, albeit according to a line of confrontation that tirelessly redistributes them.

A line that delimits nothing, that describes no contour, that no longer goes from one point to another but instead passes between points, that is always declining from the horizontal and the vertical, that is constantly changing direction. . . . This streaming, spiraling, zigzagging, snaking, feverish line of variation liberates a power of life that human beings had rectified and organisms had confined, and which matter now expresses as the trait, flow, or impulse traversing it. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 497–8, 499)

This is why the history of style does not draw a singular and ascendant line, but rather unfurls on a multilinear plane – possessing an organic line, an inorganic line and also, from the one to the other, a line of confrontation, a median line that achieves an infinite classification of images and signs. This multilinear ensemble refers to the principle of classification that Deleuze develops in his *Francis Bacon* and in his book on cinema; and it is this same semiotic programme that prompted the writing of his book, *What is Philosophy?*

Ever since *A Thousand Plateaus*, this multilinear taxonomy has marked Deleuze's work, and strove time and again to extract the transcendental determinations that we also find *with other dynamisms* in

every empirical moment of style. In philosophy, the friend, the lover, the suitor, the rival are as many transcendental determinations actualized in each epoch, with the help of differing conceptual personae,⁹ each one of which reveals new relations and new rhythms and limns a complex semiotic, thereby affecting philosophy with mutations. But these transcendental determinations do not imply that concepts can be found readymade in an intelligible heaven. A concept is never a simple essence, it has to designate the circumstances and name the event – no longer the essence. There are no concepts when the transcendental determinations no longer collide with the line of the outside, which causes the concepts to enter *new networks*, new maps, new agencies and new rhythmic personae.

In this sense, the a priori elements of style are applied to new experiments, on the basis of a variable alliance, designated as ‘confrontation’. The connection between stylistic elements and circumstances, contexts and historical conditions, define concepts and spatio-temporal dynamisms in agreement with the modalities of struggle, confrontation or resistance. This confrontation, this shock of the outside, has nothing empirical about it. Rather, it confirms the connection between principles and domain, and this is one way to justify subjecting the domain to principles assigned by Kant to the transcendental. In other words, the relationship and struggle between principles and a specific domain is never given and never determined in experience. The empirical provides the concrete figure on the strength of which principles are assembled in any domain whatever, but does not explain what makes this assemblage possible. The empirical registers how an apparatus is actualized in history. What history retains of the shock and the confrontation depends on its actualization in an original figure, but its becoming and its event are not indebted to history. As Deleuze has often said, history only indicates the sum of the fairly negative conditions that cultivate the effectuation of something that is not historical.

And so, it is not history that determines the mutation of the images of thought and its concepts, but quite the opposite. *Relating* a concept to a space-time block is not an act that is given; it is, instead, a door to the outside by means of which something new arrives. An act of this nature is going to *subordinate* the a priori elements of style to a new diagram not offered by *experience* – a diagram that, alone, is able to produce an experiment with the outside. The connection between elementary logic and a poetic diagrammatics that elicits mutations is one between the inside and the outside, the struggle of the

internal and the external, the organic and the inorganic. Without the shock of the outside, the constitutive elements of philosophy, science and art would always stratify themselves or link together in a series based on a centralized organic process in order to lay the foundation for a necessary curve of development.

In this context, it is common to associate Gothic architecture with the progression of a theorem. There is no better situation under which to witness the submission of matter to the law of form. And, beginning with the vault, nowhere else are such far-reaching consequences unleashed – consequences capable of determining the association of masses, the articulation of the empty and the full, the distribution of visibility, and so on. However, this curve that appears to be genetic is not exempt from the catastrophes and *clinamens* by means of which it reconstitutes the whole gamut of relationships. The vault becomes acquainted with events and declinations that are neither historical nor structural but, rather, released breath, a call for air where the thunder of the untimely is to be found. One can certainly say that the architecture of the thirteenth century already contained the counter-curve internally, so that its blossoming in France was genetically determined. The counter-curve was perhaps already enveloped in the trajectory of relatively old forms, so that the encounter between the Gothic arch and the lower lobe of a four-leafed clover shaped its plan. But with the development of the flamboyant style, it became necessary for this element to *confront* a new state of architecture – a new diagram – in order for the counter-curve, enveloped within the old forms, to be seen by this logic as a principle contrary to the stability of architecture and to the coherence of results. The principle of the counter-curve was not compatible with the unity that governed this logic and had therefore to be sought elsewhere – in the mutation of either a style or an image of thought, and in the emergence of a new percept.¹⁰

Architecture poses problems, therefore, which exceed all theorems and confirm a constant struggle with an outside prepared to hollow the inside, in accordance with extremely variable relations:

Human movement and action are exterior to everything; man is always on the outside, and in order to penetrate beyond surfaces, he must break them open. The unique privilege of architecture among all the arts, be it concerned with dwellings, churches or ships, is not that of surrounding and, as it were, guaranteeing a convenient void, but of constructing an interior world that measures space and light according to the laws of a geometrical, mechanical and optical theory that is necessarily implicit in the natural order, but to which nature itself contributes nothing. (Focillon 1992: 74–5)

According to Focillon, there is an extreme divergence between the mechanical logic of structure, perspective and geometric reasoning, depending on the images of style and thought, but also according to the epochs of the life of the forms. In every noological diagram, a complex game persists between geometry, optics and mechanics – a game that mobilizes dynamisms between spaces that have no common border. Architecture is developed in a variety of space of ‘*n*’ irreducible dimensions. The laws of optics, mechanics and geometry are never presented on the same space. The space created by light is not the same as that which settles over immobile masses. Similarly, the space that hollows mass volumes through an internal relief mobilizes motifs that have nothing in common with the stability of the mural economy. The same silhouette pierces through one sheet of space to the next, and the same transcendental elements hover about. Obviously, neither the Romanesque, nor the Gothic, nor the Baroque crosses the various spaces in a uniform way. One never has repeat access to the same concept. In fact, a conceptual silhouette animates this peregrination in space, according to the smallest value of time – a block of space-time. And a conceptual sketch limns the variation of stylistic elements, on blocks of incommensurable space.¹¹

A variety of spaces with no common measure – haptic, optic, digital, mechanic – constitutes a fragmented universe: a labyrinth of forking paths. This variety, along with its modalities, constitutes, for each stylistic event, the transcendental part that must be distinguished from what is actualized in history. The task of the philosopher is to extract a concept from this silhouette, which will serve as the event, and from the singularity of a dynamism that crosses the various spaces and reorganizes the elements according to their intensities, and without any extension. The concept, therefore, is not so much the passage of one stylistic element to another, but rather, of one form to a dynamic space – the erratic passage of a form upon *all* planes of space. The concept is a method of transposition, of metamorphosis – a line of flight. And it is characterized by a power of variation that traverses the heterogeneous states of numerous spaces. It is due to this method that a form or an utterance is compelled to cross all the variables that might affect its contents in the shortest moment of time. And *at the same time* a concept relays a form along *all* the heterogeneous dimensions of space, thereby drawing an arabesque that could connect rebirths and regressions of the ordinal, modular, or processual style in a series of positions.

I inscribed this putting into variation in the process of a

The Image of Thought

transformational semiotic. But this semiotic is possible only if a line of confrontation is drawn between the inside and the outside. A concept does not become a diagram simply because the latter is related to a pre-philosophical, pre-aesthetic and pre-scientific plane, like an image of thought. It is, in fact, inseparable from an image of thought. *The diagram sketches out the orientations and coordinates in accordance with which a concept develops* and is able to produce its arabesque within a variety of spaces without common borders. Style qualifies the entire movement from diagram to concept and from concept to the constitution of the spatio-temporal blocks within the framework of a natural history. Styles, diagrams, concepts and space-time blocks constitute the pure elements of natural history.

This is why we find the same concepts and styles in Gothic and Romanesque eras albeit *with different degrees of development*, and within other silhouettes and under other profiles of visibility. Hence, concepts that animate Gothic space may be the same as those we find at work in Romanesque space, even though their *orientation* is not the same. The concept of the fold intervenes both in the Gothic and in the Romanesque eras. But it finds its full measure only within the Baroque diagram. Indeed, concepts alter their dynamism and their orientation only under the constraint of a new diagram or new ways by which the different leaflets of space intersect. Such a stylistic reorientation marks the birth of a new image of thought in a natural history that juxtaposes all ages of style. This is why one can find in the same moment anticipations and relics, as well as coexistence of late and innovative forms. As Henri Focillon aptly states, time is occasionally on short waves and occasionally on long ones. It follows a rhythm that beats at many speeds of flow.

History is not unilinear: it is not pure sequence. We may best regard it as the superimposition of very widely spaced present moments. From the fact that various modes of action are contemporaneous, that is, seized upon at the same moment, it does not follow that they all stand at an equal point in their development. At the same date, politics, economics and art do not occupy identical positions on their respective graphs, and the line joining them at any one given moment is more often than not a very irregular and sinuous one. (Focillon 1992: 140)

Natural history neither progresses in a synchronized movement nor does it proceed according to a chronological or synchronic rhythm. On the contrary, we see in natural history asynchronous movements and becomings, decelerations and accelerations that carry forms and

concepts along vectors that are divergent, dissimilar and without common measure. Style, therefore, cannot be reduced to the internal logic of genealogical development. It confronts a line of the outside, an inorganic line that redistributes its elements by imposing new orientations and new images of thought and matter. Natural history involves complex formations of coexistences and sign regimes, the articulation of which is no longer dialectical but diagrammatic. In this respect, the historian's duty lies in recovering the flows of differentiated passages, in pointing out the periods of coexistence or the simultaneity of movements, in marking the entanglement of the empirical and the transcendental, in composing a multilinear semi-otic with the help of diagrammatic, transformational and generative regimes, and in liberating the image of thought where, through deterritorialization and reterritorialization, it finds itself. This is the multi-sided programme of *A Thousand Plateaus* for a philosophy of the future (*avenir*) or a philosophy of what will occur (*advenir*).

Consequently, the image of thought that Rembrandt mobilizes, with the motif of the *philosopher in meditation*, is especially instructive and helps make sense of the pragmatics that Deleuze develops in his analysis of the Baroque style. To hollow space from the outside, to experience the outside, constitutes an experiment that Rembrandt's flight of stairs skirts. It focuses on the spiral, the inside of which is constantly widened by the outside, along a line of force that folds material into a helix, marking the confrontation between the inorganic and the organic, the continuous and the discrete, the smooth and the striated, the sinuous and the scalar. Rembrandt's flight of stairs crosses over many spaces where the space of light no longer overlaps the dynamic space of the hub. The latter must still be distinguished from mechanical space unfurled by the successive steps. This image of thought that Rembrandt develops around the staircase is already present in the philosophical understanding of the real, even if it behoves the philosopher – and no one else – to create the concepts that correspond with the aesthetic percepts and the affects of an ethical origin. If philosophy creates concepts according to its own curve, this curve necessarily intersects with creative forms that are not concepts, but productions suited to the sciences, the arts, and to practices with dynamisms that are compliant with other rhythms and under other occurrences. Associated with Rembrandt's flight of stairs as image of thought, philosophical concepts, mathematical functions and diverse artistic endeavours are associated.

In Leibniz, we find Rembrandt's proposed concept that corre-

The Image of Thought

sponds with the slope of the staircase. The fold, according to Deleuze, designates an inflexion that Leibniz successfully elevates to the status of concept. Fold is the Leibnizian concept from which one can consider the principle of Baroque variation. It unfurls a power that carries forms and statements over a *variety* of disjunctive spaces:

Yet the Baroque is not only projected in its own style of dress. It radiates everywhere, at all times, in the thousand folds of garments that tend to become one with their respective wearers, to exceed their attitudes, to overcome their bodily contradictions, and to make their heads look like those of swimmers bobbing in the waves. We find in painting, where the autonomy conquered through the folds of clothing that invade the entire surface becomes a simple, but sure, sign of a rupture with Renaissance space (Lanfranc, but already Il Rosso Fiorentino). Zurbaràn adorns his Christ with a broad, puffy loin-cloth in the rhingrave style, and his Immaculate Conception wears an immense mantle that is both open and cloaked. And when the folds of clothing spill out of painting, it is Bernini who endows them with sublime form in sculpture, when marble seizes and bears to infinity folds that cannot be explained by the body, but by a spiritual adventure that can set the body ablaze. His is not an art of structures but of textures. . . (Deleuze 1993b: 121–2).

The fold not only designates what happens to the texture of materials and forms in each particular art, it also marks the point of passage from one art to another. This does not mean that philosophy, literature, painting and architecture belong to the same category. On the contrary, one must distinguish between all these practices to the extent that each one actualizes its own task, on its own curve. Together, philosophy, art and science gather a multilinear ensemble of relations and mutual resonances with melodic curves alien to each other. Leibniz and Rembrandt, philosophers *and* architects. . . Obviously, in architecture, the modulation of a formal element over a variety of spaces does not amount to a concept, even if we were to have, in each case, a *differenciatted concept* for these spaces. It is the philosopher who produces the concept, on his specific line. But from architecture to philosophy, we follow the movement of a diagonal that introduces obvious intersections. As always, a philosophical concept cuts across the neighbourhood of concrete entities that architecture, sculpture or paintings actualize along their own trajectories. It is from the side of philosophy that architectural modulation releases concepts according to methods and conditions that no longer belong to architecture. From this perspective, Deleuze's analysis of Leibniz' elaboration of the concept of the monad is instructive.

What preoccupies architecture also confirms a power of modulation that Leibniz will raise to the status of concept through dissimilar methods. There are always resemblances by means of which things do not resemble one another. That the monad is without doors or windows is something extraordinary and must be taken in a literal sense, even if it does not concern inhabitable space. The monad is visualized against the model of a dark chamber, together with a diversified canvas and the help of moving folds. Shining effects emerge from this interior texture, folded in all directions, as the many incorporeal events that Leibniz refuses to assimilate to predicates:

For ages there have been places where what is seen is inside: a cell. A sacristy, a crypt, a church, a theater, a study, or a print room. The Baroque invests in all of these places in order to extract from them power and glory. . . . The monad has furniture and objects only in *trompe l'oeil*. . . . The monad is a cell: It resembles a sacristy more than an atom. A room with neither doors nor windows, where all activity takes place on the inside. (Deleuze 1993b: 27–8)

In short, the concept of monad expands on a geography, where one discovers the layers and dynamisms that correspond to ‘the architectural ideal [of] a room of black marble, in which light enters only through orifices so well bent that nothing on the outside can be seen through them, yet they illuminate or color the *décor* of a pure inside’ (Deleuze 1993b: 28). The individual substance is, therefore, more like a texture rather than an essence, a texture whose folds and pleats designate events, polished effects rather than predicates – marblings, tissue, cloth, the kind of fold that stretches to infinity. And so, the concept of monad corresponds with an image of thought that partakes in a world of diverse rhythms and thresholds. It also forms a counterpoint to the Baroque house. Concepts, affects, percepts develop themselves in accordance with a philosophy, an ethic and an aesthetic that establish a contrapuntal world in a system of resonance and correspondence – the Romanesque, Baroque, Gothic worlds, the diagrams of which are neither given nor imposed. Then how is a world created? What produces a world? How is it that two curves as unlike as those of architecture and philosophy, for example, can be constituted so that the motifs of the one agree with those of the other? How should we determine the event that incorporates philosophy, art and science in a network of points and counterpoints? There are moments of time when men simultaneously think of similar forms, as if the same impulse runs from one discipline to the other and is

already present in new material. But the influence is somewhat weak. The work of an affinity is never sufficient to describe it. An influence and a postulated translation never account for anything. Besides, in order for an influence to succeed, on a given line, we must be able to account for the conditions that this influence is unable to produce. Imitation explains nothing. We can say, in fact, that the development of the counter-curve in France corresponds with the English influence inherited from the Hundred Years War. But for such an influence to be possible, conditions of acceptability, reception and expectation are necessary and those are not established by influence alone. The meeting of two different states of style produces mutations only through deterritorialization. This is a becoming that occurs between two stylistic states – it is a phenomenon of double capture, of parallel evolutions, where each term snatches particles from the other and becomes something else – an explosion between two heterogeneous series!

In fact, the English counter-curve *becomes*, it transforms itself completely as it deterritorializes along the French line that will, in turn, metamorphose itself. The introduction of a foreign contribution would mean nothing without this shared deterritorialization that inscribes the contribution in a new configuration.¹² The notion of mimetic transference is a poor concept to account for mutation. Indeed, one cannot isolate a style from the geographic milieu that has an effect on a foreign element. The programme of architecture is found in material – a sky, a site, or a city – that accepts the transfer by modifying the content in an unpredictable way:

Brick, stone, marble and volcanic materials are not merely elements of color: they are elements of structure. The amount of rainfall determines the steepness of the gables; it call for the gargoyles and the gutters that are installed on the weather-faces of flying buttresses. Aridity of climate permits the substitution of terraces for steep roofs. Brilliant sunlight implies shadowy naves. Where the weather is customarily dark, a multiplicity of windows is needed. The scarcity and high cost of land in populous towns control corbeling and the overhanging of stories. (Focillon 1992: 148).

From one milieu to another, no matter how hard we try to create resemblance, it creates itself through non-resembling means – and this changes everything. Moreover, the notion of milieu itself is not homogeneous. Each milieu is established through topological variables that never develop themselves according to the same rhythm,

and because of this milieu cannot be separated from a differentiated temporal flux. Furthermore, if architecture inscribes itself within a milieu, this milieu never stops fleeing, deterritorializing itself on a border whose growth one cannot prevent. Actually, there is no single milieu: rather, they are superimposed in a way that one never occupies them more than once in the same way, with laws that cannot be reduced to a uniform principle:

But Venice has worked on Venice with a most extraordinary freedom. The paradox of its construction is its struggle *against* the elements: it has installed Roman masses on sand and in water; it has outlined against rainy skies oriental silhouettes that were first conceived for use in perpetual sunlight; it has waged an unending war against the sea by devices of its own invention – the ‘maritime tribunes,’ the works of masonry, the *murazzi* – and finally, it has seen the overwhelming preference of its painters for landscape, for the green depths of forest and mountain that lay so close at hand in the Carnic Alps. (Focillon 1992: 150)

What is true of Venice represents the charm and the singularity of every other city, each one of which combines a number of very important milieus. It is precisely at the intersection of these coexisting milieus that a strange element resonates in a new way, according to new relations and new territorial counterpoints. And so, the counter-curve, which will be developed in France around the thirteenth century, enters a universe that puts it in variation and proposes to it heterogeneous milieus that react on its trajectory, with unexpected tonalities. In this way, no milieu is ever simple – they are not suspended over the time that possesses and modifies them. Geography itself consists of milieus and rhythms. Milieus do not cease to clash, to slide beneath one another, as they snap up each other’s periodically repeated components.¹³

Rhythm is established at the same moment an element transposes itself from one milieu to another, and begins to oscillate between them. Rhythm designates the repetition of a term on different planes in continuous variation. How is the counter-curve going to roam around all milieus, and according to which rhythm? The coordination of milieus depends on a singular rhythm, and this testifies to the temporal character of geography. This is why, at any given moment, the components of milieus intersect in accordance with a rhythm that corresponds neither with another period nor an influence of a mimetic order. Each epoch and its region manifests an original system of world-making, precisely where all divergent milieus meet.

The Image of Thought

The Baroque, Romanesque or Gothic worlds designate a variable multiplicity of elements and lines that, each time, follow other rhythms. And what is true of architecture is equally true of interdisciplinary intersections. Art, science, philosophy do not encounter one another without causing the rise of milieus and rhythms, spaces and waves, in accordance with a non-given world that must be snatched from chaos in a semi-aleatory process, similar to the toss of a dice. The event is this: a contact or a contrast that provokes the intersection of unequal development and incompatible heterogeneous lines, in a non-chronological and ahistorical time. In a language that resonates with Deleuze's concepts, Focillon has this to say: 'This immense multiplicity of factors is in complete opposition to the harshness of determinism, into which, by breaking it down into endless action and reaction, it introduces cleavage and discord at every turn' (Focillon 1992: 156).

Variations

With each new beginning, Deleuze's philosophy ramifies and fragments itself around a question that reengages a labyrinth of problems, wherein the echo of multiplicities resonates. The conquest of multiplicities does not attempt to emulate Hegel by reducing the totality of the real to a uniform play of the one and the many, the same and the other. The rhizomatic logic of multiplicities leads Deleuze to a multilinear conception of thought that – far from compartmentalizing itself within autonomous sectors, and circles of circles – produces folds, pleats and lines of flight that bring aesthetics, philosophy, ethics and science together within a mobile territory.

In the encyclopaedia of a cyclopean odyssey, it is necessary to establish the lines of flight for a geographic becoming, for walk and thought, for topological courses and networks of neurons. Thought may toss the dice into the snares of fibrous material, but not according to the model of exemplification. The mobility of the ritornello and its power of propagation do not follow the repetition of examples. Rhythm and milieu in architecture do not designate a model whose examples are philosophy and painting. There are architectural, literary and philosophical ritornellos without common borders.¹ The rhythm of music is not the rhythm of poetry or philosophy and the places it travels to do not share the same nature. Thought, no less than architecture, counts its own spheres and dynamisms. Each philosophy establishes a rhythm, releases a spiritual automaton in a purely descriptive material and may correspond to the rhythms of music, painting or architecture. But in all these domains, we do not come across a logic of exemplification at work. The example, the 'side game' (*Beispiel*) that Hegel invokes at the beginning of the *Phenomenology of Mind*, is not a good concept. '*Beispiel*', translated by Jean Hyppolite as 'example', has no business in a sedentary game. There is movement in it, a movement of recuperation and encoding that plays the universal capitalism game. *Beispiel* is a game of economic imperialism that includes restoring the wealth of alterity to the kingdom of mobile identity. This identity divides and propagates

itself while keeping the principles of its measure and the identity of its function. In fact, *Beispiel* designates the institution of a game that never changes its rules during the course of its development. From this vantage point, dialectics produces the principles of a mobile identity that continues despite its displacements – a *now* that maintains itself as it changes place and content, a movement of homogeneous territorialization. *Beispiel*, whose infinite power of reappropriation is unfolded by Hegel, is the setting for every imperialist totalization that takes ‘hold of the true’ (*Wahrnehmung*). What interests Hegel is the wealth of displacement, and displacement is economy through circulation. The Hegelian *Beispiel* determines a ‘now’ that advances through maintenance, a now that is ‘a simple entity which remains in its otherness, what it is; a Now which is any number of Nows’ (Hegel 1931: 157). From this perspective, difference is the capital of the identical, the numerical qualification of ‘nows’ in a single ‘now’.

In taking ‘hold of the true’ Hegel becomes intrigued by the logical inventory for the wealth of alterity – the wealth of Parmenides’ stable being – a kingdom of mobile identity.² The Hegelian now, as opposed to the regime of the Parmenidean immediacy, can, according to a process of capitalization, displace itself while maintaining the principle of its metrics. It displaces itself while ‘maintaining/now-ing’ itself (*Aufhebung*). It is the style of maintaining that, in being-other, remains the same while carrying difference in its essence. But then, contrary to the Hegelian ‘now’, the ritornello and the toss of dice relate to a game that displaces itself as it invents new rules at each stage: deterritorialization! The ideal game that Deleuze reveals in Nietzsche’s neighbourhood reveals an unprecedented power of metamorphosis – a movement of decoding and a becoming that one cannot simply bring against *Beispiel*.

With Deleuze, we must distinguish two versions of multiplicity that, as soon as they become entangled, start over, but through differentiation rather than opposition. It is in Riemann’s work that Deleuze discovers the concept for multiplicity. Riemann had wanted to demonstrate that space is not the only known magnitude and that, rather than grounding all other magnitudes, space itself had to be explicated on the basis of the notion of multiplicity. There exists a multi-dimensional magnitude susceptible to different metric connections – a multiplicity for which space is only one determination among many. Rather than thinking of magnitudes as extended under given conditions, Riemann proposed to produce the concept of a multi-dimensional magnitude, with space as one of those dimensions.

This is why the general propositions of geometry cannot be deduced from the concept of magnitude unless, from among all possible magnitudes, we make the effort to distinguish the determinations for the specificity of extension. One cannot construct an adequate representation of space unless one has a criterion that repairs different modes of determination within a variety of n dimensions. In his monograph on the hypotheses as foundations for geometry Riemann examines the different metric connections brought about by a variety of n dimensions (Riemann 1968: 280–97).

But as soon as the existence of a multiplicity of magnitudes is accepted – space being one case only – the essential problem becomes one of establishing a passage through all determinations, with the help of a method that can organize them all on the basis of rigorous connections. To this effect, Riemann considers two forms of connection between modes of determination – two ways to cross all dimensions of magnitude. Depending on whether or not it is possible to travel from one dimension to another in a continuous manner, magnitudes would form a continuous or a discrete variety. In the order of discrete varieties, the comparison between the elements that produce a magnitude does not pose a particular problem, since one can always list and count its elements. On the other hand, if the measurement involves superimposing magnitudes in order to compare them, it becomes necessary for every situation to establish a method of bringing the magnitude that serves as the standard to bear upon all the others. But according to Riemann, the means to accomplish this feat are not available to all continuous varieties. We can only compare magnitudes of a continuous variety if one magnitude is part of another, so that we can determine the largest and the smallest; but, then, we are not able to establish numerical relations.

In other words, we encounter magnitudes that are free of every metric determination, magnitudes that do not exist independently of their position and so can no longer be explained through a unit, but only as regions that are internal to the variation. If every variation is definable in terms of n determinations, then these determinations will either remain independent of their positions or, conversely, they will depend on them. Indeed, we can always compare the magnitude of a vertical line stretching between two points to that of a horizontal line stretching between two others. But in this type of transposition, the multiplicity remains metric and its determinations include comparable magnitudes. On the other hand, a comparison like this is not possible between different parts of a continuous multiplicity.

We cannot compare two magnitudes – one belonging to a space of zero curvature, and the other, to a space of 1 or -1 curvature. From one space to the other, we confront another geometric system. This is why we cannot transpose a given figure from one plane to another without deforming it. A figure would modify and transform itself as it crosses dimensions whose arc in the curvature – the tensor – is not of an analogous degree. Put otherwise, we cannot separate metric determinations from the singular intensity and *curvature* that make them possible. In each case, the magnitude depends on the degree of curvature and one does not go from a plane to a sphere without first adopting a new metric. Then it is the non-metric intensity, the degree of curvature or tensor that makes the metric, and not the inverse. It is the intensity of the curvature that determines a suitable geometry that allows us to change a magnitude or quantity.

As Deleuze says, it is not possible to compare two sounds of different intensities and of equal pitch with two sounds of different heights and of equal intensity unless one designates part of itself to the other, and their magnitudes are clearly inseparable from their respective heights, for which we have no common measure (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 482–7). These two determinations can be compared only if one refers to a part of the other and only if it is clear that their magnitudes cannot be separated from their pitches, keeping in mind the fact that we have no common criterion for them. We are faced with different dimensions for a variation with no common regional border by which to determine the smallest without saying by how much. In other words, we are faced with an anexact and non-metric evaluation. Bergson said the same thing when he distinguished between qualitative and numeric, homogeneous multiplicities (see Bergson 1910: Chapter 3).

That there are determinations of magnitude that are neither metric nor spatial, but rather intensive, is precisely what Bergson has always maintained:

The multiplicity of conscious states, regarded in its original purity, is not at all like the discrete multiplicity which goes to form a number. In such a case there is, as we said, a qualitative multiplicity. In short, we must admit two kinds of multiplicity, two possible senses of the word ‘distinguish,’ two conceptions, the one qualitative and the other quantitative, of the difference between *same* and *other*. (Bergson 1910: 121)

With respect to Hegel, movement designates the play of a mobile identity that maintains its metric principles as it progresses, and

the dialectic movement refers to a logic that never alters its rules throughout its course. But this no longer applies to Bergson when he considers the variation of a continuous multiplicity. Movement, in its becoming, relates the independent magnitudes of all metric determinations, and it affects each one of them that borrows 'an indefinable colour from its surroundings' (Bergson 1910: 132). Movement also combines percepts taken in by a system of positions, as well as heterogeneous regions connected through distances that cannot be decomposed or divided without changing their nature at each step of the division. These regions of space that duration reconnects designate the anamorphic declination of a surface of variable curvatures, that is, the folding of the objectile. There is perhaps only one step, the dialectic step, from one to the multiple, and this is the step described by an external observer of the improbable race – where Achilles' hot breath and the heavy carapace of a panic-stricken turtle affront one another – the observer who stands on an infinitely divisible space and slides along the interminable intervals of a regular and discrete metric. But, of course, one can guess that behind the measured traces of the turtle, another set of steps, with each stride, reshuffle the cards of an infernal race, where, beyond all the calculations of a dumb-founded Zeno, Achilles will cross the line and, with an intrepid leap, will free the thousand folds of an objectile modulation:

To give this argument a stricter form, let us imagine a straight line of unlimited length, and on this line a material point A, which moves. If this point were conscious of itself, it would feel itself change, since it moves; it would perceive a succession; but would this succession assume for it the form of a line? . . . But how can they fail to notice that, in order to perceive a line as a line, it is necessary to take up a position outside it, to take account of the void which surrounds it, and consequently to think of space of three dimensions? If our conscious point A does not yet possess the idea of space . . . the succession of states through which it passes cannot assume for it the form of a line; but its sensations will add themselves dynamically to one another and will organize themselves, like the successive notes of a tune by which we allow ourselves to be lulled and soothed. In a word, pure duration might well be nothing but a succession of qualitative changes, which melt into and permeate one another, without precise outlines . . . without any affiliation with number: it would be pure heterogeneity. (Bergson 1910: 104)

Achilles or the turtle – two observers A and A' – who develop their *ritornellos* by locating the flexible points in their immediate vicinity, but who cannot, without changing the rules, find their own bearings

with respect to one another. They are both engaged in an intensive becoming that affects space according to speeds and differentiated thresholds that join positions and vicinities in an ensemble of distances that cannot be decomposed. And in this race that invites walk and thought to adopt an aparallel rhythm, every region they tread upon is coordinated with the previous ones, so that with each new addition the whole is modified much like a musical phrase ‘which is constantly on the point of ending and constantly altered in its totality by the addition of some new note.’ (Bergson 1910: 106)

A ritornello is not a homogeneous line; it is a broken one that does not suppress disjunctions while in the process of identifying the fragments of the world. The ritornello designates the surveillance of an indivisible distance, of a distance that does not divide itself without redistributing the regions and connections it organizes. Under its rhythm, space fragments itself into irreducible splinters that are affirmed by their new distances, each one of which is modified through the displacement of those involved, as is the case with Albertine’s kiss:

Albertine’s face is at first a nebula, barely extracted from the collective of girls. Then her person disengages itself, through a series of views that are like distant personalities, with Albertine’s face jumping from one plane to another as the narrator’s lips draw nearer her cheek. At last, within the magnified proximity, everything falls apart like a face drawn in sand. (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 69)

Here, every degree of distance modifies the connection of terms that it integrates in compliance with new relations of proximity. Albertine’s kiss unfolds as it goes through n heterogeneous dimensions and intensive magnitudes that can no longer be numerically expressed. This variety of n dimensions endlessly transforms itself in other multiplicities and in a string of disjunctive planes. With this in mind, the narrative ‘I’ that travels through this space that is capable of being modulated is only one mobile point of view, a threshold and a becoming between two multiplicities. Albertine’s kiss suggests a rhythmic course along which there is a string of frames and borders, by which the multiplicity changes dimensions. The multiplicities that Deleuze creates in each of his books transform themselves by their border – the string of edges that, each time, determines the number of their dimensions, spread out on a single surface, with their borders connected and tracing a broken line.³

Deleuze substitutes a system of distances for magnitudes that

cannot be divided without having their nature modified – veritable enveloping differences whose metric constantly varies – anywhere from packs, to ritornellos or ossuaries, etc. These non-metric multiplicities develop variable dimensions and, as a result, one cannot assign them an exact magnitude or a common unit for their coordination. It is true that a rhythm can attempt to cross them, but it does not pass through these dimensions without changing measure or tempo or without losing its fixed and homogeneous values – in other words, continuous variation! This is why variations like these determine affects more than properties. Intensive magnitudes are riddled with affects, each one of which develops its particular affect. The question is, which affects are in the two faces that intersect, then embrace one another or reject each other? Which affects for colours meeting each other, or for temperatures being added to each other?

It is enough to hold wax near fire to observe transformations that only unlimited patience could catalogue. The wax itself demands a certain patience and deliberate measured pace to make the articulations that it espouses tangible as it changes. To warm a body is always to augment the agitation of atoms and to shatter the crystalline network whose rigidity it shares. When heat is at a sufficient temperature, the atoms break the bonds that unite them. Under the effect of thermal energy, the wax melts and rapidly vaporizes, releasing hydrogen and carbon atoms into a field of directionless vectors. The bonds that hold the atoms in a network are of an electro-magnetic nature and as such they depend on a determined force. Aside from the electro-magnetic force, as it rises, heat discovers new forces. Heat is a thermal elevator that opens its doors at superimposed floors. At a certain intensity, heat will break electro-magnetic connections. The electro-magnetic force is a specific dimension of matter: it releases a particular world of solids and liquids. As we rise with the thermal elevator we collide with other forces and with other worlds. Beyond a certain threshold, thermal agitation will release a new force. The bonds that had combined atomic particles to form a nucleus will themselves break apart, and the electro-magnetic force will surrender the step to the nuclear force. In breaking the nuclear bond, heat releases a new world – the universe of quarks – producing particles united by the novel quarkian force that holds them inside the nucleon. At higher temperatures, we will likely encounter another floor of matter whose force would be beyond our imaginations.

Matter establishes a layered structure, with a new force on each layer that animates itself and possesses its domain of specific activity.

Passing from electro-magnetic to quarkian force through a nuclear one, matter presents levels of organization that are incompatible with the previous ones. After its augmentation, is it still the same wax? Descartes' question, formulated in the second *Meditation*, is perhaps not well presented. When there is change, the wax is not able to sustain itself and to maintain its alleged identity. Surely, heat contributes something! Heat does not divide itself without changing its nature at each of its thresholds; it carries the wax along both a becoming and a variation that make it cross multiple dimensions as they metamorphose it. Unless we strip the wax of its proper affects – of the patience that articulates all the power within it – we have to recognize that with respect to heat, wax is slowly consumed and, as we wait, it becomes volatilized and dissipates into atoms of carbon and hydrogen, establishing a new dimension of matter. As for the extension, it is no longer the same when one passes from solid to liquid and from liquid to gas. We might strip space of the qualities that distort it; but even in this case, the wax passes through dimensions and orders of magnitude that do not belong to the same geometry.

In microscopic physics, the geometric outlines become blurred and the magnitudes are no longer metric. There would be no sense then in defining an electron in terms of volume, and no sense in following the discrete language of measurement. Now we come up against an intensive dimension whose quanta can no longer express themselves through a standard for homogeneous measurement. In going from the molar to the molecular, one passes by dimensions whose parts no longer overlap. These are incommensurable dimensions, no more susceptible to numerical relations, because we do not have a standard that can be applied from one to another. Descartes is not sensitive to the patience necessary for matter to animate itself by itself as it follows a multiplicity of n dimensions:

Patience, patience
Patience in the sky-blue!
Every atom of silence
Is the chance for a ripe fruit.⁴

Paul Valéry's poetic formula successfully points out that we cannot separate matter and its geometric determinations from the affect that traces matter's incommensurable dimensions. As always, there is the question of speed and slowness. Continuous multiplicities are inseparable from the speed at which their dimensions are travelled

through. As Deleuze says, the acceleration or deceleration of a movement entails incalculable consequences, while determining the intensive elements that vary in nature according to movement or heat. As the theatre for all metamorphoses, the intensive quantity unfolds the world as an embryo, with respect to differing speeds and affects. In fact, the embryo takes on movements that are not viable for the species, overflowing species' limits and expressing differential relations, which virtually preexist the species' actualization. The extraordinary embryonic torsion of the turtle's neck experiences connections, all of which will not be actualized in its individuated existence. These are more or less intense movements that distribute singularities at each acceleration or deceleration, and that otherwise leave behind an ensemble of virtual configurations irreducible to the species to which the constituted individual belongs. The embryo of the turtle cuts across all the species it encounters, according to a particular speed and a particular fold (Deleuze 1994: Chapter 5).

The same goes for the first few moments of the universe after its initial explosion. At first, everything happens too quickly and this impatience is not without consequence for the behaviour of matter. At these beginnings, the universe behaves as if it were a very dense soup with particles that aimlessly move in all directions, reaching and capturing other particles, thereby establishing a doublet of heavy hydrogen. As intensity lessens, temperature stabilizes this link for new possibilities of capture to be released. But under the constraints of the initial explosion – the big bang – the expansion of matter will engender a cool down that is too rapid. The universe stratifies itself; there is no longer enough heat to continue the activation of nuclear mechanisms. The first few seconds of the expansion are marked by impatience and a celerity that blocks the play of nuclear synthesis. The capacity for connections between nucleons being too powerful, everything becomes solidified in hydrogen and helium and the system of double capture closes in on itself.⁵ The speed of nuclear combinations will have been too large, and nothing else will happen in the order of the nucleo-synthesis, making it necessary to wait for a protracted period before, from the depths of stars, matter climbs back up the ladder of temperature in order to reactivate the process of nuclear captures. Matter becomes increasingly complex as it crosses all the dimensions of temperature. Each one of these thresholds releases a new play of forces, electro-magnetic, gravitational, etc. Heat is an intensive magnitude incapable of dividing itself into layers, without also promulgating a new distribution of forces on

each one of its layers. For gravity to enter into the play, a great deal of patience is needed – all the time necessary to realize the predominance of massive matter on the radiation that released the extremely high temperatures. The universe, by which everything was consumed by radiation, becomes even more substantial as it loses its heat.

Another force, one very different from those preceding it, corresponds with this latest threshold of the thermal elevation that would usher in gravitational force. Curiously, gravity will allow all the dimensions of matter to reactivate by introducing a new intensification of temperatures. As they contract, a large amount of matter will emerge from the homogeneous fluid that represented the cosmos in its electro-magnetic state. This condensation will prevent universal cooling, whilst the continuous contraction of the stellar masses will create unprecedented energies. As they contract, stars will become hotter and hotter as they ascend the thermic curve, until they pass the ten-million-degree mark. At a star's core, matter inversely climbs back up the various levels of heat. At each level, it redistributes itself in accordance with a new distribution of singularities, a flow of singularities taken in a multi-dimensional toss of the dice.

Therefore, in the backwards crossing of n dimensions of heat, a star continues the nucleo-synthesis aborted by the initial explosion, under an expansion whose speed was too great. The original blast may have lasted several minutes, but the stars' centres would require immeasurable endurance – millions of years – to reheat. From one rhythm to the next, everything changes in nature. Another speed, a measured slowness, prepares the galactic boiling pot – possessing a fortitude without which the universe would have botched the development of carbon.

Clearly, the evolution of the universe is made on several diverse rhythms. The speed of its flow or its contraction is not a superfluous phenomenon. One does not accelerate such a process without substantially modifying the game of complexity. Speed and slowness, therefore, are not accidental factors that would oppose an intelligible expanse, and heat cannot be reduced to the game of a homogeneous, extensive magnitude, as Descartes assumed:

I observed as a result that nothing whatever belongs to the concept of body except the fact that it is something which has length, breadth and depth and is capable of various shapes and motions; moreover, these shapes and motions are merely modes which no power whatever can cause to exist apart from body. But colours, smells, tastes and so on, are, I observed, merely certain sensations which exist in my thought, and are

as different from bodies as pain is different from the shape and motion of the weapon which produces it. And lastly, I observed that heaviness and hardness and the power to heat . . . consist solely in the motion of bodies, or its absence, and the configuration and situation of their parts. (Descartes 1986: 113)

To reiterate, for Descartes, heat, weight and hardness designate simple geometric configurations raised against the background of a homogeneous expanse that cannot alter its form. For this reason, the wax remains the same after its qualitative change, to the extent that, whatever its thermal state, it can always refer its variation to an absolute space. Its coefficients of speed, heat and hardness are taken from a metric order, whose division does not imply any essential modification. In fact, in no way do thermal intensity and the speed of qualitative transformations alter the game of actions and shapes arranged by the intelligible extension. But, even if we were able to refer everything to measurable magnitudes, it would still be doubtful that, from one thermal threshold to another, we would still be contending with the same expanse, as if space were in some way uniform and its form unchangeable.⁶

Perhaps it is not intensity that grounds itself in extension, but rather the contrary – in varying its own distances and thresholds, intensity unfolds irreducible spaces and heterogeneous dimensions. From this perspective, extension can no longer account for the individuations that occur within it, because it is itself the outcome of a disparity whose intensity designates the differential element – the broken thread of a nomadic distribution. Such intensity establishes the cry that shatters space into a variety of n dimensions – the cry that propels *Difference and Repetition* to finally release the delirium of the nomadic distribution and the joys of a crowned anarchy on numerical individuation. We must thank Deleuze for having hoisted the intensive magnitude to the level of a philosophic category that distinguishes it from absolute quantity and quality. Between quantity and quality – namely, in their middle – there is now intensity.

Since his book on Bergson, Deleuze's philosophy has become one of multiplicities that endeavours to follow the sinuous comings and goings of intensity. Intensity, for Deleuze, is not really a quantity, but it is not a quality either. It designates difference in quantity; in other words, that which, in the order of magnitudes, remains unequalizable, or can be equalized only on the condition that it will be able to change dimensions like a number that passes from natural integers into fractions, from fractions into irrationals and from irrationals

into complexes, encounters problems along the lines of an inequality that forces it to change its dimension, from straight line to plane, and from plane to complex surfaces. Within quantity, intensity establishes the problem that places it in variation – an inequality capable of leading to new numeric determinations. In Q, the fraction harbours the impossibility of rendering the relationship of two magnitudes equal to a whole number, and if R permits us to solve the problem of this equalization, we are bound to encounter a new inequality in it, since the irrational number exposes the difficulty for any two magnitudes of contemplating a common aliquot to equalize their relations. And if we move to C, we are faced with different roots for the same term, without having a criterion to direct our choice. If the intensity indicates what is not the subject of annulment in the difference of quantity, we are justified in thinking of it as the quality suited to quantity, in which case it will be possible to qualify the realm of quantity.

However, even if intensity cannot be divided and cannot preserve the same metrical principles as an extensive quantity, it is not indivisible in the same way as quality. In the realm of intensity, a temperature is not composed of temperatures, it is not a ‘now’ comprising ‘many nows’ in a dialectical manner. On the contrary, temperature and its intense patience signify the difference – a difference that is not composed of differences of the same value, but one that implicates series of terms in perpetual heterogeneity. Contrary to qualities, intensity can be divided, but in doing so, it liberates new powers. However, it cannot be divided without changing its nature. Qualities possess much more stability or immobility than one would suppose. Without intensity, it would be difficult to imagine the transformation of one quality into another. It is in playing on the intensities that qualities fade into one another. Intensities present a way of affecting quantity as they modify the quality, a ‘blending’ of sorts that combines figures without a common border. Intensity designates a universal ‘blend’ of intervals and landings, an interstitial place where distances are patiently linked in accordance with a continuous variation or a game of conjunctions and disjunctions, in the heart of a strange depth – *flat* and yet graduated. Intensity designates the continuous movement of a telephoto lens that crosses several separate levels – a movement that makes us jump from one plane to another possessing nebulous zones, more or less distant according to the degree of magnification – Albertine’s kiss. Intensity defines a flat depth in its entirety, superimposing incommensurable strips and segments on a deformed

surface. The foreground and the background of this surface touch one another so that the smallest retreat of the lens (zoom) determines significant modifications.⁷

In borrowing a distance of this nature, Achilles' trajectory will no longer exist as a uniform line, and from one location to another it will cross heterogeneous levels that add to each other in a dynamic fashion – the way successive notes of a melody cannot be de-composed in a succession of intensive changes that are founded and co-imbricated without precise contours; namely, a depth of field. And, as Deleuze correctly observes, depth never designates an extension, but, rather, determines a pure '*implex*'. Indeed, if all depths contain a possible length and width, these possibilities will be realized only thanks to the very short displacement of the telephoto lens, each advancement of which reorganizes all the component elements upon a flat surface. 'Zooming' in fact crosses a small space: it develops a thin depth whose metamorphosis is lived in intensity on a trajectory that cannot be decomposed.

If extension cannot be formed without composing different relations such as left–right, high–low, above–below, then these spatial organizations are brought about by a displacement in depth that places the system in continuous variation. Depth is not added to length and width, to height and weight, without modifying their articulation on the twisted line of its progression. Depth designates the very intensity of space, a tensor along the length of which are distributed games of distance and of asymmetrical relations between series of heterogeneous terms. And one is not displaced on such a depth without tangibly modifying the intervals and differences relating all elements to one another. Depth develops a graduated diagonal, whereas distances vary in dimension in accordance with an accumulation whose every supplement leads to the metamorphosis of the whole. Depth, therefore, develops a variable multiplicity of distances that envelope one another, so that it becomes difficult to travel from one to the next without recomposing the terms within a new organization.

And this outcome is exactly what is produced through a telephoto lens whose magnification varies continuously by adding or subtracting measurements of space along the line of its movement. At each high- or low-angle shot, the regions of space are curved and connected in compliance with a variable axis. The least adjustment of the lens will carry each region towards another dimension of curvature, producing new connections of parts. The telephoto lens, therefore,

develops a complex surface comprising a group of small pieces stuck together in keeping with rules that vary greatly. The depth of field designates a modulable tensor, each degree of which modifies the global manner according to which fragments are connected, with the result that neighbouring points on one of the pieces may be associated with those in another region.

Consequently, with Deleuze, one can distinguish two types of depth that are neither equivalent nor to be confused with one another in either cinema or painting. The first distributes autonomous, parallel planes that never meet. Each plane follows its own order, without interfering with the others. But, also, everything changes when the elements of one plane are connected directly with the elements of another. In this case, depth will tunnel the surface from within, and bend its dimensions according to different curvatures. The high- and low-angle shots will then bring about the same objects along dimensions they do not traverse without being subjected to violent and aberrant transformations that are in line with a no longer Euclidean geometry. 'At this moment, depth becomes depth of field, whilst the dimensions of the foreground take on an abnormal size, and those of the background are reduced, in a violent perspective which does even more to unite the near and the faraway' (Deleuze 1989a: 107).

And so, doubling the depth with wide-angled lenses allows Orson Welles to put the enormous magnitudes of the first plane in relation with a background that cannot be reached without crossing an intensive diagonal that frees other distances in each of its thresholds. This occurs to the extent that, from one plane to another, it is not the same object that is homogeneously restored to neighbouring regions. And this peregrination of the object, as it crosses a variety of n dimensions, describes mutations that testify to the power of time, rather than the power of a metric determination: 'In this freeing of depth which now subordinates all other dimensions we should see not only the conquest of a continuum but the temporal nature of this continuum: it is a continuity of duration which means that the unbridled depth is of time and no longer of space' (Deleuze 1989a: 108).

In this way, we must imagine the same face – that of Albertine – carried along the depths of a complex plane that superimposes dimensions and deforms it each time through topological transformations whose movement is subject to the form of pure time. As Bergson says, one does not follow a diagonal of this nature in the way that one would follow a homogeneous line. In fact, in order to perceive a uniform straight line where depth increases, it is necessary to be placed

in a realm of magnitudes independent of setting and position, and to consider a space of constant curvature. In reality, a displacement ('zoom') in depth generates colliding and telescoping between incommensurable planes on which a term could be ramified: these are precisely the events that Bergson attributes to duration. Duration refers to a broken rhythm that runs through several superimposed planes – a rhythm by which logically contradictory terms blend together, as if in a dream. Pure duration, therefore, would be nothing but 'a succession of qualitative changes that found it, that penetrate it without precise contours . . . without any relationship with the number'. Now, the telephoto lens associated with wide angles is precisely what carries Orson Welles along a thin or short depth, the smallest wide-angle shot of which subjects itself to pure time as it crosses superimposed layers, each one of which includes the same points taken in other relations and under an arc of different curvatures.

Surfaces of this nature, that is, surfaces of variable geometry, were thematized by Riemann in his dissertation on *The hypotheses that function as the foundation of geometry*. In fact, we can consider different varieties of surfaces. On a curving surface, figures do not behave the way they would on a plane. Geometry of space may vary from one point to another according to the curvature of the given surface. There are at least three distinct geometries depending on the curvature in question. A figure with right angles on a Euclidean plane of zero curvature cannot be placed on a hyperbolic surface of curvature -1, without its angles becoming acute; and if we go to an elliptical plane, we will be confronted by obtuse angles. Obviously, we can assign a metric of constant curvature to each one of these surfaces, but this metric will not remain the same from one to the other. And this is why it is impossible to transpose a figure of one plane onto the next without deforming it.

Thus, for example, any cylindrical or conic surfaces would be considered equivalent to a plane, because they can be applied to it by means of a simple flexion. In this operation, their intrinsic metric relationships remain invariable and all the propositions that regard these relationships – in other words, the entire planimetry – continue to subsist. On the contrary, these surfaces are essentially non-equivalent to the sphere, which cannot be transformed without extension onto a plane (Riemann 1990: 290–1).

Truth be told, this is a strange nomadism. One and the same figure can be moved from the cylinder to the cone and from the cone to the

plane, without altering the principles of its metric. Its erratic movement, its migration from one plane to another, changes nothing in the form that defines it. The figures can be moved without suffering any extension. But, frankly, from the plane to the sphere, movement becomes nomadic in a space of continuous variation that proceeds from space to space, following a metamorphosis of metrics, a topological transformation, and a manner of being in space, which is very different from the sedentary manner – namely, geometric mannerism! Here, all forms assume new postures. Surfaces of constant curvature can be traversed without suffering extension and can receive forms capable of being displaced without deformation. But this is no longer possible with the measurements of heterogeneous curvatures. Indeed, a relationship between two magnitudes is general only if these magnitudes are from similar dimensions and have the same tensorial character. But from the plane to the sphere, the tensor will not be of the same order and the forms will necessarily suffer sensible deformations.

Riemann had the idea to make a figure vary upon spaces of different curvatures, in order to expose them to circumstances of incommensurable dimensions, transferring a part of Euclidean space on an elliptical space by means of a topological transformation. Riemann makes parts of space traverse a surface of n dimensions in compliance with a strange voyage in the same place. From the plane to the cone and from the cone to the sphere, one and the same part of space leaps in place as it crosses all the degrees of the curvature. This intensive crossing can be compared to the way in which one fashions a car's fender, beginning with a flat piece of metal that one bends and presses in order to give it a new arc of curvature. Neighbouring points situated on a region of the metallic, flat sheet must be aligned with those situated on other regions, so that the pieces may be angled as much as one wishes, while preserving the neighbouring relations. In other words, the topology of each piece will be that of a small fragment of the Euclidean plane, but the global means to reconnect them will no longer be of the same curvature. It is a migration such as this, through superimposed planes and variable curvatures, that composes the event, liberating a toss of the dice to incessant modulations within a sphere of folded contour. From literature to painting and from architecture to geometry, we rediscover that marching in place is capable of unfolding a poetics of multiplicities in slashing to pieces the figures and the forms along the unstable line of continuous variation.

Poetics of Multiplicities

Deforming figures and forms, positioning the body for a leap in the same place, and preparing it to be ramified in a depth of dimensions of variable superimposed curvatures is a singular operation, entirely extended towards a horizon of visibility with unstable contours. Philosophy cannot be separated from the madness of sight, from the decomposition of all forms carried off by a modulable lens – an optical lens where shadows are lengthened and co-imbricated, refined and entangled as if riding an infernal carousel. For Deleuze, philosophy is a method of vital rectification, an anamorphosis imposed only after a torsion places the curvature into variation from which blocks of space-time are being removed (Deleuze 1988b: 13). The philosopher, therefore, is a member of the race of clairvoyants – with steely eyes, and a diagrammatic and discerning ear placed at the service of hearing the imperceptible. He mobilises a new articulation of faculties in perpetual heterogeneity and a discordant accord by means of which an eye hears where a thought touches its concepts with the eyes of the mind. These are incandescent eyes, charged with sensibility and tact that seize the world bodily, decomposing and recomposing it along a depth that Deleuze defines as a body. This is smooth and shiny body without organs, a body on which things are lit up, touched, and thought, with eyes and ears whose percepts can be translated and transposed through anamorphosis or topological transformation. From the eye to the mind, there is becoming, modification of curvature – a third eye!

The purpose of demonstration functioning as the third eye is not to command or even to convince, but only to shape the glass or polish the lens for this inspired free vision. ‘You see, to me it seems as though the artists, the scientists, the philosophers were grinding lenses. It’s all a grand preparation for something that never comes off. Someday the lens is going to be perfect and then we’re all going to see clearly, see what a staggering, wonderful, beautiful world it is. . .’ (Henry Miller) (Deleuze 1988b: 14).

Deleuze discovers this anamorphosis, not only in Spinoza, but everywhere else – in cinema, theatre, architecture, and especially in

his encounters with painting. In fact, the book he devotes to Bacon emphasizes this optical geometry where the eye crosses levels of sensibility, each one of which modifies our perception by means of a creative deformation. Sensation constitutes a multiplicity that transports bodies along various sensible dimensions, characterized by extensions and unbearable transformations at each of its thresholds. And so, each sensation has sensitive, superimposed orders that a body encounters under the strength of new forces and new tensors, and in accordance with postures that fold and contract it. How can a body become involuted as it traverses the depths of sensation? By this question, we do not require a description of the body's process as it develops historically. We do not ask how a body changes position in terms of breadth and length, nor with what it exchanges its gestures, its smiles, or its sentiments. Rather, we ask how a body changes position in terms of depth. Sensation is the theatre of metamorphosis – a cruelty where one single figure is shown on dissimilar, sensitive and fibrous levels. Bacon strives to make the degrees of fall, curvature and rhythm visible. And this visibility – as it drives the body to its depths and causes the eye to touch the dimensions that contract or dilate it – is no longer narrative.

According to Deleuze, narration develops on one level of sensation only (Deleuze 2003: 8, 32–3). It institutes a plane without curvature, where bodies are penetrated and intertwined in keeping with an order of homogeneous relations. Commensurable relations are woven between two bodies or two figures, and a story is interpolated that represents the entanglement of actions and reactions, as well as their exchanges and communications. Narration, on the other hand, with its organic plot, never accedes to an in-depth mixture. It is incapable of following the unrepresentable movement of sensation, the drop of a body onto itself, or its displacement in intensity that triggers mutations and metamorphoses through continuous variation. To render visible the movement of the body on itself through inorganic levels of sensibility, or to follow the peregrination of the body without organs – organs that are not the essence but rather the event – is not done without risk. In this sense, Bacon's undertaking cannot be distinguished from a catastrophe, or from a caesura that marks the stuttering, or the leap at the same place consistent with all poetics. *The Logic of Sensation* is the means by which Deleuze approaches the investigation of a very particular poetics that owes nothing to narratology, which is founded on the process of the metaphor or on the metrical organization of *mythos*.

Indeed, Bacon's painting is never measured by the principles of what is represented. It is not developed at the heart of homogeneous space that grants the order of the figurable or the refigurable. Bacon does not paint the forces that bend bodies without first pondering over that which is impeded on the plane of figurative representation. In other words, the construction of the figure or the figural is not realized without first considering the usual metrics of figuration. It is true that figuration is satisfied with the production or reproduction of recognizable forms, and with its transposition to a plane of objects that evolve in a three dimensional space. This is why, when transferring forms of space to a plane, these forms do not suffer from either a transfiguration, a sensitive variation, or variable sensation. Common sense reigns in the realm of the represented, and the displacement of forms does not cause any sensible surprise in the play of faculties. Instead of a transfiguration of figures under another use of faculties and another kind of agreement, pictorial representation is a simple operation of refiguration. From this point of view, the double axis of the frame imposes a structure of locations, a metrical rule that realizes the transcription of forms on another scale of magnitude. This transcription – that respects the metrics of forms in their positional change as it leads them from a space external to the painting to orthonormal space on the canvas – this transposition establishes the pre-pictorial moment of all paintings. Relating all visible forms to the axes of a plane, dividing visible space into an exchange of places in order to inscribe all data on a surface that respects the relations – a procedure of this nature designates the very foundation of representation, and the first step of figuration. But there is something else in Bacon. It may be that Bacon often starts with a photograph as the first figurative act, and that he lifts his figures from an orthonormal space – a space without curvatures. Nevertheless, the event of painting cannot be reduced to these decisions.

Rather, the work of this great painter is defined by his original method of integrating space into the movement of a fold that can be modulated. This anamorphic treatment of figures was already present in Renaissance painting. But in this epoch, above all else, painting was intended to position the deformation in a corner of the artwork, surrounded by the circumference of a thick, insurmountable frame. Remember the convex mirrors that double the space of the visible in Van Eyck's work. Intersecting objects and sensible qualities are subjected to a curvature capable of inflecting them, the way that Holbein tries to deform the perspectives of the skull. Here, a lens is already

stretching the silhouettes to a torsion that renders them unrecognizable and brings them to the limits of the normal order of our faculties, which are subject to the operation of recognition. However, this minute micrography does not occupy the entire canvas. Its extension is carefully limited by the exterior border of the mirror, a frame that protects the rest of the work from the anamorphic fold.

But for Bacon, this fold pervades the canvas entirely, through a double figuration – one beginning with the cliché and the orthonomic space, and the other ending with the elaboration of the figure, under a form of sensibility for which common sense (*sensus communis*) cannot account. Nevertheless, Bacon persists in his attempt to extract the figure from a space of curvature = 0 (the space of representation) for a space of variable geometry, so that every form suffers a sensible metamorphosis, whose arrangement is accessible only to a new form of sensibility and to a new apparatus of faculties. And these two moments of figuration are not commensurable: metamorphosis and transfiguration are neither refigurations nor deductions. There is no historical evolution from Holbein to Bacon. We find in both a similar trait of expression, albeit otherwise developed, on different levels of *depth* and in accordance with other degrees of distance. Be that as it may, a figure undergoes deformations that can no longer belong to the metrics of figurative representation. Between two spaces of heterogeneous curvature, forms themselves begin to bifurcate as they leap on the same spot across the otherwise inflected layers.¹ The figures that Bacon liberates establish vague essences that straddle many dimensions of the curvature and extend between irreducible spaces. From this perspective, the peregrination of a form along a variety of *n* dimensions is comparable to a topological deformation: a manner of creating resemblances with non-resembling means. Consider, for example, a triangle removed from a plane with inflection = 0 to a surface whose arc varies between 1 and -1 – in other words, a triangle ramified within a layered space as it leaps from one plane to another with sometimes obtuse and sometimes acute angles – namely, a becoming on the spot!

For example, a mouth: it will be elongated, stretched from one side of the head to the other. For example, the head: part of it will be cleared away with a brush, broom, sponge, or rag. This is what Bacon calls a 'graph' or a *Diagram*: it is as if a Sahara, a zone of the Sahara, were suddenly inserted into the head; it is as if a piece of rhinoceros skin, viewed under a microscope, were stretched over it; it is as if the two halves of the head were split open by an ocean; it is as if the unit of measure were changed,

THIRD VARIATION

and micrometric, or even cosmic, units were substituted for the figurative unit. (Deleuze 2003: 82)

Here, geometry becomes sensed, and follows sense's stammering. For a tensor, each surface has an accidental degree of sensibility and a unique metric. Left to the arbitrary sensations and spasms – affects – surfaces contort while carrying figures to their lines of hysteria in order to liberate new percepts and to produce a rhythm that shifts from macro-metric to micro-metric, a variation to which divergent postures are connected – namely, a concept. This is why, according to Deleuze, form reveals the event and no longer the essence, the modulation and no longer the substance, becoming and no longer being. And this is already what is done in Van Gogh. *Café de Nuit*, *La Chambre à Arles*, *Café, le soir* unfold a space where objects are contorted in accordance with an accelerated perspective. Here, one never moves from one essence to another, or from one form to another, but rather it is the same form that borrows a diagram containing all the degrees of the curvature and juxtaposes them virtually. We have, therefore, one and the same form spanning a surface of n dimensions, extended along different arcs of inflection – an event, a fork, a succession of planes interspersed with unfathomable abysses. The event that translates the figure, the event named by the concept, is the thread connecting all diverging postures that impose a continuous variety. It is the movement of variation that enlayers the entire diagram of inflections that operates bodies and gestures. In any case, as Deleuze writes, there is no question here of pure form, if form is the actuality of an immobile essence. Rather, the figure of the event refers to a creation of relations that are substituted for the form, by means of a sensible and lived deformation, wherein each degree of the arc of curvature corresponds to a different exchange of faculties and another sensible agreement.

The figurative lines will be scrambled by extending them, by hatching them, that is, by introducing new distances and new relations between them, out of which the nonfigurative resemblance will emerge: 'you suddenly see through the graph (*diagramme*) that the mouth could go right across the face.' There is a diagrammatical line of desert-distance, just as there is a diagrammatical patch of gray-color, and the two come together in the same action of painting, painting the world in Sahara-gray. (Deleuze 2003: 127)

Sahara! Sahara is depth: the variation of distances along the line of depth and the nomad itinerary that causes curvatures to plunge into

the tensorial diagram, across the length of which a face stretches its mouth and, with abandonment, bloats and modifies itself like a balloon, grimacing under the crushing effect of its poles. Deleuze discovers this variation in Bacon. But this variation is already asserted in Fang's stammerings in *The Logic of Sense* – Fang = X, taken simultaneously from an infinity of worlds, in accordance with a ramified posture that crosses them as it grimaces. And it is perhaps with his book on Carmelo Bene that Deleuze covers the longest distance in his approach to a poetics of multiplicities.

The theatre of Carmelo Bene always assumes the form of a critique. The entirety of his work is permeated by a critical movement, a critical leap that exposes the theatre to his diagrammatic regime (Deleuze 1993c: 203). Like Bacon, Carmelo Bene builds his characters by beginning at representation degree zero. More often than not, it is in his work with Shakespeare that Bene finds the elements necessary for setting it in continuous variation. He is not intending to transcend Shakespeare. Rather, it is a question of confronting Shakespeare's work as a sign regime and an apparatus of visibility deposited in history – a regime extended along a new line as soon as we become attentive to its diagrammatic components. From Shakespeare's theatre to that scrutinized by Bene, one finds identical elements, albeit combined differently and in accordance with thresholds of dissimilar development. From Shakespeare to Bene, there is no evolution. Both are busily determining the same characters, as if there were several convoluted histories for similar types. Bene considers each of Shakespeare's characters as if numerous issues could be traced for each of them, as well as many possibilities that would be presented at the same time, but on different dimensions and without belonging to the same world or to the same becoming. There is the world where Mercutio's untimely death makes way for Romeo, but there is another world in which Romeo is done away with – a world that creates a plane and an extension for Mercutio to assume in an original way. And so, one can consider that Bene is integrating his characters in a plural, layered history. This is why Mercutio is divided in perpetuity, projected into a network of forking pathways. Whatever Mercutio's posture, he is forever surrounded by a halo of possibilities that render him indecisive – leaving him to stutter on the spot! Whatever he does in this world is suddenly saturated with circumstances that belong to other worlds. Bene catches Mercutio unawares in this uncertain posture, in this critical moment where he is reduced to a band of characters taken from other worlds and other circumstances.

Borges' *Fang*, Leibniz' *Sextus*, and Bene's *Mercutio* designate studded and ramified points. They remain suspended, undecided between bifurcating dimensions, surrounded by an invisible swarming and an intimate agitation, infinitely saturated with invisible characters and double secrets, bustling about other dimensions of space and time. Bene's characters, as they cross divergent postures and attitudes, are caught in a state of infinite swarming. And this fibrous instance is a singular moment where *Mercutio* is divided, a moment where he incarnates heterogeneous postures, a throng, a thick crowd of similar characters lifted from other worlds – in other words, supersaturation! And this supersaturation is Bene's real subject:

He does not proceed by addition, but by subtraction, by amputation. How he chooses the component for amputation is another question. . . . But, for example, he amputates *Romeo*, he neutralizes *Romeo* in the original play. So the whole play, because it now lacks a part chosen nonarbitrarily, will perhaps tip over, turn around on itself and land on another side. If you amputate *Romeo*, you will witness an astonishing development, that of *Mercutio*, who was no more than a potentiality in Shakespeare's play. (Deleuze 1993c: 204–5)

Thus, from Shakespeare to Bene, there is no historical genealogy. Both combine the same elements consistent with arrangements that have no descendants or filiation. The elements that Shakespeare held at some distance in secondary characters and in atrophied roles now gain a new depth and modify the relationships between what is near and what is far, based on a disjunctive synthesis and on a discordant accord of entirely foreign terms. Let us take Shakespeare's *Hamlet* as an example: it is an arrangement that coordinates harmonious relationships between commensurable elements – a metrics used under a null and constant curvature. *Romeo and Juliet* is a system of vicinities whose links are coordinated by inflection = 0. *Romeo and Juliet* = 0. Bene starts here, but without producing new dimensions and without imposing an original arc of curvature, Shakespeare does not inspire him. Indeed, by amputating *Romeo*, by cutting him out of the new play, one determines new relations of vicinities between heterogeneous regions. *Romeo and Juliet* carried to the $n-1$ dimension. From Shakespeare to Bene, there is superimposition of spaces, and proliferation of irreducible dimensions traversed by characters in variation. For Shakespeare, each character establishes a region of the theatrical plane. For Bene, this plane will be covered with a surface of variable curvatures, so that each character will be ramified or

rediscovered on other superimposed dimensions, albeit in accordance with a different form – namely, topological transposition!

Here, each character is gradually established as it crosses various degrees of curvature, and by being ramified along dimensions that deform it. And the play ends once the characters are established – with their falls and slips, their change in level and height, and when they reach the limits of their disgrace and the deformities of their forms. Each character buckles when crossing the superimposed thresholds of its own disgrace. They swell from the middle and endure stroboscopic postures. They are distributed in a stereoscopic space, and are split in their pursuit of the median fold, each degree of which releases a unique world along the thread of depth. In an instant of profound uncertainty, a character is ramified. And it saturates its gestures and statements with an impersonal din, wherein there resonate other scenes, inextricable histories, and echoes taken from other impossible worlds. As for the formulas that traverse the call of an actor, one confronts a suspension of sense, a radical indecision that establishes the forked texture of every statement:

For example, you say ‘I swear it.’ But it is not at all the same statement according to whether you make it before a tribunal, in a love scene, or as a child. And this variation affects not only the external situation, not only the physical intonation but also from within the sense, the syntax, and the phonemes. You will thus make a statement pass by way of all the variables that can affect it in the shortest space of time. The statement will be no more than the sum of its own variations, which make it escape every apparatus of power capable of fixing it and which enable it to dodge every constancy. (Deleuze 1993c: 211)

A statement designates a formula that cuts into varying universes of sense. It is a diagrammatic line in perpetual variation, a heterogenesis that marks the logic of sense. Every constant signification loses its contour in the formula, in keeping with an atrocious mixture that Deleuze qualifies as porridge – a preconceptual movement.² Every world – and all the dimensions of a variation – is simultaneously expressed by the stretched mouth that moves from one universe to another, each time in accordance with a new curvature. In fact, for Deleuze, signification is possible only when eating and talking can no longer be coordinated. This is why language has to be regarded as the deterritorialization of the mouth, tongue and teeth. Deterritorialization always designates an extension of territory to a non-territorial dimension. With respect to the mouth, this extension

determines a change of dimension through the extension of the phonological values constitutive of a signifying articulation.

To assign a non-alimentary use to the mouth is to carry it along an organic plane, coded with axes of substitution and contiguity. In other words, the tongue attempts to compensate its tensorial deterritorialization through a reterritorialization of signification. Sense is the surface = 0 of language, the surface where places and positions are distributed in support of opposition. Deterritorialization must anchor itself in sense, and discover in it signposts and invariants. However, deterritorialization, as a dimensional tension and a transposition of elements throughout a variety of n dimensions, does not stop at signifying translations. Language is a system of translations, a transport of forms not modified when changing positions from one variable to another. On the contrary, in Bene's theatre, language begins to stammer, to jump on itself in order to change dimension. Every statement passes through heterogeneous stages where one no longer retains its signification. The characters staged by Bene subsist within what can be described as a musical din – a chant not unlike *Sprechgesang* (Deleuze 1993c: 211). And this musical language retains none of the sense of the words that it utters. It becomes asignificant and asyntactical in deterritorializing sense through transposition to obtain a musical silhouette and a rhythmic, complex character – like a child who repeats a paternal word order to have it vary along a line of nonsense: 'end of the month, end of month. . .' (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 21). This ritornello, this *Sprechgesang* snapped up from sense, carries the mouth along a dimension that is no longer alimentary or signifying, and finds consistency in 'an accenting of the word, an inflection' (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 21). This is language raised to an anamorphic curvature – deterritorialized language, pulled straight by asignificant accents.

Bene's statements indicate the position of a new flexibility, where sense reaches its own limit to the extent that every statement traverses impossible levels and frequencies. Language is a multiplicity that carries us along heterogeneous dimensions. In one and the same moment, an individual traverses many languages: manifesting his paternal authority, declaring his love to the beloved, and adopting a professional language as the telephone takes him from his familial situation.³ This deterritorialization that brings an atrocious tension to language as it transfers signs across superimposed planes, this inflection on the occasion of a loss of territory, has nothing in common with the process of metaphor:

Poetics of Multiplicities

Kafka deliberately kills all metaphor, all symbolism all Signification, no less than all designation. Metamorphosis is the contrary of metaphor. There is no longer any proper Sense or figurative sense, but only a distribution of states that is part of the range of the word. The thing and other things are no longer anything but intensities overrun by deterritorialized sound or words that are following their line of escape. (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 22)

A line of flight is a line of delirium, a musical line where the voice traverses fan-shaped thresholds. In order for a concept to be born in thinned out signs, it may be necessary to direct the deterritorialization of language towards a use that no longer signifies. Obviously, theatre and literature should not be associated with philosophy. Literature, like all the arts, is the creation of anonymous percepts that set themselves dancing alone in an absolute deterritorialization. This is as true of Marcel Proust as it is of Virginia Woolf or Malcolm Lowry. But even if philosophy does not create percepts or functions, these elements resemble components of the concept as well as its neighbouring zones with which it establishes relations. Philosophy, no less than literature, travels through the expanse of words to produce its cries and its conceptual personae. Philosophy may very well proceed through sentences; nevertheless it cannot do so without subjecting language to an incomparable curvature. It is enough to open any philosophy book to stumble against a deafening rumble – a rumble that common sense confuses with gibberish, and that only the power of commentary can render acceptable. But this reterritorialization of philosophy, upon the analysis of propositions or the interpretation of metaphors, prevents us from following the concept's intense movements, because a concept is neither an acceptable proposition nor an appropriate metaphor.

Indeed, for metaphor, the gaps and transference of sense occur on one dimension only: that of refiguration. This is a transference whose semantic forms transfer locations without real extension, as is the case for a figure that makes the transition from cone to cylinder and from cylinder to plane. In each case, we have a common metrics at our disposal. There is a variation in territory but not in deterritorialization. This is why metaphor never travels from one dimension to another, whereas the concept necessarily passes through phases and incommensurable planes. The concept's movement is not divided according to species or genre, with resemblance as its measure of semantic transfers. By invoking metaphor as the authority over conceptual transfer, it does not escape the scrutiny of even the smallest

concept. And the examples that Deleuze cites in his book on philosophy are sufficiently simple to convince us.⁴ The concept is a fan-like statement, a vague essence in Husserl's sense, a lens that contracts heterogeneous planes.⁵ On the categorial mistake generated by the metaphor – as it obliterates the generic boundaries for new resemblances and, by the same token, new significations – Deleuze superimposes layered dimensions on which one cannot change locations without being subjected to profound metamorphoses. The concept posits itself, thanks only to an in-depth displacement defined by Deleuze as variation and deterritorialization.

Deterritorialization has little to do with metaphoric distance, or with the categorial transgression that satisfies itself with a deviation within an already established logical order. Such a deviation does not know the ventilation of the outside or the fold of the fan. It indicates a difference on one and the same plane and a measured transfer. Instead of the trickery that characterizes the metaphoric transgression, 'instead of limits that one overcomes', deterritorialization produces a betrayal, 'a turning away from the limit', the double turning away of an accordion's segments ramified into layered planes.⁶ The philosophical creation is inseparable from this double turning away that splits words and sentences from the middle with the introduction of a caesura in thought. The creation of the concept is anticipated by a double turning away, where the blades of a fan become dislocated and intersected at the middle. This turning away of the limit directs us to images of thought and to a noology wherein philosophy encounters forces that are not only philosophical, but also shared by science, art, ethics, and so on.⁷

The concept therefore has nothing to do with the proposition or with categorial or metaphorical logic. And this is why relations within the concept are neither intensional nor extensional, but rather relations of ordinality and of ramification.

In the concept there are only ordinate relationships, not relationships of comprehension or extension, and the concept's components are neither constants nor variables but pure and simple *variations* ordered according to their neighbourhood. . . . The concept of a bird is found not in its genus or species but in the composition of its postures, colors, and songs: something indiscernible that is not so much synesthetic as syneidetic. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 20)

The concept is movement that travels through layers as distinctive as colours, postures and songs. It is variation on a surface of *n*

dimensions, which are relatively independent; upon crossing them, it renders them indiscernible. Such an heterogeneity refers to a complex dynamism that has nothing to do with the logic of essences or of accidents or, to put it more crudely, with the apparatus of predication. The concept is a continuous variation in an asignifying and asyntactical matter that its movement ordinales through vicinities and superimpositions, and in accordance with a survey that disengages its events and episodes.

As Deleuze suggests, one must distinguish a multiplicity of components in a concept. There are generative, transformational and diagrammatic components. It is necessary, therefore, for each concept to outline a movement in which it is posited in itself, thereby replacing the concepts that precede it, in accordance with an historic prolongation that charts its outline and traces its dimension. This movement of *endo-position* designates its generative component. But a concept is not exhausted in either its history or the genealogy that risk smothering it. It continuously builds bridges near other concepts that occupy the same plane. One can therefore distinguish in every concept a second movement – a movement of lateralization – a geographic movement that helps the movement produce contours within its bordering elements, but without ever directly belonging to it. This development at the edge, this *exo-position*, is the transformational component. But a third movement is still needed to generate the concept: a movement in depth, ramifications, divisions; a movement of little thickness and of *superimposition* that determines the double turning away, the slipping away of the limit along a diagrammatic line. This is the diagrammatic component that inscribes the concept on a plane of immanence in accordance with a certain image of thought and a certain topology. Under these three movements, the concept inhabits a rhythmic, complex character that, in a unique way, intersects the spectrum of things and signs with its infinitely modulated trajectories. This complex character is the conceptual persona that moves about Deleuze's work like a nomad, the 'surfer' of the plane of immanence, and the athlete of a fanned-out universe that is swallowed up by the ground to avoid the limit and to splinter it in perpetuity.

Deleuze's philosophy, therefore, establishes the intensive diagram of a surface that can be unfolded and refolded in compliance with innumerable curvatures. At each fluttering of the fan, concepts and components of concepts are dispersed along the length of a fractal line that designates a common fold. Not only are we faced with a

THIRD VARIATION

ground, but with an anamorphic melting pot wherein regimes of diverse ordination are combined. This wild line is a plane of immanence, the contour of a layered surface where concepts connect in a lateral and transversal fashion, from step to step and from one stage to another: this is an open group of dynamisms, orientations, directions and dimensions, the conditions of a geophilosophy where concepts flash by, in keeping with a threshold of ventilation and a breath characteristic of each philosopher. If this movement of thought is subjected to time, this time will be stratigraphic and cerebral for partially determined clearings that become prolonged as they unfold their bat wings.

Crepuscular breezes blow
Their freshness out to you
As lightly each imprisoned stroke
Presses the whole horizon back.
(Mallarmé 1994: 210)

FOURTH VARIATION

Malcolm Lowry, or, the Manifesto of Things

Virginia Woolf's [dream] was for the writing to be like the line of a Chinese poem-drawing. She says that it is necessary to 'saturate every atom' and to do that it is necessary to eliminate, to eliminate all that is resemblance and analogy, but also 'to put everything into it.' . . . To be present at the dawn of the world. Such is the link between imperceptibility, indiscernibility, and impersonality – the three virtues. To reduce oneself to an abstract line, a trait, in order to find one's zone of indiscernibility with other traits, and in this way enter the haecceity and impersonality of the creator. One is then like grass: one has made the world . . . a becoming. . . . Because one has suppressed in oneself everything that prevents us from slipping between things and growing in the midst of things. . . . To succeed in getting drunk, but on pure water (Henry Miller). To succeed in getting high, but by abstention, 'to take and abstain, especially abstain.' I am a drinker of water. (Michaux)

(Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 280, 286)

The March Towards Death

‘[There are] forces in man which cause him to be terrified of himself.’ Malcolm Lowry’s declaration is what motivates his literary existence, because, in his case, literature can no longer be conceived as a biographical act that reduces life to one simple, personal expression. *Under the Volcano* unmistakably contains biographical elements, in the sense that each of these elements helps to introduce points of rupture in the orderly course of a personal life. Biographical elements are equivalent to the elements of a curve that carry the constituted subject and his or her personal history along a broken line with inflections that determine very special becomings. These becomings are precisely the sort of thing that Deleuze attempts to individuate under the name of ‘haecceity’; that is, they are processes of an impersonal singularization. ‘Biography’, therefore, means something more than a simple retrospective sequencing of personal events that affect life. Biography is actually about events, but there are two ways to approach them: the first attempts to gather, in a chronological manner, their effectuations in states of affairs, and their actualization across a personal history, in order to assign motives and incentives for actions; the other entails ascending to the event until we reach the problematic points that surround it, and the halo of singularities whose immanent direct expression it designates, as it outlines endlessly asubjective issues and possibilities for a life beyond personal effectuations. Biography can be seen as an art form that traces the core of a network of abstract lines that consciousness will never integrate into the screen of personality. Nevertheless, these abstract lines sketch a very real world, one that holds together potentialities having nothing to do with those actualized inside the personal form that characterizes man.

For Malcolm Lowry, to create literature is to test all the forces which cause man to be terrified of himself, and to sink into this infinitely saturated proliferation of a molecular turbulence, with respect to which the form ‘man’ constitutes only a secondary crystallization. To write, he says, is to erect a jetty within chaos.¹ Rather

than selecting forms that are given, it becomes a matter of being grabbed by forces that choose us and sweep us up into a whirlwind, at the centre of which new and different entities are incarnated. To write, as Malcolm Lowry reiterates, is to constitute consistent entities capable of crossing chaos in order to capture its rhythms and turbulences (Lowry 1965: 42–3, 83). Deleuze has certainly understood this, given his contact with Anglo-American literature, in the act of writing where the fearsome temptation to make life something more than personal is imposed. In this context, to be terrified of oneself, to abandon the personal form of human individuation for grand consistent entities, results in an ethics and an aesthetic that Deleuze patiently expands on in constant relation with the affects and percepts that literature experiences along its own curve. But that does not mean that Deleuze's concepts are borrowed. They have their internal necessity and they occupy a plane of immanence that only the philosopher can pluck from chaos with its bare hands. This way, the philosopher, no less than the poet, knows her terrors and her catalepsies. Indeed, we do not write books with our memory or from our personal life any more than we write in an already given world. Concepts, affects and percepts are necessarily created as one seizes a multilinear world from chaos. *A Thousand Plateaus* and *Under the Volcano* can be machined in a way that will allow an apparatus to reach consistency in order to make a world where no world had existed before. Therefore, with the help of *A Thousand Plateaus*, I too would like to construct an entity and to follow the vacillating gait of the Consul, to walk in the footsteps of a drunkard, to create a text that one writes with many others, in pursuit of roads that are yet to be invented, and that, thanks to Malcolm Lowry's experiences, would have writing stagger between death, verbal delirium and the holes of memory.

Under the Volcano is offered as a march towards death in twelve acts, each step of which discloses and designates entities that the drunken steps of the Consul reconnects – a hesitant and yet steady pace that is incorporated in the rhythm of thought. The plateau designates the surface upon which percepts and concepts are successfully extended, in accordance with a principle of asignifying rupture. It is always possible for a plateau to be broken apart, producing rifts and ravines that dislocate it at any point whatsoever; but the plateau always resumes its growth by following one of its lines upon which its expansion may be followed and modified in a thousand different ways. *Under the Volcano* can be read like a thousand plateaus, and

The March Towards Death

the original rift that spans them must be followed, along with the sizeable ravine that dislocates the plateaus and holds them together. This way, a plateau is always traced from the middle of this rift that plunges into the soil, a median fold gaining more in surface rather than depth, in the manner of a fissure that covers the expanse of a windshield. The plateau is issued from a rift that is no longer immersed in depth, and that, because of it, covers the available expanse of surface. There are no rifts that are not superficial – crust of the earth, flaky skin. There is no relation with any *Grundrisse*, if by ‘*Grund*’ we mean the ground, the turmoil of depth. It is rather a puzzle of sorts. It involves stepping over the line that runs between all plateaus, the line of flight that sets the earth’s surface into motion. One may step over this line if one wishes, but to do so requires a certain dexterity – that of the alcoholic, along with the prodigious balance of the Consul that Lowry holds in suspense, vacillating over the frightening void like a tightrope walker:

Or is it because right through hell there is a path, as Blake well knew, and though I may not take it, sometimes lately in dreams I have been able to see it? . . . I seem to see now, between mescals, this path, and beyond it strange vistas, like visions of a new life together we might somewhere lead. (Lowry 1947: 36)

Lowry’s entire novel, after all, follows the pathway that the Consul’s erratic gait traverses, a gait wrapped up in the rhythm of his thought. Thought shudders upon realizing that the rhythm of the walk has now become automatic – a thought that leaps, jumps over the dead and over ravines, rifts and cracks, in a vertiginous struggle with chaos. *Under the Volcano* is a walk that involves legs and thought moving together in a rhythm that, from one telluric plateau to another, builds new circuits for thought – topological distance and networks of neurons, earth and brain. This is why the Consul’s gait is comparable to a leisurely stroll where every point intersects chaos, producing a rhythm wherein affects, percepts and concepts are connected. It can be compared to a stroll without a fixed destination, as one follows, balanced on the edge of the sidewalk, a rhythm whose surprising task does not come from the will – a rhythm imposed on us without our being able to hum it. Without really belonging to us, this rhythm carries us to splits and divisions that become increasingly complex, and where ideas, oddly enough, follow on the heels of dancing, walking and thinking.

For Malcolm Lowry, the Consul’s movement, his stiff legs

staggering from difficulty, is connected to the spasmodic pace of a thought as straight as an *I*: redundant, cinematographic, stroboscopic, black, white, saved! lost! saved! lost! This combines the rhythm of the leisurely stroll with the murmur of an eidetic agitation, the sinuous line of the ravine along which one walks with the chain of neurons that are extended indefinitely. And this composition in twelve acts increases in intensity along the course of the Consul's wanderings, until it transcends that which human faculties are able to produce in the ordinary course of time. According to Malcolm Lowry himself, the twelve chapters of this leisurely stroll ought to be regarded as twelve independent entities – each one of which forms a continuum of intensity capable of being machined with the others to produce a multiplicity of trajectories:

The truth is that the character drawing is not only weak but virtually non-existent . . . The four main characters being intended in one of the book's meanings, to be aspects of the same man . . . Hugh and the Consul are the same person, but within a book which obeys not the laws of other books, but those it creates as it goes along. (Lowry 1965: 60, 75)

Under the Volcano is perhaps a ritornello caught in the grips of a many-faceted development: a machine indefinitely machined in accordance with a transversal machination that develops a ritornello whose rhythm carries the leisurely stroll and thought towards curious circumstances. Everything begins under the slow rhythm of the blazing Mexican sun. Mexico is the *terrain*, the anchor point for this ritornello. But this terrain is marked by geological accidents that endlessly fracture it into plateaus of various foldings. This terrain is submitted to the force of a fold that constantly parcels out its surface rather than increases its depth. And it is endlessly modified and dislocated around the Consul, as if its growth and its border had no end. And the reader himself 'does not feel the need to stop and to plunge beneath the surface', caught up, as he is, by the power of deterritorialized ritornellos. A tension exists between the earth that multiplies its scales and the territories that seek out landmarks and stable reference points by which to measure it. But, as we will see, the ritornello that seizes the Consul takes hold of such territorial marks only to deterritorialize them upon the fold of the earth, so that the void on which the Consul reaches his balance itself becomes breathable. Hence, the Elizabethan formula that surveys the first caesura of *Under the Volcano*: 'Then will I headlong fly into the earth: Earth, gape! It will not harbour me!' (Lowry 1947: 34)

The March Towards Death

But in the middle of this infernal fall, the Consul says, we must find forces that will preserve us from death: 'I have grasped at every root and branch which would help me across this abyss in my life by myself. . .' (Lowry 1947: 38). The abyss, the *barranca*, the fold of the earth – a line of death.

The cheerful if ironic music, the cries of the little children on their goose-necked steeds, the procession of queer pictures – all this had suddenly become transcendently awful and tragic, distant, transmuted, as if it were some final impression on the senses of what the earth was like, carried over into an obscure region of death, a gathering thunder of immedicable sorrow; the Consul needed a drink. . . (Lowry 1947: 215)

In this quest for equilibrium, there are several territorial marks that make hell breathable. This whole development in the ravine, hell and death, is a reminder of what Deleuze has Bichat say about death. Deleuze affirms that Bichat presents death as a line of confrontation that permeates life itself – a line coextensive with a life 'that we are constantly confronting, and cross in either direction only at the point where it ends' (Deleuze 1995: 111). This line is also the *barranca* that carries off territories and folds plateaus. It is a mortal line, death itself, that we must leap over for new thoughts and other affects and percepts. So, according to Deleuze, it is imperative to make the line breathable and feasible while crossing it. We must make room for the many micro-deaths coextensive with life by jumping over the line in both directions without drowning; we must cross over the line and make it breathable and plausible. This ethic, this art of living, represents the risks that *Under the Volcano* and *A Thousand Plateaus* have in common – these two telluric, seismic books that tackle the sense of the earth. Deleuze's idea of the ritornello is in effect completely devoted to the possibility of rendering the earth practicable. To produce a ritornello is to extend a melodic rhythm over the fault, and, without sinking into the void, to jump over the line that passes between things and thoughts. How to be safe, how to stay alive as one confronts the *barranca*? This is the Consul's odyssey. And it is also a question that Deleuze encounters on his own journey that leads him to an ethic and an aesthetic whose concept – ritornello – is produced by *A Thousand Plateaus* (see Deleuze and Guattari 1987: Chapter 2).

One can list several ritornellos: to leave, to set off from our home with a repetitive melody in our head that ties us to our abode; to go to bed, to sleep with a thread that extends from wakefulness to

sleep with the helpful rhythm of a story or a lullaby; to advance on the enemy, gun at the ready, to the pounding of drums. A thread always exists that makes a departure possible, develops a pace, plans an escape. A waltz just as easily carries us away, becomes progressively decentred as it moves towards the cosmos, and develops its interstellar curve within the tour and the detour of its rhythmic trajectory – 2001: *Space Odyssey*. In other words, a ritornello has continual phases and its evolution passes through the several planes it develops in a variable fashion. In view of the chaos that rumbles around us from all sides, the ritornello initially fixes anchor points from which it subsequently soars. But this is not the end of it. There can be no ritornello without a breakaway grafted onto the walk organized around points of attachment (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 311–12). A plateau is traversed by many points that can always serve as territorial markers. To leave, to cross a plateau, to traverse faults in favour of new plateaus beyond the cracks of earth and death, to dwell in the fold whose surface is disintegrating as it clings to life – all of this exemplifies the tension in the ritornello.

The Consul is definitely caught in the grip of a rhythm that must initially establish a territory. If he moves from one milieu to another, he does not do so without territorializing them. A cantina is first and foremost a milieu, a labyrinth of small alveoli opening unto each other, in compliance with a periodic repetition. In his course that borders the *barranca* – the grand ravine – the Consul passes from one milieu to another, is taken between two milieus, and jumps from one to the next with surprising agility. But these places and rhythms must not be confused with the alcoholic's territory. The alcoholic has a territory only by tearing it from the milieus that he traverses. The alcoholic's territory would not exist without the many marks that extend from those of whisky and cigarettes to those of the innumerable advertisements that outline its limit, and, from time to time, the billboards that at various points punctuate the itineraries, dislocated by the *barranca* – the ravine of death. Indeed, one finds public notices all along the Consul's road:

Box! said an advertisement. Arena Tomalin. El Balon vs. El Redondillo. The Balloon vs. the Bouncing Ball – was that? Domingo. . . But that was for Sunday; while they were only going to a bull throwing, a purpose in life whose object was not even worth advertising. 666: also said further advertisements for an insecticide, obscure yellow tin plates at the bottom of walls, to the quiet delight of the Consul. (Lowry 1947: 188)

These public notices that constantly increase in number represent the emergence of a veritable matter of expression, and in order to become expressive, they stop being functional. The billboards and notices progressively lose their directional and economic functions. Under the influence of alcohol, they become territorial marks and signatures. Instead of being indicative, these notices now take on an expressive value, which is dimensional more than directional. As components of the milieu, they shift from functionality to a quality that traces a territory.² They resemble the bird, scenopoïetes, that marks its reference points by overturning the leaves of its tree, so that their internal, paler face contrasts with the soil. It is comparable to cigarette and alcohol brands – Ailas, Johnny Walker, Tequila Anejo, and so on. There are brands of whisky, posters and billboards – components of a milieu – that one selects as a reference point the territory of which refers to the expression. Ritornello is the milieu and the rhythm of functions that territorialize themselves in becoming expressive. The ritornello, therefore, initially actualizes a certain number of anchor points without exhausting itself in this territorial function. In fact, it is along the ravine of death where the Consul's territories find non-territorial exits and where his leisurely stroll reverberates in the same way that thought functions.

To the extent that the Consul's walk is interspersed with territorial marks, and with billboards used to designate this territory, these marks and these public notices give way to relative independence of thought. Freed from their territorial connotations and from their attachment to the territories they extract from the milieus, all billboards begin to float around in the Consul's mind with such an autonomy that they become food for thought. This is the second aspect of the ritornello: to leave the territory with its matter of expression – billboards, notices, labels, marks, signatures – and to bestow upon them enough independence to form between themselves a new arrangement en route to deterritorialization. To create a territory is to render expressive certain of these functions that had been removed from their milieus – the anchor points of the ritornello. But, at the same time, there is an autonomy of expressive qualities that enter into relations of composition that could propose something resembling territorial counterpoints. To recapitulate, relations between anchor points may be established without previously having the circumstances and the milieus from which the anchor points would be deduced. This is why all the territorial marks that the Consul renders expressive begin to function autonomously; like

irreducible faults, they intersect with the logical sequence of ideas and, thereby, produce a new rhythmic pace *within thought*. It is as if the ritornello expresses a new surface, another plane that seizes territorial marks and notices in accordance with compositions and themes that no longer produce territory. One could say that the ritornello that engages the Consul translates the tension between the territory and something more elusive – the earth – with its telluric ravines and faults, its fissures moving aberrantly and unpredictably, its lines of dislocation, and its jagged twists and turns. We understand nothing, we are incapable of understanding anything regarding the billboards and public notices that mark the Consul's territory if we fail to relate them to the earth, to the *barranca* that introduces them to thought in order to punctuate new rhythms, beyond the cuts and the interstices that they determine. This impersonal force that grips the Consul and sends him on his way, this rhythm that imposes itself on him, securing his walk and thought – this ritornello – cannot be separated from the ravine into which he will fall and begin to stutter. Limp, stutter, limp, stutter – suddenly a ravine! First, therefore, there is the leisurely stroll, the Consul's involuntary and mannered promenade, that entices him to stumble towards the ravine. It is the death of the outside:

He had almost fallen into the *barranca* . . . He paused, peeping, tequila-unafraid, over the bank. Ah the frightful cleft, the eternal horror of opposites! Thou mighty gulf, insatiate cormorant, deride me not, though I seem petulant to fall into thy chops. One was, come to that, always stumbling upon the damning thing, this immense intricate donga cutting right through the town. . . (Lowry 1947: 130)

The length of this ravine that the Consul traverses, there are known places – familiar brands of whisky, posters evocatively assembled as if they were components of milieus that produce territories. But that's not all. The Consul's vagabond walk always stumbles against these components the moment they are expressed. In other words, these components of milieus, these reference points that outline a territory, these marks that accompany us in flights and strolls, these indicative panels that render the *barranca* breathable, provide the suspensions and stammerings that are deterritorialized in thought, the almost imperceptible micro-fissures – a death of the inside – the loud hiccups of thought whose rhythm cannot be determined by a constituted subject. There are, therefore, the rhythms and waves that run through us, take hold of us and impose themselves on us, without

The March Towards Death

the consent of the self, without the individual being present, vigilant – rhythms and waves that know what needs to be done. This is essential to the drunken gait. One begins to walk, and she walks ahead of the person who knows how to orient herself, becomes fully present inside the one who walks. A ritornello takes hold of our steps, bringing along marks and signatures that it sets upon to compose new arrangements. And these arrangements, having become autonomous, will be machined among themselves, without being given the circumstances and milieus from where their materials have been issued.

He was in a room, and suddenly in this room, matter was disjunct: a doorknob was standing a little way out from the door. A curtain floated in by itself, unfastened, unattached to anything . . . An orderly little clock behind the bar called him to his senses, its ticking very loud: Tlax: tlax: tlax: tlax: . . . Half past five. Was that all? ‘Hell,’ he finished absurdly. (Lowry 1947: 314)

And it is precisely to such a hell that the ritornello introduces us, and where it teaches us to endure sense and the earth’s inextricable windings. Chapter 12 of *Under the Volcano* is inscribed in this art of living, and in breathing the unbreathable atmosphere that reigns over the line – this line of the outside that dislocates the surfaces at an incalculable speed. Rather than a form, the ritornello proposes a pace, a breakaway, a jetty traversing a tangled network of aberrant lines, a world that, incapable of becoming invaginated in depth, necessarily wins in brightness, surface and beauty. In this way, Lowry’s reader, no less than the Consul, must produce her own ritornello and follow in the Consul’s footsteps between the splinters of the world that is opened by the folds of the earth. There are as many difficulties in reading *Under the Volcano* as there are, for the Consul, aberrant lines through which he must trace his ritornello. Perhaps, here again, we must allow ourselves to be carried away by Malcolm Lowry’s style before we encounter the forceful entrance of an individual who informs us that he knows how to read, and subsequently produces an automatic reading that drives the reader to the networks of an asubjective entity. Perhaps, then, it is commonplace to say that there is no such vigilant reader, that to read a book is to escape, to lose control of one’s own subjectivity, to be in an unfamiliar world wherein the magic dissipates upon any attempt to awaken and intensify the reader’s disorientation.

But rarely does the opportunity exist in literature for the reader to place her own gradient next to that of the book itself, and to be

seized by impersonal forces beyond the degree zero of reading. If it is habitually difficult, indeed impossible, to read with our own self, if the self is rarely the spectator of the operation by which something may be read, this white zone, nevertheless, remains pervaded with narrative instances that substitute themselves for the subject who is momentarily fully absorbed. These narrative instances develop a series of intrigues that compensate for the sensory-motor vacuity of its readers. Now, what results from one's reading of *Under the Volcano* has nothing in common with this supplementing operation. Not only is the vacuity of the Consul superimposed onto that of the reader within a space rarefied to the extreme, but also within a dimension where haecceities develop their floating lines – an autonomous dimension, saturated with deterritorialized components, inconsistent marks and signs free to compose impersonal arrangements. The Consul's gait establishes a line of flight that, beyond the void of the *barranca*, develops the thread of the ritornello – a thread that moves sinuously from corporeal movement to that of thought, in accordance with a rhythm that takes hold of walk and thought at the centre of an aparallel becoming. The Consul's gait is folded into the generation of his thought, between points and counter-points, in accordance with a ritornello whose repetitive development leads to a cerebral and gestural automatism, and to a world that has become cinematographic:

The faces of the last hour hovered before him, the figures of Hugh and Yvonne and Doctor Vigil moving quickly and jerkily now like those of an old silent film, their words mute exploding in the brain. Nobody seemed to be doing anything important: yet everything seemed of the utmost importance. (Lowry 1947: 141–2)

Silhouettes, brands of beer – Carta Blanca – whisky – Johnnie Walker – and strychnine enter a ritornello whose matter becomes dislocated, signaletic and cerebral – spiritual automaton (Deleuze 1989a: 156). As Deleuze adeptly notes, automatic motion of images is responsible for the rise in us of a spiritual automaton. And this spiritual automaton, to be sure, has nothing to do with the mechanically connected ideas formally deduced from each other in compliance with a specific order. Rather, the spiritual automaton is related to this movement of walking and ambulation that is extended to thought. Its shock produces an arrangement consisting of a variety of germs – sensory, kinetic, intensive, affective, rhythmic and so on. The spiritual automaton is actually a shock that passes from walk

to thought, following a transversal whose thread blends with the ritornello. In the ritornello, there is a power that forces us to walk and to think, without manifesting the power of consciousness to grant orientation to thought . . . lost, saved, lost, saved, step by step, lost in thought as in something that is not ours, but that we must think anyway – something that forces us to think our own impower (*impouvoir*). The ritornello is perhaps a shock whose power carries us to the centre of thought, towards that which in thought does not allow itself to be thought – the unthought of thought. In this transversal that extends from walk to thought, in a spiritual automatism of sorts, territorial marks and publicity notices constitute a wave of rhythmic shock, ‘a descriptive material loaded with visual and sound features of expression, synchronized or not, zigzags of forms, elements of action, gestures and profiles, a-syntactic sequences . . . a primitive language . . . or rather . . . a drunken monologue’ (Deleuze 1989a: 159; translation modified).

In other words, the ritornello that introduces walk and thought to an aparallel evolution also carries territorial marks that are no longer inscribed in a territory and produce signaletic matter. This matter that is both sensible and eidetic combines an inorganic multiplicity of sensorial, affective and kinetic elements. The ritornello also traces a nervous wave that gives birth to thought within thought, to new cerebral openings, and to new pathways in the network of neurons. Between walk and thought a vibration exists that gives birth to thought within thought, it propagates inside thought, and becomes lost in it, as if in an impersonal and asubjective environment. This way, the ritornello that carries the Consul off in spite of himself proceeds to a suspension of territorial indexes and signaletic images; that is, a suspension of both expressive material capable of addressing that which in thought cannot be thought, and that which does not allow itself to be determined by the form of the ‘I.’ This is spiritual automatism, with no immediate participation of the Cogito, thanks to which we may return to the intimate reality of the brain, and experience its fissure and central crack in the manner of a ‘vigilambulist’.

He had peered out at the garden, and it was as though bits of his eyelids had broken off and were fluttering and jittering before him, turning into nervous shapes and shadows, jumping to the guilty chattering in his mind, not quite voices yet, but they were coming back, they were coming back; a picture of his soul as a town appeared once more before him, but this time a town ravaged and stricken in the black path of his excess, and shutting his burning eyes he had thought of the beautiful functioning of the system

FOURTH VARIATION

in those who were truly alive, switches connected, nerves rigid only in real danger, and in nightmares sleep now calm, not resting, yet poised: a peaceful village. Christ, how it heightened the torture . . . to be aware of all this, while at the same time conscious, of the whole horrible disintegrating mechanism, the light now on, now off, now on too glaringly, now too dimly, with the glow of a fitful dying battery – then at last to know the who; the town plunged into darkness, where communication is lost, motion mere obstruction . . . ideas stamped. (Lowry 1947: 144–5)

How, then, can we experience the folds of the earth and the brain, sojourn on this ultimate line that rejects us in full torment, where madness, life and death confront one another? How can we jump over this mortal line while trying to live on it, as if we were prevented from attaching ourselves to the thread of the *ritornello* that successfully sets about this trip by folding the line that, at an extreme speed, endlessly unfurls itself? Obviously, the Consul knows a number of things about his own anguish. He is aware of having lost the mastery of his molecules and his atoms. But it is not his knowledge of this nature that matters; it becomes secondary and cannot modify the headlong flight of ideas that scatter in all directions. The power of consciousness has no hold over the convulsions of the nervous system. At most, consciousness follows the vigilambulist progression of the spiritual automaton. Consciousness, in taking notice of its own impower, becomes vigilambulist – both lucid and powerless at the same time. Far from granting thought to knowledge, the spiritual automaton introduces the unthought in thought, and makes the unthought thinkable by relieving the lucidity of thought from all interiority. In so doing, it hollows out the spacing of the outside, the fault that doubles it and constitutes the reverse, while the hollow becomes tangible in its dissemination and its spaced diffusion. The spiritual automaton, the shock of the march on thought, can only return each thought to its own faults, to its own impossibility, and to the difficulty of thinking its impersonal layout. All thought is inevitably suspended by a distribution of singularities whose differentiation is not immediately thinkable. Each thought restrains its mobile point on a sheet of singular points, in accordance with procedures that render thought possible, but still cannot be thought as such. It is this molecular unconscious that the automatism of the *ritornello* forces us to think. To the extent that thought rolls the dice, the process that engenders thought inside thought – its transcendental condition – becomes thinkable only, thanks to a shock in which forms and subjects are lost; in other words, thanks to a rhythmic line of flight

that appropriates walk and thought and deterritorializes them in the direction of a preindividual plane. The plane is saturated with entities that are drunken, vague, without defined outlines and burdened: to walk, to dance, to drink, to see double. The drunken eye hears the fold of thought beat along a line where the pulsations of dazzling sights and darknesses, and the alternation of colours and shadows confront one another. How, under these conditions, can we extract new thoughts, and construct new circuits of neurons inside a divided material, a city-brain permeated by fissures, sometimes giving light, sometimes not, sometimes offering blinding clarity, sometimes the intermittent glimmer of an irrational alternator, without previous will or knowledge?

Perhaps this question cannot be separated from an ethics that revives the old notion of prudence. Indeed, prudence defines virtue in a world where the good and the rational no longer have power, a sublunar world where movement and becoming are incompatible with a knowledge (*savoir*) that posits the existence of an immobile nature. Prudence, as Aristotle says, is indeed the site of chance, related to both poetics and science; it is here that prudence can thrive as a proper virtue. But, instead of deliberating on how to determine the just middle, or deliberating on the attitude that we must adopt in chance's torment, and the pace that we must maintain under the wind of the sublunar, it is now a question of how to conquer a posture, of how to occupy the middle itself, and to remain in the in-between where a different atmosphere prospers. This is the atmosphere from which light sometimes comes and sometimes does not, sometimes a blinding clarity comes and sometimes obscure rays of darkness that must be traversed. It is in the middle of this intermittence, and in the fork of the sometimes. . . sometimes. . . sometimes. . . that an ethics of prudence finds its own dimension – its virtue.

Kairos, from this point of view, is not the determination of the right middle, of the ideal moment inclined to offer the opportunity for action to the subject that commands it. *Kairos* is rather a floating line that always assumes its initial speed from the middle; it is the intermediary line that continues to gain in surface, in layout, the way a crack dislocates an ice field. It is a matter of holding on to the middle at all costs, and of capturing the aberrant moments of pure time, the moments when the event, at the centre of which the sensory-motor scheme has been suspended, is no longer extended to action. It is a matter of liberating new signs, new thoughts and new styles, as Deleuze demonstrates in his discussion on the cinema.³

FOURTH VARIATION

To be prudent is to conquer a posture, to hold oneself steadfast in the middle, the way the Consul does. ‘Oh we allll WALK ze wibberlee wobberlee WALK’ (Lowry 1947: 20). Prudence is the virtue that, in the decomposition of the world, when one has lost faith in the world, attains balance within a time that cannot be submitted to any deliberation, but that on the contrary demands new postures and through them liberates creative movements on the aberrant network of the *Aion*. This is perhaps the sense of *kairos* – to occupy the middle, even incorrectly or if it is unlikely, in the intermittence of a line that sometimes folds and sometimes unfolds – glimmerings and darkness – in order to adopt new thoughts and new styles. Prudence, therefore, designates the ethics of the ritornello, an art of living in the middle that develops between things before carrying them off. At such a place, the Consul embarks on the creation of a new world, between walk and thought, the length of a line of flight saturated with drunken molecules and preindividual singularities – a signaletic material from which thought is generated; that is, from thought’s own unthought.

Mannerisms

To render the unthought of thought thinkable, visible the invisible part of the visible, and sensible the insensible side of the sensible, is a way to jump past the riddles and to proceed through the doors of conception, perception and affection in the direction of the micrologic plane from where all these acts originate. Concepts, affects and percepts are actualized, thanks to a toss of the dice that produces a virtual coexistence of divergent series, and crosses the heterogeneous states of descriptive material – the best example of which is Simondon’s crystal. This molecular, preindividual agitation allows for new circuits of visibility and new cerebral pathways that the ritornello reconnects piece by piece and step by step, in a semi-aleatory automatism. The latter goes beyond the cuts and microfissures – sometimes raw light, sometimes darkness, sometimes voids, sometimes little brain deaths – an entire reservoir of intermittences and divisions seized by the thread of the ritornello as it moves from one cut to another in accordance with an aleatory mechanism, and *an uncertain system*. We meet experiments of this nature wherever new procedures of creation are imposed – from Stendhal to Proust – as we pass over Nietzsche and Mallarmé. They mix complementary things together: porridge! molasses! chaos! All is there, on the same dishevelled plane – the invisible part of the visible. The problem is how to extract a new variety of colours from this chaos – note Van Gogh’s athleticism! Malcolm Lowry attempts to strike a similar pose in a city-brain, where communications are lost and obstructions accelerate.

To conquer a space, which is at the same time topological and probabilistic along the dimensional thread of a ritornello on the occasion of a loss of territory and walking alongside death, all the way from one end to the other – this perilous gymnastic feat does not have much in common with Thanatos because Thanatos is always a foundation for the pleasure principle – the ground-less where the principle comes from and that its withdrawal makes possible.¹ To the extent that Thanatos, in its abyss, assumes disparation and the

flickering of pleasures, to the extent that it inaugurates the compulsion of repetition, its depth that interrupts pleasure is too clean, too precise, and too remote to gain in surface. Naturally, there is confrontation with death, but this confrontation is not resolved in pleasure, interruption and discharge. Rather, it is resolved through the excess of life – a life too big for pleasure, too difficult to interrupt or to amortize in a compulsion to repeat. According to Deleuze, organisms discharge in pleasure; organs die, not life (Deleuze 1995: 143). All around, life finds inorganic ways-out and flows of desire that carry it along without interruption. Here, death, even though its bite is indispensable, cannot be established as a principle without life running through it in an intensive continuum, and in a creative reconnecting act that death never explains. Desire is explained neither through lack, nor through the quest for pleasure, nor through death. It creates spaces, Saharas, spatio-temporal distortions; it widens the micrologic intervals of the real, produces intermittence without yielding to the interruptions of pleasure. As it incorporates death in its deployment, desire produces its own spacing and its own surface dislocation.

For Deleuze, death is no longer a principle. And, as it is neither beyond the pleasure principle nor the pleasure principle itself, death is no longer separable from its immanence in desire. According to the classical conception of death, pleasure designates the pause and relaxation of organic tensions, an interruption of movement that finds its principle and its model in death. Pleasure, from this perspective, represents ‘the little death’ that provides movement with a direction and completes it. But all these little deaths find their teleological function only when they plunge their roots into the ultimate death that, from the depth of its retreat, releases and articulates them forever, as it lights them up retrospectively. Death is the limit from which the individual essence of a being is innervated. From the depth of its eternal rest, the being of beings reveals itself to the thought that it punctuates. This definite retreat of death marks the non-place from which beings can be thought of as being. We can question beings on the subject of their being only in light of their finitude, namely, the final point of their essential retrospection.

As Solon said, a man cannot be called happy as long as he lives. Being can only be said, with respect to *ti ēn einai*, in the imperfect tense. As long as it lives, it is not yet, and the happiness that we attribute to it can always be questioned – movement, becoming. Only death establishes ontology, stems the flow of life and converts contingency into necessity. The finite essence of man is the perversion of

movement in death. Fundamental ontology exists only in the imperfect tense of finitude. By contrast, the infinitive is about becoming: to become red, to become green – these are incorporeal transformations that are not able *to be*, because they are ways of being. They are mere manners of being. This is why the imperfect tense is always about a subject that becomes what it is only because it no longer exists in the process of becoming. As Aubenque states, death is a substitute for eternity, a revelatory limit of the finite essence, a foundational border where beings raise the question of their being (Aubenque 1962: 470). To become green, to become red, concerns regimes of transformations that *cannot be assigned*; it is about infinitive styles that may be said of an apple or a strawberry, without ever belonging to them. Where have the ‘to redden’ and ‘to become green’ gone when the apple is finally rotten? Isn’t the ‘to become green’ and ‘to redden’ something that happens to the apple without ever belonging to it? And how would ‘to become green’ and ‘to redden’ still belong to the apple when the worm finally eats into it? Is ‘to eat into’ another infinitive? In any case, it is not Being. One never dies alone in the void of being. *One* dies in an infinity of ways that are themselves infinitives. Ways of dying. Styles. To become green? To become red? An apple – to die. Death is not rest. It is an evanescent passage, a becoming that belongs to us no more than to the worm that will gnaw away at us. Bodies penetrate one another in depth, but death does not belong to them. It is an incorporeal effect, an event that is not bent by any rational, individuating border. Here, beyond the pleasure principle, death is not what would be held at the horizon of life, situated at its extremity in order to trace therein life’s essential limit. Death never stops fleeing, moving from one body to another in order to open them up, rather than closing them upon their essence. This is why death escapes them, holds them by their middle as an asubjective will-o’-the-wisp. Death, bursts of bodies – incorporeal, diffused patina. There are no fixed borders. One does not die without crossing one’s own ossuary, without becoming lost in a reliquary. Saint Fiacre does not die without becoming the name of a pathological condition, the disease that affects all fistulas. Saint John becomes epilepsy, Saint Méen scabies, Saint Maur gout – symptomatic, clinical names; names of countries, explosions of disparate worlds. We see it – death teaches us nothing about the individual essence of Saint John. Even the death of Socrates, from which Aristotle seeks to extract Socrateness, does not give us such an essence, but simply a style of being, a philosophical mannerism, a posture in view of the cup that finds him

and from which he must drink, not without becoming something else – a legend. To die is to remain open to the forces of the legend, to incorporeal operations that trace life's exits, instead of enclosing life within itself.

To make death the external border of life – the closed border of existence reconnecting the inextricable cuts of pleasure that it orients – belongs to the very logic that Deleuze denounces in the game of transcendence. He does not believe in pleasures and in 'the little deaths' strongly structured by the signifier, by the ultimate retreat of Thanatos.² His whole philosophy is an attempt to make death an immanent spacing of desire itself, an atomization of desire susceptible to integrating death into a multiplicity of irrational cuts that would be coextensive with life. It is this death that Lowry reflects on in his interminable sentence, a sentence that exhausts itself in being incapable of ending, with its final point arriving only in the form of an accident:

the darkness that murmured and was palpable, the cold aching loneliness in the high-sounding dining room, stiff with the dead white grey folded napkins . . . the thirst that was not thirst but itself heartbreak, and lust, was death, death, and death again and death the waiting in the cold hotel dining room, half whispering to himself, waiting . . . (and this calamity he was now penetrating, it was calamity, the calamity of his own life, the very essence of it he no longer penetrated, was penetrating, penetrated) . . . and the clock ticking forward, with his heart beating now like a snow-muffled drum, ticking, shaking, time shaking and ticking towards El Infierno. . . (Lowry 1947: 349–50)

This syntactical sentence – like death itself, unlimited like the dying that carries and dislocates it; this sentence that remains *open* – best expresses what the immanent relations of death and desire could be. Everything happens in the openness of dying – the becoming red, the becoming green, the trembling, so many evanescent passages, so many ways of being, of being a legend: universal effects of shimmering ripples. Here, desire indicates the plastic power of waiting – the patient waiting that penetrates the 'essence' or the *fabric* of life in order to extract from it new surfaces, new figures, and new styles. And this requires an interminable waiting – endless, without closure, a world of illimitations, of rhythms – the elastic humming of silence: 'The cantina's emptiness, and a strange ticking like that of some beetle, within that emptiness, began to get on his nerves; he looked at his watch: only seventeen minutes past two' (Lowry 1947: 228).

Seventeen minutes past two: an odd minute that does not arrive without having already passed, a minute that does not pass without being present at the same time: full of cracks, openings and crystal-line deaths. Seventeen minutes past two – the fork of pure time, the intermittence that has us penetrate a unique world saturated with opsigns and songsigns, styles and becomings – to become red, to become green, a curtain of tulle ventilated with folds. From these folds, one extracts purely incorporeal motifs and geometric colours of which we cannot even say that *they are*. There, we rediscover the maybug that Melville's stillness of calm had left humming in the inert navigator's head; we rediscover the mariner waiting for the wind to finally billow in the limp and hanging sails, cherishing the desire to be finished a long time ago, but with a sea outside always calm, like a mirror veiled by jerky and tick-tocking snow – jerky time and tick-tocking eternity. And the emptiness of the *cantina* carries the Consul towards becoming while in one and the same spot, a ticking slashed in its middle by a swelling from which everything visible springs. There is a distortion of space and time where every batting of the old maybug's wings decomposes the humming, in the manner of an old jerking pendulum – tick-tock. . .

That such a waiting penetrates the intervals of life – 'death and death again and death again waiting' that grows in the middle of things – that such a patience penetrates the *essence* of life, can only signify one thing: the plastic force of waiting makes the *fabric* of existence visible in its illimitation, fold upon fold. The 'essence' is fabric; it is a silky desert of intersecting folds, a knitwork the microscopic holes of which agitate and ventilate in creative undulation – a shimmering phenomenon. Indeed, it is enough, for example, to superimpose identical arrangements of equidistant parallel bands, alternating between the opaque and the transparent, in order to produce a shimmering effect. If we suppose that the thread of the arrangement is a tenth of a millimetre and, therefore, invisible to the naked eye from a distance of one metre, we obtain – in accordance with the value of the interval between the two arrangements of vertical bands – a continuous variation between total transparency and opacity. But it is enough for these bands to not be equidistant in order to give rise to modifiable motifs that would spin between the two arrangements, without ever belonging to them. Where could we situate the birth of these ghostly images? What ontological density should we attribute to them when we know that such images come to the fabrics, without essentially belonging to them? Between two arrangements of states of

things there spins a line of delirium and death, an incorporeal surface that keeps them open without being found in either one of them. It resembles a transparent tulle that folds, or the image on a television screen that displays a band of horizontal lines (the actor's costume) that interfere with our viewing of the screen.³ A costume to green. Eyes to suffer. Where does this happen? What is it? As it is neither a state of things nor an attribute of things, the eye bumps against the *Istigkeit* of a floating entity – an *haecceity*. The shimmering effect is incorporeal, an extra-being. And between the tick and the tock the Consul plummets as much to this indefinitely variable fabric as to the calamity of his own existence. The resilient waiting of his drawn-out desire reveals the variable fabric of his existence, with its alternation of luminous rays and obscure faults, or, as Leibniz says of colour, a vast number of small mirrors and a vast number of small caverns. It is from here, on this surface traversed by the small faults left open by death, that we deduce all our percepts, and where life endlessly crosses and connects through its postures – in other words, it is from here that we deduce mannerisms!

What waiting allows us to feel is the fold of things whose ventilation, the great outside, produces alternants – sometimes. . . sometimes. . . sometimes:

From the French window I walked out under a kind of pergola covered . . . in part by laths, one inch wide with half an inch of space between them. The sun was shining and the shadows of the laths made a zebra-like pattern on the ground and across the seat . . . of a garden chair . . . here the shadows fell on the canvas upholstery, stripes of a deep but glowing indigo alternated with stripes of an incandescence so intensely bright that it was hard to believe that they could be made of anything but blue fire. (Huxley 1954: 53)

Blue fire, an event, a shimmering effect, an alternative surface of micrological folds that is made palpable through waiting. Blue fire is an event, not an attribute or a quality, but an incorporeal predicate, a way of being held open in the middle of everything. As Deleuze says, the event that the Stoics raised to the state of a concept goes far beyond the Aristotelian alternative of essence and accident: 'The Stoics and Leibniz invent a mannerism that is opposed to the essentialism first of Aristotle and then of Descartes' (Deleuze 1993b: 53). In this context, for Leibniz, the world itself is an event included in every subject, resembling a fabric from which each of us extracts mannerisms that correspond to our perspective. Perhaps then we

should say that with Lowry an event is not only an individual predicate – seventeen minutes past two or five o'clock in the evening also designate events. The event is an impersonal vibration, an electro-acoustic wave bearing an infinity of harmonics. Contrary to the monad, Lowry's world is kept open by the process of multiple deaths. The fabric of the world is infinitely variable and is metamorphosed by changing points of view.

The Consul penetrates a fabric of this nature so that, under the suspense of alcohol, the shimmering effect makes room for alternating slowing down rays, the impact of which will produce the motifs for the visible. Death, and death again and death always, a spatio-temporal dislocation being the fabric of life; life as a fabric traversed by divergent micro-faults, intermittences, and plural deaths immanent to desire. In the last analysis, the ritornello carries the Consul to this bundle of stitches in order to extract from this diagrammatic material motifs, styles and geometric entities that are neither beings nor attributes of things. Between two bundles of crumpled tulle, forms begin to dance, pure virtual expressions that the Consul joins together on the thread of the ritornello. Without existing here and now, they spin between two states of matter. In fact, it is enough that two bands of knitwork are crossed in order to produce an infinitesimal gap, in order for transparent surfaces to alternate with solid surfaces, on a scale that is no longer of the same order as that of the microscopic band. Virtual forms that exist nowhere begin to dance, without their macroscopic variation sharing the same logic with the microscopic perturbations. Between two arrangements of singularities, a surface of visibility is opened the expressions of which will be connected in an autonomous manner and in accordance with appropriate rules. We could say that the Consul always abandons this microscopic surface in order to install himself in the pitch of the knitwear (*les pas de la maille*),⁴ where he engages himself in a kind of quantum physics, abandoning altogether the rough-and-ready rules of classic mechanics. To be thrust into the stitches of a net in the direction of an unsafe land, without failing to show how macroscopic forms remain simple neighbouring effects between the micro-cuts that ventilate the real, or how to produce, by means of them, other motifs, this seems to be the point of Lowry's mannerism – an entire physics of sensitive qualities:

But now the mescal struck a discord, then a succession of plaintive discords to which the drifting mists all seemed to be dancing, through the

elusive subtleties of ribboned light, among the detached shreds of rainbows floating. It was a phantom dance of souls, baffled by these deceptive blends, yet still seeking permanence in the midst of what was only perpetually evanescent, or eternally lost. (Lowry 1947: 286)

In the middle of this unlimited evanescence, permeated by plural deaths, the most infinitesimal perturbation will reverberate and endure on the plane of incorporeal effects. The smallest vibration, the smallest dissonance, will be able to engender a whole world of new forms, express other possible worlds, and bring about a passage that would seem permanent. The generation of dissonant agreements amidst descriptive material – a small shock or a toss of the dice with colossal consequences – is the business of the ritornello. The ritornello is a series of dissonant agreements, at the mere sound of which the dust is disturbed and affected along a field of vectors that actualize new worlds and new styles.

This physics of qualities developed by Deleuze ever since *A Thousand Plateaus* is also the concern of Malcolm Lowry, who, in his own way, introduces an exceptional neo-mannerism. Indeed, Lowry's way of conquering the line of the outside and of inserting himself in the middle of the cerebral and telluric faults reverberates on the very structures of the novel and, simultaneously, on the evolution of characters and the linkage of postures. As Deleuze states, it is a question of keeping at a distance the dissonances of chaos that knock at the door (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 319–20). When chaos rumbles nearby, it becomes critical to trace an arabesque, a figure or a style that could reconnect us to the world. We require an array of poses, gestures, steps, silhouettes and postures to compose mannerisms. We do not live in a world of shadows and phantoms, of simulacra and complicated interlacings, without having to produce a system of postures apt to restore our faith in the world.⁵ The will to rediscover faith and to believe in the world – despite its inevitable decomposition – the problem of faith that Deleuze discovers in the cinema of Garrel, constitute Yvonne's (the Consul's wife) constant preoccupation. If the Consul's formula is, 'give me a brain', that of Yvonne could very well be, 'give me a body'. Where the Consul stops in front of signs and public notices, and penetrates their molecular texture, their fluid agreement, and the undulatory movement that disseminates them, Yvonne never stops recomposing figures and motifs that assume the body, compose the body, and combine continuous corporeal gestures and attitudes. However, the Consul is progressively

carried off to the extreme limit, to the unstable frontier of the fair, where all signs of life are decomposed. He is sent into orbit in an infernal machine, launched full speed above the striated spaces of the fair, mixing his cries and his colours as if the space of the fair had many dimensions, as if at the doors of this infernal machine a new world had begun, with other accelerations and decelerations, renting the air in the manner of immense, swirling knives. This is the voyage on the spot with which the Consul experiments when he decides to embark on the unstable carriage of the *maquina infernal* that adds another dimension to the space of the fair in this inextricable region where everything is at once combining and becoming disjointed – beyond all experience.⁶ Where the Consul relinquishes everything, allowing everything to fly in a cerebral explosion of sorts, Yvonne, on the contrary, attempts to provide the world with a body:

[Yvonne] knew, increasingly frightened by it, darkness to be still there, in them, of them. The cripples jerked themselves slowly past. Men muttered by in whose faces all hope seemed to have died . . . And everywhere, that darkness of a world without meaning, a world without aim . . . but where everyone save herself, it seemed to her . . . however churlish, lonely, crippled, hopeless, was capable, if only in a mechanical crane, a cigarette butt plucked from the street . . . of finding some faith . . . This was what she too was seeking, and had been all the time, in the face of everything, for some faith. . . . Yvonne felt she had to have a cigarette. . . (Lowry 1947: 255–6, 268)

In need of a trip to release everything – a cerebral explosion – the Consul endlessly experiments with new dimensions of the brain, and follows, ‘beyond all experience’, as he says from the height of his infernal machine, new circuits of neurons, new chains of atoms, with dissonant agreements and improbable perturbations. ‘Give me a body’; ‘give me a brain’ – these two formulas echo one another to the extent that the Consul does not plummet to hell without Yvonne responding with a connection of postures that could build a new world.

As we will soon see, these are the two senses/directions that jointly constitute the becoming of mannerism. Indeed, Yvonne, the Consul, along with Hugh and Laruelle, enter into a mannerist arrangement that develops in accordance with heterogeneous becomings in a uniquely Baroque way. The statute of characters is profoundly modified here. There is one character – a character of different rhythms, of harmonies sometimes diminished, sometimes reduced, a bundle of lines with zones of reciprocal exclusion and surfaces of convergence.

Hugh, Yvonne and the Consul form a single, unique triptych the arrangement of which can be compared against those analyzed by Deleuze with respect to his Bacon (Deleuze 2003: Chapters 9 and 10).

According to Deleuze, Bacon's triptychs designate powerful, distributive units. Each triptych proposes a unity, a common fact capable of intersecting very different lines. In other words, these triptychs represent an original means to incarnate a common fact for diverse figures. From this perspective, Bacon's figures realize a discordant accord of parts with no relation and no analogy. The triptych, therefore, is the development of a rhythm, the rhythmic articulation of three lines that are thematically separate: an active line, a passive line, and a line-witness the intersections of which take on the extreme division of motifs and figures. The principle of the triptych resides in the maximum of rhythmic unity for the maximum division of figures. The triptych proposes a dislocation of motifs and functions in a universal rhythm understood as the common fact or the common, distributive unity. These are the unities that Malcolm Lowry has in mind when he attempts to extract entities from chaos. Here is what he confided to J. Cape in a letter in which he elaborates on the method that rendered possible the composition of *Under The Volcano*:

The truth is that the character drawing is not only weak but virtually nonexistent . . . The four main characters being intended in some of the book's meanings to be aspects of the same man . . . Hugh and the Consul are the same person, but within a book which obeys not the laws of other books, but those it creates as it goes along. (Lowry 1965: 60, 75)

One could therefore say that each book of *Under the Volcano* develops a triptych of sorts, a consistent entity whose common fact and particular rhythm is the ritornello. Each book of *Volcano* develops a plane of consistency on the rhythmic thread of the ritornello. The ritornello cannot be a line of flight without, at the same time, imposing a consolidation. It proposes a growth, a development of planes of consistency or of entities between which its thread passes, and, at the same time, it proposes a consolidation. And the consolidation is the very act that produces that which is consolidated. The consolidation designates the consistency of the whole, as we may see with respect to Gothic keystones. The ritornello determines consistency in a manner comparable to reinforced concrete. Not only is the concrete a heterogeneous matter, but moreover, as Deleuze suggests, the

‘iron is intercalated following a rhythm; moreover, its self-supporting surfaces form a complex rhythmic personage whose “stems” have different sections and variable intervals depending on the intensity and direction of the force to be tapped’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 329). The architecture of the twelve books of *Volcano* defines a similar rhythmic consistency. Each of these books leads to a triptych that captures different forces, thanks to a rhythmic complex character. Thus, if Hugh and Laruelle always assume the role of witness, Yvonne and the Consul, conversely, incarnate, in this book, active or passive functions with respect to the forces that are to be captured. Hugh, Yvonne and the Consul constitute a rhythmic, complex character, altogether variable from one book to the next, and susceptible to new compositions in accordance with the modulation of the ritornello. The Consul breaks into his funereal march, and skips the pitch of the fabric that composes all incorporeal styles of a universal shimmering effect; he rediscovers, as a result, the micrological knitwear of a signaletic material that combines territorial marks with signs and public notices lacerated by the gyrating movement of the infernal machine; he confronts the fluid alternation of shadows and light rays that interconnect through the vertiginous spinning of his capsizing skiff. But, on the other hand, and at the same time, Yvonne constantly attempts to rediscover faith in the world, to recompose – through dance – a world and a stylization that could bring styles and postures together.

Malcolm Lowry’s mannerism is the setting up of a modulable triptych, an infernal machine whose rhythm achieves the machination of different figures in one character that takes up Yvonne, the Consul and Hugh in an impersonal becoming. From one book to the next, this character generates varying distributions of the elements of the triptych. And so, here we have a complete modulation of the complex rhythmic character, a modulation connected to the thread of the ritornello. This ritornello not only introduces the Consul to the networks of the descriptive material that has become independent from the macroscopic components initially deduced from a territory, it also connects all the mannered postures that Yvonne experiences. Yvonne’s becoming and the becoming of the Consul are developed on a ritornello the differentiated rhythm of which brings about one and the same rhythmic character. The ritornello designates a thread with three inextricable components. First is the molecular line – the line pursued by the Consul. Next is the line that Yvonne attempts to follow – a melodic line that withdraws a set of mannerisms, surface

effects and incorporeal transformations from the microscopic agitation that the Consul introduces to his own line – a set that Yvonne will stylize. And then there is a third line, the line-witness that Laruelle occupies as he relates the story. This is the same line that Hugh occupies – Hugh and Laruelle are the two rivals who aspire to the love of Yvonne and to the friendship of the Consul in order to divert them from the aparallel evolution that carries them away – the molar line of reterritorialization. However, this ritornello does not end up abolished in the tragic form of death – understood as the ultimate, withdrawn and transcendent limit. This ritornello is constructed in the manner of an infernal machine rather than on the basis of the tragic mode. The Consul encounters infernal machines everywhere – not only in the fair’s maze, but also on the decrepit walls of a *cantina*, in the frescoes of Rivera, in the Cocteau’s book that attracts his attention, and so on. All these machines have a common functioning rhythm of three speeds. For example, in the Diego Rivera painting that decorates Laruelle’s room, one discovers a regime of visibility in its entirety. The lower part of the canvas is encumbered with monsters towards which drunkards tumble, headfirst, in a hail of broken bottles. Above, angels rise towards a universal light. Here, two kinds of becoming exist that the Consul attributes to his love for Yvonne. This painting is the infernal machine that ventilates all the relations of which Yvonne and the Consul are capable, all the becomings that appropriate, separate and reunite them in accordance with a uniquely Baroque rhythm:

He saw those people like spirits appearing to grow more free, more separate, their distinctive noble faces more distinctive, more noble, the higher they ascended into the light; those florid people resembling huddled fiends, becoming more like each other, more joined together, more as one fiend, the further down they hurled into the darkness. Perhaps all this wasn’t so ludicrous. When he had striven upwards, as at the beginning with Yvonne, had not the ‘features’ of life seemed to grow more clear, more animated, friends and enemies more identifiable, special problems, scenes . . . More separate from himself? And had it not turned out that the further down he sank, the more those features had tended to dissemble, to cloy and clutter, to become finally little better than ghastly caricatures of his dissimulating inner and outer self. . . (Lowry 1947: 361)

This is the Baroque device that Deleuze discovers in Leibniz’s machination of the world. Indeed, the Baroque world, as Deleuze suggests, is organized in compliance with two vectors: that which sinks down below, and that which raises to the heights. This is a

world with two floors separated by the fold or, as in Tintoretto and el Greco, by a horizontal line leaving the bodies below that press upon one another, whereas on high the soul rises, bordering a thin refold (Deleuze 1993b: Chapter 3). Perhaps it would be necessary to refold these two bundles of material – one upon the other. Perhaps the infernal machine could successfully ventilate them, introducing an incessant interval in order to extract a line of delirium, a fold that we could raise to infinity. Be that as it may, this infernal machine establishes a kind of distributive unity with three folds, three lines that sometimes join together, sometimes become undone in accordance with the rhythm of the ritornello. When these lines become entangled in a congruous thread, a complex, thematic character emerges. But it is enough to have these tensions loosen up from too much suppleness for each line to follow its own trajectory, no longer capable of capturing the forces of chaos. Sooner or later, however, the thread of the ritornello recoils upon itself and carries on with the liberation of triptychs. The infernal machine is, therefore, a web of infinitely modulable lines that tense and relax in accordance with an aleatory logic. Never is the thread completely unwound. Even when very slack, it maintains a tension between its three components, so that the smallest local accident reverberates on the whole as if it were a drunken diagonal. This diagonal is extremely variable and is always taken from one of the three lines as if it were one of their *clinamens*. It represents a fibre detached from its initial material, a fibre that becomes independent, as it retraces all the components of the system. It straddles the web; a vague essence astride many a line. A fibre of this nature assumes very different names, based on the line from where it begins. But this distance and this bifurcation more often than not mark the irruption of an animal figure – dog, cat, bull or horse.

The deaths of the Consul and Yvonne, therefore, do not conclude the novel without reconstituting a new rhythmic character. In fact, if Yvonne's roads and those of the Consul fall off and separate at the end of the book, it is crucial that the Consul's death releases forces that Yvonne's death assumes in its own unlimited becoming. The Consul does not die before releasing *the horse* that appears throughout the novel and that, in his wild racing, spans the whole arrangement, trampling Yvonne at the exact moment that the Consul loses his footing and forever sinks inside the rift that cracks the surface of *Under the Volcano*. The Consul's death ends nothing. His dying is itself an opening towards the death of Yvonne that is

FOURTH VARIATION

constitutive of a cosmic becoming. Where the Consul loses himself in the micrological scales of the earth, where forms are scrambled and figures molecularized, Yvonne reconstitutes relations, so that it is impossible to dissociate the two movements, the two becomings that death itself carries off towards the imperceptible, towards the cosmic illimitation.

This Baroque device renders possible a quantum physics of sensible qualities, a terrible physics the concept of which we find in Deleuze, beginning with *A Thousand Plateaus*. However, its convincing formula is put off until *The Time-Image* or rather, even more successfully, until the analysis of perception developed in *The Fold*.

For a Microphysics of Qualities

We are indebted to Deleuze for his belief that *Matter and Memory* is a remarkable contribution to the history of philosophy – as first noted in one of his essays on Bergson and again in his monograph dedicated to cinema. Chapter 4 of *The Movement-Image* is given over to a vertiginous analysis of the Bergsonian universe and from this point of view establishes the matrix of the classification of signs and images in its entirety that Deleuze will develop in the rest of the book. This analysis of the Bergsonian universe is the site of a completely original physics of qualities, whose variable aspects one can discover in Deleuze's works. In Bergson, as we know, perception cannot be separated from a selective capacity. Generally, its role consists in eliminating from image and movement everything over which our actions have no hold or power; in other words, everything that escapes the sensory-motor schematism. In the fabric of images and things, our conscious perception draws a system that favours our possible action on the real, and this is why everything else escapes us. It is, as Bergson says, an infinitely divisible net that we cast over the continuity of the material world. Everything unfolds, therefore, as if we were content with filtering the real action of external things in order to occlude every virtual action. But what would happen if we were to discard the grids of perception and bypass the valve of reduction, the parsimonious draining that our sensory-motor system imposes on every image, and if we discard the burst of images that constitute the real? In which universe would we find and lose ourselves if there existed detours capable of bypassing the valve of reduction that causes our actions to slice matter into relatively closed sections?

Indeed, for Bergson, matter is composed of an infinity of images that slice up planes of varying movements. This is why every image acts on other images and reacts to them from all sides and in many ways. According to Deleuze, the ensemble of these movements, of these variations between images, constitutes a plane of immanence that intersects them impersonally inasmuch as these images and

movements are not addressed to anyone in particular. The burst of images and the diffusion of movements permit the definition of the plane of immanence to become a universal light. The impersonal plane of immanence is light in its entirety. And so, if every image reacts to the others from all its sides and in a variety of ways, this continuous emission of the many movements produces a light that fuses in all directions. This is a diagrammatic light whose phosphorescent singularities are extended to the vicinity of the others, without any determined orientation or polarity of convergence. A diagrammatic progression exists on a plane of immanence, a supersaturated light with images bursting from all sides and bearings, without being directed or polarized around a sense that would cause them to bend together and coagulate in a determinable convergence.

If a polarization happens to orient the burst of light and impose a convergence, a directed course or an ordered stratification, in one way or another, it is due to certain local accidents that manage to stop or to reflect the light and to consolidate strata on the plane of immanence. But such a suspension and crystallization belong to the plane itself and are entirely immanent to it. What happens to a plane of this nature, where everything reacts to everything else when factors foreign to it cannot be introduced? In fact, where all images burst in all directions from all their sides – a veritable incandescent halogen – we also find images unable to bear this all too violent universal explosion. These images shrivel in the heat, curl in on themselves in the refolding of their fragile zones. Although all images interact, we are able to find fragile instances that are crinkled, and instead of receiving light on all their sides, present only one side and react only with the one aspect of the surface that they innervate.¹

An absolute sensibility of the unbearable is developed at this point, one capable of screening light by isolating a few influences from those that act together in the universe. As Simondon reiterates after Bergson, perception is an operation of cooling down and crystallizing in determined chains, overlooking a completely molecular and infinitely richer agitation. Hence, perception remains subtractive. From the flow of images, it eliminates those that do not interest it. However, instead of descending this line of differentiation, of cooling down and crystallizing into determined chains, we can still find the detours capable of reversing the perceptive drainage and once again ascend to the luminous plane of immanence. There is therefore a way of 'rediscover(ing) the matrix of the movement-image as it is in itself, in its accented purity, in its primary regime of

variations, in its heat and its light, while it is still untroubled by any centre of indetermination' (Deleuze 1986: 66).

The problem then is the following: how to escape the selective form of perception, the personal grid of conscience? 'How can we be undone of ourselves, and undo ourselves?' Can we reconnect, inside man, with these forces that compel him to be terrified of himself? This is the question that animates a microphysics of sensible qualities, anxious to rediscover the plane of immanence from which perception derives a certain order. It is an ethics of this nature that carries the prudent gait of the Consul who is greedy for light and saturation:

The lake was lapping, the lilacs were blowing, the chenars were budding, the mountains were glistening, the waterfalls were playing, the spring was green, the snow was white, the sky was blue, the fruit blossoms were clouds; and he was still thirsty. Then the snow was not glistening, the fruit blossoms were not clouds, they were mosquitoes, the Himalayas were hidden by dust, and he was thirstier than ever. Then the lake was blowing, the snow was blowing, the waterfalls were blowing, the fruit blossoms were blowing, the seasons were blowing – blowing away – he was blowing away himself, whirled by a storm of blossoms into the mountains, where now the rain was falling. But this rain, that fell only on the mountains, did not assuage his thirst. . . . Perhaps because he was drinking, not water, but lightness, and promise of lightness – how could he be drinking promise of lightness? Certainty of brightness, promise of lightness, of light, light, light, light, and again, of light, light, light, light! (Lowry 1947: 125–6)

In this text, we discover a host of bursting images, of luminous germs twisting in a storm where particles, atoms – the mass of our atoms – freely interact, without axes or centre, above or below, right or left. . . Here, each atom begins to float, and, sensitive to all movements, perceives the imperceptible, reacts to all that happens in the Universe, without restriction or selection. Lake, lilacs, hemp, sky, buds burst from all sides – a multiplicity of phosphorescent seeds, vertiginous swirlings improvising everything. And, as Deleuze claims, it is true that an atom perceives the universe that it holds within itself much better than we do, and without any restriction (Deleuze 1986: 63–4). Saturated with atoms, the Consul fudges and plunges his mass of molecules into the universal light that disperses him: to lap, to flower, to bud, to sparkle, to let everything go, to let everything pass – these are verbs that define the quantic variation of the field of immanence. This quantic variation designates the luminous aspect of the plane. Grains of light traverse a translucent plate from which

the black screen, capable of individuating forms in a photographic method, is still missing (Bergson 1911: 31–2). In fact, for Bergson, consciousness is the black screen that reveals the propagation of light that nevertheless overflows it from all sides, consistent with a universal quantic variation. And it is in the direction of this black screen, towards the active aspect of the photographic plate, that the Consul chooses to gradually sink into. If one chooses to believe *Matter and Memory*, the perceptive grid functions in the manner of a chemical emulsion comparable to that on the back of a photograph. It is a framework incapable of retaining the details that saturate atoms and luminous waves.

Since Epicurus, at least, thought has stumbled against such waves of variable flux, unassignable *clinamens*, produced within a time even smaller than the minimum thinkable, *intervallo minimo*. There is, so to speak, a minimum thinkable from which our thought is issued – a poverty of thought, its misery. Everywhere, it bumps against details even smaller than those put into perspective by our consciousness. There are *clinamens*, evanescent quantities and quivering scintillations that escape our power or our degree of definition. Nature is composed of transitions, of evanescent passages and small bifurcations that are produced in a time smaller than the minimum thinkable, in a time that is no longer our own, a time alien to our form of sensibility, a pure form of time that does not come from the schematic structure of our sensibility. This is the form of time that painting, literature and music seek to appropriate for their own material. It is as if we were to decide to break off from the space-time of classic mechanics in order to bump against our own incomprehension and our own disempowerment. At any rate, when we register a scene either in a photograph or through the magnetoscope, the situation that we want to fix must be de-composed, selected in accordance with a coarse structure imposed on a significant number of physical entities. Photography is the result of a weak spatio-temporal organization.

According to Bergson, in order to be likened to photography, consciousness must have a very selective power of definition, similar to the active aspect of the cliché.² Indeed, on the back of the photographic plate is an emulsion of silver granules. The means to set small details will depend on the fineness of these particles. This is why the continuity of optic lines can be translated into photography only discontinuously, becoming a streak of jagged powder. When seen through the microscope, this emulsion adequately reflects the hell

wherein the Consul continues his struggles – a formless fog informed of discontinuous grains. This also applies to the electromagnetic band, where we can always count on very different components. Of course, here we have granules of oxide, molecules of steel, a certain quantity of determined particles. But the quantity of information that this band sets will necessarily be limited. There are a number of details that cannot be inscribed on the back of the photographic plate, details that the granules of oxide and the molecules of steel cannot render tangible. In fact, the number of details that we register in a unit of time will depend on how many metallic particles are contained by the magnetic band. It is impossible to retain details smaller than the order of magnitude of molecular chains on this band. The plastic support has a rather coarse molecular structure. But this structure designates the horizon or the limit beyond which we can no longer perceive anything, and this horizon constitutes the power of definition, the degree of definition suited to this mode of registration. If we were to move beyond this limit, the sound would be confused with the background noise determined by the discontinuity of elementary particles.

An analogous problem is presented to our brains – a degree of definition beyond which one can no longer think, a horizon that marks the difficulty of thinking as well as our own impower. Our brain is a network of broken and fragmented neural chains. Our head is cracked all through with synapses, and our thought jumps with intermittent hiccups . . . sometimes. . . sometimes. . . sometimes. . . sometimes. Consequently, plural deaths and micro-faults are everywhere, in the middle of which the Consul is guided by the ritornello that carries him away. And so, there are details that necessarily escape cerebral transmission, details that are smaller than the order of magnitude of neuronal chains. Smaller than the minimum thinkable are those details that fall into the synapses between the cerebral micro-faults. The evanescent and the event fall into the middle, into the fold of the earth and the brain that the Consul skirts as he whistles his ritornello – a middle that necessarily escapes *the power of definition* of consciousness. The swarm of infinitesimal quantities burst and bifurcate between the cerebral micro-faults – so many waves *and* particles, atoms and *clinamens*:

The outlook had rarely seemed so bright. He became conscious, for the first time, of the extraordinary activity which everywhere surrounded him in his garden: a lizard going up a tree, another kind of lizard coming down another tree, a bottle green hummingbird exploring a flower,

another kind of hummingbird, voraciously at another flower; huge butterflies, whose precise stitched markings reminded one of the blouses in the market, flopping about with indolent gymnastic grace . . .; ants with petals or scarlet blossoms tacking hither and thither along the paths; while from above, below, from the sky, and, it might be, from under the earth, came a continual sound of whistling, gnawing, rattling, even trumpeting. (Lowry 1947: 139–40)

These whistlings and rattlings designate the limit, the horizon, the threshold of our degree of definition. It is the background noise suited to the discontinuity of neuronal chains. We encounter the effects of these limits throughout Wim Wenders' beautiful film, *Wings of Desire*, a film that attempts to translate the inhuman sensibility developed by the world of angels. This film causes us to topple over into a supersaturated dimension, where two angels evolve into vigilambulists. This is the Consul's situation that the final chapter of *Volcano* successfully floats between the asubjective burst of things – *Ailas!* And it is from the perspective of his impending death that each moment of time is once again divided and distended to the point where things suddenly stumble between the cerebral micro-fissures. The interstices will assume a ubiquitous independence. Between tick and tock, the indolent clock resonates: '*dolente . . . dolore!*' Here, everything begins to tumble around inside the Consul's brain where this clock, slashed at the middle, is interrupted – the same clock that we note at the beginning of the novel we also encounter at the end (Lowry 1947: 42, 373). Noon-midnight, the hour when time begins to spin in circles, the hour when everything begins to unfurl and resonate from the middle:

He was about to replace the crumpled letter in the book when, half absently, yet on a sudden definite impulse, he held it into the candle flame. The flare lit up the whole cantina with a burst of brilliance . . . as M. Laruelle set the writhing mass in an ashtray, where beautifully conforming it folded upon itself, a burning castle, collapsed, subsided to a ticking hive through which sparks like tiny red worms crawled and flew, while above a few grey wisps of ashes floated in the thin smoke, a dead husk now, faintly crepitant . . . Suddenly from outside, a bell spoke out, then ceased abruptly: *Dolente . . . dolore!* (Lowry 1947: 41–2)

In this splendid moment, the wheel of time bifurcates and, as Malcolm Lowry suggests, begins to spin in reverse. Interstices proliferate all around, without the discontinuous triumphing over the continuous. What happens here, as Deleuze says of Godard, is the middle, the cut, and the interstice become irrational. The median

fissure then spreads out and manifests itself in an internal (*internelle*) rhythmic of sorts (Deleuze 1989: 213–4). To reiterate, the interstice achieves relative autonomy and fills the space of its jingling Sahara. In his film, Wenders successfully evokes this distortion. His angel unfolds very fine perceptions. He does not choose what he sees or hears. Each moment is infinitely divided, and presents an interstice independent of the edges that he separates. The world is decomposed in a variety of spaces without common edges, so that one necessarily stumbles across the intervals. The whole Universe resonates in him, in an inextricable whispering with its suspensions and its catatonias. In a certain way, Wim Wenders' angel, comparable to that of Paul Valéry, seeks to impose a new form of sensibility, an inhuman sensibility that registers nature's sudden passages, the imperceptible growth of mountains and the evanescence of the continuous. The order of fading quantities, the smaller than the minimum thinkable that generally falls to the synapses, this entire molecular agitation in Wenders' film corresponds to a physics of sensible qualities and may be translated by singular percepts, sometimes on a canvas as intolerable as one of Van Gogh's. With his finger, the angel touches every articulation of the real – the small bifurcations, the quiverings of the world, its *clinamens* and its variations – in continuous hesitation between his angelic and human becomings. Here, we encounter a very creative process of subjectivation, a divine madness of the human mind, where the angel does not become man without first allowing man to put his finger on the fold of things.

A process of subjectivation of this nature adequately corresponds to the state of extreme tension that animates the Consul's drunken gait. Between angel and beast, the Consul attempts to force the man form into following the direction of his impower, the direction of this limit from where man thinks and perceives, the direction of his *degree of definition* where, if we hope to gain in grace and lightness, we must think. But how can we carry the man form to this limit that would permit its relationship with other forces? How can it achieve this median, this interstitial line, while avoiding larcenies, whistlings, and cerebral background noises? How can we break the grid of consciousness and the neuronal stitches without becoming deaf and blind? How can we live inside the folds?

Life in the folds, the *kairos* as the test of the middle, calls upon an ethics that demands plenty of agility, a whole connection of postures inseparable from a philosophical gymnastics of sorts that carries thought towards its critical threshold, towards a degree of plastic

metastability. *Kairos* is necessary for thought to grow from the middle, between the cerebral micro-fissures, to occupy the middle; that is, an interstice that, without belonging to the variations that it divides, never fails to liberate new pathways associated with neurons. To conquer a posture in this interval that separates spaces without common edge, to jump from one shore to the next like a sailor on his riggings, to slide between synapses without becoming lost in the discontinuity of particles and without stumbling against the background noise of our perceptive system – all this demands a wealth of intense affects. There are no intense percepts without affects. According to Deleuze, ‘style in philosophy strains towards three different poles: concepts or new ways of thinking; percepts, or new ways of seeing; and affects, or new ways of feeling’ (Deleuze 1995: 164–5). Deleuze adds that we need these three dimensions in order to create movement – philosophy as an opera, a bird of fire!

To understand this, let us revisit the example of photography. The image we perceive is dependent on the degree of definition suited to the chemical emulsion of the silver granules. If it is true that a photograph of a sand pile requires more signals than the particles contained in the chemical emulsion and that, consequently, it is easier to obtain the image of a simple form of the face-landscape kind, how will it be possible for the Sahara to become accessible to such a system? In fact, without affects or intensities, the Sahara escapes the pellicle. The affect is the power to diminish the quantity of information as we preserve the quality of signals from the start. The affect plays between quantity and quality by placing them in each other’s vicinity. As Simondon explains, by augmenting the contrast on the television screen, we significantly improve the perception of objects at the same time that we increase the loss of information (Simondon 1989: 83). In the synthesis of homogeneous diversity, intensity establishes a new connection between quantity and quality. In the last analysis, the inexhaustible origin of details becomes perceptible when affects increase in intensity. The intensity of perception succeeds in individuating the sand dune that we call Sahara. A dusting of particles cannot produce an entity by simply adding diversity. Joy, agony, waiting again and waiting always, desire – in short – give perception the intensity that it requires to betray its degree of definition. Whatever is smaller than the minimum thinkable falls into synapses, but can become sensible through intensification, which is what happens when we adjust the television screen whose intensities and potentiometers render sensible that which escapes the degree of definition.

A physics of sensible qualities, understood as an aesthetic, is in fact inseparable from the ethics of intensities and affects, as Deleuze elaborates on in *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Patience, waiting, the voyage in place are the operators of desire – the intense experiences inseparable from a production of affects that establish percepts and concepts, visibilities and utterances. Through his own literary experiment, Malcolm Lowry renders indiscernible the development of the ritornello and the production of affects. For him, the ritornello becomes confused with the development of a line of intensity that cannot be divided by degrees without changing its nature at each stage of the division:

The water still trickling into the pool – God, how deadeningly slowly – filled with silence between them . . . There was something else; the consul imagined he still heard the music of the ball, which must have long since ceased, so that this silence was pervaded as with a stale thudding of drums. . . . It was doubtless the almost tactile absence of the music however, that made it so peculiar the trees should be apparently shaking to it, an illusion investing not only the garden but the plains beyond, the whole scene before his eyes, with horror. . . (Lowry 1947: 75)

Here, horror is the affect of a singular hour, clepsidra with muffled and unlimited resonances, the rhythm of which thunders as it traverses the brain as if shot from a cannon – absolute speed. An absolute speed in the middle of falling drops that must be heard like a difference of intensity that contracts a phenomenon, launches and expels it in a space of n dimensions. This is why an absolute speed is no less able to measure a quick movement than a slow or even an immobile movement. A voyage in place can be intense; the capacity to produce differentiated space-times essential. In his striking text from which Lowry freely borrows, Melville successfully sets the conditions for an extraordinary ethics. Melville intends to create the affect of an absolute speed from horror, sheer horror, still whiteness from where the rose and the tulip extract their colours and their bursts (Melville 1925: Chapter 17). Horror is a shivering of sorts that runs through our spinal marrow and retracts our pupils and skin. It has nothing in common with anguish or agitation. Horror is a creative affect that takes over our skin in an extraordinary, sensorial becoming. Horror effectively gives birth to the finest of skin in a variety of spaces without common measure. There is no homogeneous space the way that Kant wanted. Kant's space is the result of apathy. With horror, on the contrary, space bristles with potentialities, or irreducible dimensions permeated by a univocal shiver. Our

FOURTH VARIATION

body is not suited to uniform space, but to a differential topology that varies, thanks to the affects that cross it. In his chapter dedicated to the whiteness of the whale, Melville establishes a certain ethics of affects, each affect having corresponding forms of percepts, and the singular spaces they extend. From the joyous horror to frightful sweetness, Melville experiments with new ways of seeing and new styles of thinking. Without grim horror, he says, there is no spiritual wandering, charm or grace. And it is true that nobody knows exactly which spaces a style of testing is capable of producing. The affect is an intense line, a shiver that traverses us, and whose rhythm agitates trees and flowers. The affect is the shock of the ritornello, and there are as many ritornellos as there are affects that shake us up. The ritornello somehow designates the becoming of an affect, a creative becoming of innumerable space-times, a becoming that places percepts and concepts in a relationship of intensity, a dance of neurons in the middle of the brain. . . sometime. . . sometime. . . sometime:

The gardener at the Argentinian ambassador's week-end residence was slashing his way through some tall grasses, clearing the ground for a badminton court, yet something about this innocent enough occupation contained a horrible threat against him. The broad leaves of the plantains themselves drooping gently seemed menacingly savage as the stretched wings of pelicans, shaking before they fold. The movements of some more little red birds in the garden, like animated rosebuds, appeared unbearably jittery and thievish. It was as though the creatures were attached by sensitive wires to his nerves. (Lowry 1947: 76)

From the *barranca*, the Consul still heard the rise in his head, the jerking noise of Parián drums. There was a celebration last night. Today is the day of the Dead.

Postscript to the Anglo-American Edition: What is a Multiplicity?

To give centre stage to the movement of variation in Deleuze's philosophy is paramount for what Deleuze calls *creation of concepts*. A variation is possible only by virtue of the liaison established within a multiplicity, and in accordance with a compositional plane or an original conceptual method. But a multiplicity is not only composed of elements and parts. Deleuze does not envisage the multiple in the way Alain Badiou sees it – by distinguishing the elements of their relationships (or parts) within a set, while fully aware that the latter are more numerous than the rest and require a line for the overflow to drift. Deleuze does not think in terms of number or surplus. His thinking is more algebraic.

Undoubtedly, Deleuze remembers Descartes' account of space in his renewed approach to extension through the creation of dimensions. The Cartesian space is directional and dimensional, having vectors and reference points. Here, the approach is not based on the enumeration of elements and parts. Its precise construction is a multiplicity and a cartography that comprise longitude and latitude, initially qualified as coordinates rather than expressed by a magnitude: a line will be defined by a single coordinate, a plane will require two, a volume will presuppose a supplementary coordinate, and nothing prevents us from having access to objects with infinite coordinates. We should note that all these relationships vary through functions and variables that Descartes, rather than applying numerical terms, will call y or x , because the latter receive very different determinations and engage in problems that are not yet associated with numbers.

A variable, therefore, defines vectors and dimensions rather than a collection of parts or elements. This is why Deleuze endeavours to explain to Badiou that a multiplicity is not numerical, that, as a variation, it is comprised of multiples as a way to associate spaces. Descartes creates a new dramatization of this association, but ignores the fact that the dimensions could be further subdivided and thinned

out among themselves. It will be possible, as Riemann demonstrates, to imagine spaces with n dimensions, and even to think of them as not quite whole; namely, that there are fractional dimensions, spaces to be discovered between length, breadth and depth – the sort of entities that will be called ‘fractal’.

This is the saga of *A Thousand Plateaus* and, in a certain sense, a homage to Riemann. Variation means we can superimpose dimensions that are otherwise folded in non-arithmetical ways, in compliance with a branch of algebra that applies to places (*topoi*) more so than number. Hence, the weight that Deleuze attributes to Leibniz’s angle, to the extent that its inception generates a site without foregoing the qualification of a point. One could say that this is a live point, not to be confused with an element or a number, the intensity of the angle, in accordance with which it can be extended (line of flight). In this book, I followed this typology, the divisions of which were intended to travel along vectors and dimensions without allowing themselves to be excluded by well-delimited sets and subsets. We are, therefore, far from Plato in French philosophy, which had been initiated by the Cartesian division I described.

However, this mental sheet, this image of thought that comes from the algebraic branch I invoked, is incomplete without proving Aristotle’s prominence – against which Descartes fought – and, therefore, without returning to the concept of *topos* that is Aristotle’s own. It is this concept that gave sequence to my work on Deleuze, through an analysis of feudalism, the fragmentation of the infinite that I endeavour to describe in my book, *Ossuaires*, and my book on the Stagirite and his topology that I called *L’âme du monde*.

Despite my monograph, this ample variation that began with my first book is far from complete. It has yet to be measured, not only against Badiou, but against Hegel’s philosophy as well – something that already occurs in accordance with dimensions, rhythms and processes, even though Hegel comes across as Deleuze’s worst enemy. This is why I begin to feel the need for a book on the *Phenomenology of the Mind*, where the enemy will find a better place in the network of friendships, introduced by Deleuze in *What is Philosophy?*, than he has found in the smiles of the most ardent disciples. In this book, there would be a follow up, a fugue for a new variation seeking counterpoints and singularities in the patience of the negative, instead of in the joys and affirmations that Deleuze would legitimately find in Spinoza¹.

Notes

First Variation

1. *Battlefield*

1. On *sensus communis logicus*, see Deleuze (1984: 23).
2. Deleuze's entire philosophy is implicated in this play. We find variable usages of it in all his books and as early as his *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (Deleuze 1983) that goes back to 1962.
3. On this analysis, see the text of Simondon that François Laruelle published under the title, *L'individuation psychique et collective* (Simondon 1989: 73–93 esp.).
4. On the sombre precursor, see Deleuze (1994: 119).
5. On this important question, see the third chapter of *Difference and Repetition* (Deleuze 1994) and the fourteenth series of *The Logic of Sense* (Deleuze 1990b).
6. On this version of the infinitesimal calculus, see Kline (1980: Book 6).

2. *Transcendental Empiricism*

1. On this closure, see the fifteenth series of *The Logic of Sense* (Deleuze 1990b). However, the idea of a superior empiricism is in fact realized in *Difference and Repetition* (Deleuze 1994).
2. On this approach to the concept of experience, see the analyses of Jean-Luc Nancy in his *L'Expérience de la liberté* (Nancy 1988: 24, 112).
3. On this distribution into territories, domains and domiciles, see Kant (1969: 11–14).
4. On Deleuze's project of philosophy in connection with critique and clinic, see Deleuze and Parnet (1987: 119–20).
5. In *What is Philosophy?* (1994) Deleuze and Guattari will turn this indiscernibility into consistency of the concept, power of ordination and *syneidesis* akin to a disjunctive or heterogeneous synthesis.
6. *The Logic of Sense* (Deleuze 1990b) introduces surfaces without depth; that is, the minimal surfaces leading Deleuze to mistrust hermeneutics.
7. The distinction between virtual and actual is the centrepiece of Deleuze's book on Bergson (Deleuze 1988a).


8. The ear as labyrinth is an idea that we find in Deleuze's early works. See Deleuze (1983: 188–9), and 'Mystères d'Arianne', *Etudes Nietzscheennes*, 12-5 (reprinted in *Philosophie*, no. 17, Paris: Minuit, 1987).
9. Deleuze suggests this rearticulation in his book *Essays Critical and Clinical* (Deleuze 1997).
10. On this deterritorialization of faculties, see Deleuze (1989: 259–61).

3. *Nomadology*

1. We find this idea in Gauguin and Nietzsche; both think of cooking as the creative site of thought (see Nietzsche 1993: Part I: 'Of the Virtue that Gives of Itself'; and Gauguin 1992: 140).
2. The displacement of the limit will be analyzed in the last part of this book.
3. The notion of haecceity refers to a mode of impersonal individuation. As in the texts of Duns Scotus, it helps us think the singular, which is neither universal nor specific nor generic.
4. It is in relation to Savon's films that geometry has recently developed the study of minimal surfaces deprived of thickness. The piling up of bubbles determines sections of spherical surfaces that are connected across a network of lines with a complex organization. A great variety of forms can be obtained from this univocal mixture (see Brette 1991: 461–2).
5. On the notion of rhizosphere, see Deleuze and Guattari (1987: Introduction) and Deleuze and Parnet (1987: 93–4).
6. The emergent property allows contemporary physics to get hold of extra-causal innovations.
7. This analysis is based on Chapter 10 of *A Thousand Plateaus* and the Chapter 6 of *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*. It is developed with the help of Von Uexküll's book, *Mondes animaux et monde humain* (1956).
8. On the 'subjectile', see Deleuze (1993b: 19–21).
9. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Letter to Burkhardt*, 5 January 1889; quoted by Deleuze and Guattari (1977: 96).
10. On this vision that borders on effacement, see Deleuze's text on Samuel Beckett, 'The Exhausted' (in Deleuze 1997: 152–74).
11. Vaslav Nijinsky, *Journal* (Paris: Gallimard, 1953), quoted by Deleuze and Guattari (1977: 77).
12. The emphasis here is mine.
13. This is a text of Nietzsche's that Deleuze makes his own. See 'Nomadic Thought' (in Deleuze 2004), see also Deleuze and Guattari (1977: 195–6).

Second Variation

1. Time out of Joint

1. On the analysis of the formula, see 'Bartleby; or, The Formula' in Deleuze (1997: 68–90).
 2. Gilles Deleuze, 'On Philosophy', in Deleuze (1995: 134–55).
 3. This problematic represents the stakes of Deleuze's text on cinema and grounds the difference between *movement-image* and *time-image* (see Deleuze 1986 and 1989a).
 4. Kant (1929: A194/B239). At this point, Kant inscribes the relation to the object under the sign of what is true.
 5. On this point, see Deleuze (1986: Chapter 3); see also Bergson (1910: 69–75).
 6. See the splendid analysis of Mankiewicz that Deleuze offers in *Cinema 2* (Deleuze 1989a: 48–55).
 7. On the question of Proust's assemblages, one can consult with profit: Deleuze (2000: Part II) as well as Deleuze and Guattari (1977: 69–70; 1987: 271–2).
 8. On the relationship between the narrator and the spider, see (Deleuze 2000: 182).
 9. According to Deleuze, the difficulty with this schema has to do with the narrowest circuit. This minimum circuit concerns, in fact, the crystal-image that contains the object O itself, together with the consecutive image that covers it like an immediate souvenir contemporaneous with the actual perception (see Deleuze 1989a: 289, n. 4).
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10. This analysis leans on the arguments developed by Deleuze in *Bergsonism* (1988a: Chapter 2), *Proust and Signs* (2000: Chapter 2), and *Cinema 2* (1989a: Chapters 3 and 5).
 11. On this question, see Deleuze (1989a: Chapter 4).
 12. See the First Variation, above.
 13. At this point, there is an overthrow or rather a renewal of the Kantian philosophy on the basis of the sublime. It follows that the third Critique is not foreign to this movement that comes to link up with the event.

2. The Dice Throw

1. See Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 10). On this question, the 'Rhizome' chapter offers the most successful analyses.
2. On the relationship between agrarian life and the development of natural dispositions and human faculties, see Kant (2007a: 171–3).

3. In the integral calculus, dy over dx refers to a relationship between elements with no determined value that are, nevertheless, reciprocally determined. To this relationship, there corresponds a distribution of singularities with all the relationships of which they are capable that far exceed in complexity the actualization of an entire curve. Deleuze calls 'differentiation' the distribution of these points together with the sum of the virtual relationships that exists in them. Differentiation refers to the actualization of this virtual combinatory in a particular series (see Deleuze 1994: Chapter 4; see also the analysis of Simondon's crystal in the first chapter of my First Variation above).
 4. Such a logic of the expression finds its most pertinent usage in the analysis that Hegel dedicates to perception and understanding.
 5. This affirmative logic with which we experiment here under a different form finds its sustained analysis in the first chapter of *Difference and Repetition* (Deleuze 1994).
 6. [Translators' note] Jean Labarrière, in his *Hegelianism*, proposed that 'Aufheben' should be rendered as '*sursumer*.' 'Oversume' – our translation – is as inelegant in English as '*sursumer*' is in French. But perhaps its inelegance could be overlooked in view of the elaborate defence of '*sursumer*' that Labarrière mounts in his text (see Labarrière 1986).
 7. Jean-François Lyotard's *Libidinal Economy* (Lyotard 1993) is not foreign to the elaboration of the surface that *The Logic of Sense* inscribes under Valéry's statement that 'what is most deep is the skin'.
 8. See Borges (1962). On the problem of the play in Borges, see Deleuze (1990b: tenth series).
 9. On the redundancy of the order word, see Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 79–80).
 10. On the idea of a multi-variable pragmatics, see Deleuze and Parnet (1987: 115–17), and Deleuze and Guattari (1987: Chapters 4 and 5).
 11. On these two forms, see Hjelmslev (1971: 85).
3. 'The Garden of Forking Paths'
1. This is what distinguishes fiction from a rigorous description (see Prigogine and Stengers 1986: 230–1).
 2. See Deleuze (1993b: Chapter 5); see also Leibniz (1957: § 413–17).
 3. On the ambiguous sign of the vague essence, see Deleuze (1990b: sixteenth series).
 4. On this question, see Deleuze's analysis of Orson Welles in Deleuze (1989a: Chapter 5).

Third Variation

1. *The Image of Thought*

1. On the notion of the cliché, see Deleuze (2003: Chapter 11); see also Deleuze (1986: Chapter 12).
2. On the nature of the fold, which, in this book, I connect with the suspended staircase, see Deleuze (1993b: 30–1, 33–4).
3. For de La Tour, see Serres (1974: 203); for Velasquez, see Foucault (1973: 3–8).
4. On the question of sight in general as a condition antecedent to every representation, see Foucault (1973: 31); see Heidegger (1962: 148–60).
5. On this question, see the excellent analysis that Deleuze offers of the point of view in Proust and the way he contrasts it to Leibniz's pre-established harmony (Deleuze 2000: 161–9).
6. This logic will be developed in the second chapter of this Variation.
7. On this Nietzschean reorientation, see Deleuze (1990b: eighteenth series); see also Morel (1988: 688–706).
8. See Focillon (1992). I shall refer mostly to the first and fifth chapters.
9. On the idea of the conceptual persona, see Deleuze and Guattari (1994: Introduction).
10. On the variations of the vault, see Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 364–5). My analyses are also inspired by Focillon (1992).
11. The concept always contains, and is animated by, *sensibilia* (conceptual personae). As for the percept, it carries always with it conceptual silhouettes which are not the products of philosophy. These silhouettes are sketches totally subjected to the eye and to the field of visibility that the eye actualizes for its own sake. Similarly, we find in the sciences partial observers moving in the direction of the percept without belonging entirely to the percept. On this question, see Deleuze and Guattari (1994).
12. On the schema of this deterritorialization, see Deleuze and Guattari (1987: Chapters 1 and 9).
13. For this conception of milieus and rhythms, see Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 318–23).

2. *Variations*

1. We can certainly think other mechanisms besides the *ritornello*. The *kyrielle* seems to define more accurately architecture, and *modulation*, painting.

2. I make use here of the vocabulary of the first part of the *Phenomenology of Mind*, without any modifications.
3. On the idea of distance, see Deleuze (1994: 237–8) and Deleuze and Guattari (1977: 68–84, 1987: 482–4).
4. This utterance of Valéry becomes the motto of a great book by Hubert Reeves, *Patience dans l'azur* (see Reeves 1981: 17).
5. This double capture is the object of the third chapter of *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze and Guattari 1987).
6. Henri Poincaré imagines a model of a non-Euclidean geometry that renders temperature a very special tensor. Here is the text: 'Suppose, for example, a world enclosed in a large sphere and subject to the following laws: the temperature is not uniform; it is greatest at the center, and gradually decreases as we move towards the circumference of the sphere, where it is absolute zero . . . Suppose that in this world the linear dilation of any body is proportioned to its absolute temperature. A moving object will become smaller and smaller as it approaches the circumference of the sphere. Although from the point of view of our ordinary geometry the world is finite, to its inhabitants it will appear infinite. As they approach the surface of the sphere they will become colder, and at the same time smaller and smaller. The steps they take are also smaller and smaller, so that they can never reach the boundary of the sphere. If to us geometry is only the study of the laws according to which rigid solids move, to these imaginary beings it will be the study of the laws of motion of solids *deformed by the differences in temperature* alluded to' (quoted in Stewart 1987: 64).
7. The telephoto lens flattens the depth in a way reminiscent of a few of Gauguin's canvases. Each plane is super-flat, so that zooming thins them out as if they were note-pads with superimposed leaflets that we can run through in a distance or thickness nearing zero.

3. *Poetics of Multiplicities*

1. 'Between the two', writes Deleuze, 'a leap in place is produced, a deformation in place, the emergence-in-place of the Figure . . . A probable visual whole (first figuration) has been disorganized and deformed by free manual traits that, by being reinjected into the whole, will produce the improbable visual Figure (second figuration)' (Deleuze 2003: 79).
2. This is the main motif of *The Logic of Sense* whose articulation of 'to eat' and 'to speak' recurs in Deleuze and Guattari's *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* (Deleuze and Guattari 1986). On the question of the concept as variation see Deleuze and Guattari (1994).
3. On this point, see Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 97–100).
4. We see it in Descartes for whom the concept of the self 'condenses at the point I, which passes through all the components and in which I'

(doubting), I'' (thinking), and I''' (being) coincide. As intensive ordi-
nates the components are arranged in zones of neighborhood or indis-
cernibility that produce passages from one to the other and constitute
their inseparability. The first zone is between doubting and thinking
(myself who doubts, I cannot doubt that I think), and the second is
between thinking and being (in order to think it is necessary to be) . . .
Doubt includes moments that are not the species of a genus but the
phases of a variation: perceptual, scientific, obsessional doubt' (Deleuze
and Guattari 1994: 25).

5. On lens as a vague essence, see Husserl (1931: § 74).
6. On concealing the limit, see Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 124–5); for a
critique of metaphor, see Deleuze (1989a: Chapter 7).
7. On the relationship between philosophy and non-philosophy, see
Deleuze and Guattari (1994: Chapters 2 and 3).

Fourth Variation

1. *The March Towards Death*

1. On the relationship to chaos, see Lowry's 'Letter to J. Stuart Brown', in
Lowry (1965: 42).
2. On the relation between milieu and territory, see Deleuze and Guattari
(1987: 314–7).
3. 'If the major break comes . . . with neo-realism, it's precisely because
neo-realism registers the collapse of sensory-motor schemes: characters
no longer "know" how to react to situations that are beyond them, too
awful, or too beautiful, or insoluble. . . So . . . the possibility appears
of temporalizing the cinematic image: pure time . . . there's a depth of
time, coexisting layers of time, which the depth of field develops on a
truly temporal scale' (Deleuze 1995: 59).

2. *Mannerisms*

1. See the analyses of Eros and Thanatos in Deleuze's *Masochism*
(Deleuze 1989b). But we will have to wait for 'Zola and the Crack-Up'
before Deleuze discovers the relationship between death and desire in
accordance with a line that connects us with Bichat (see Deleuze 1990b:
321–33).
2. This is true especially after *Anti-Oedipus*.
3. On this question, see Lobry (1989: Chapter 6).
4. [Translators' note:] Knitting needles come in different diameters, on
which the size of the holes of the knitwork depends. It is this size that
determines *le pas de l'étoffe* – the density of the fabric.

NOTES

5. It is here that we find the point of Chapter 8 of *Cinema 2* (Deleuze 1989a). A mannerism of body and brain is developed in this chapter.
6. With respect to the episode of the infernal machine and the transcendental dimension that it allows us to experience, see Lowry (1947: 220–4).

3. *For a Microphysics of Multiplicities*

1. Bergson speaks of intervals – not refolds – in his *Matter and Memory* (see Bergson 1910: 20–43).
2. My analysis of the power of definition is inspired by the remarkable pages that Simondon offers on perception (see Simondon 1989: 84–8).

Postscript to the Anglo-American Edition: What is a Multiplicity?

1. [Translators' note:] This book is now published: *Une intrigue criminelle de la philosophie* (Paris: La Découverte, 2009).

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Index

- A Thousand Plateaus*, 128, 135–6,
140, 198, 216
affect, 212
aion/chronos, 29
Anti-Oedipus, 36–7, 39, 50
Ariadne, 129
Aristotle, 77, 189, 196, 216
Aubenque, Pierre, 193
- Bacon, Francis, 33, 133–4, 135,
163, 164–6
 triptych, 200
Badiou, Alain, 215, 216
Balzac, Honoré de, 116
Baroque
 fold, 125
 style, 140
battlefield, 11
being of the sensible, 30
Beispiel, 146–7
Bene, Carmelo, 167–70
Bergson, Henri, 47, 64–6, 74–5,
150–1, 205, 208
Bichat, Marie François Xavier,
181
body without organs, 34, 42–3, 44,
46
Borges, Jorge Luis, 106, 168
- Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, 48,
50, 213
Cavalieri, Bonaventura Francesco,
12
Chirico, Giorgio de 76
chronos/aion, 29
cinema, 67–8, 117
cinnabar, 5, 15, 20, 24, 58
clinamen, 203, 208, 209
concept, 138, 172–3
 endo-position, 173
 exo-position, 173
concordia facultatum, 22
concrete, vii, viii
consciousness, 208–9
counter-curve, 137, 143
crystal-image, 76
- death, 191–4
depth, 159
Desargue, Girard, 46
Descartes, René, 155–6, 215,
216
 evil genius vs. Kant's cinnabar,
 5–6
 wax, 152–3
desire
 vs. pleasure, 41, 192
diagram, 139
'Dice Throw', 79–104
doxa
 urdoxa, 23
- embryo, 154
encounter, 25
ethics
 of relations, 42
Eupalinos or the Architect, 61,
69
event, 10
eventum tantum, 87, 88

INDEX

- Focillon, Henri, 133, 137–8, 139
 fold, ix, 125, 141
The Fold, 204
 formula, 57
- ‘*The Garden of the Forking Paths*’, 105–18
- geometries
 Euclidean/non-Euclidean, 160
- Gogh, Vincent van, 34
- Gothic architecture, 137
- haecceity*, 196
- Hegel, Georg, W. F., 57, 105, 146, 149–50, 216
- Heidegger, Martin, 32
- heterogeneous temporality, 21
- heterogenesis, vi
- horror, 213
- Husserl, Edmund, 26–7, 172
- Huxley, Aldous, 33, 34, 48, 49, 68–9, 77
- Hyppolite, Jean, 146
- image of thought, vii, 24, 121–45
- integral calculus, 220, n.3
- intensity, 156–8
 and extension, 156
- judgement
 and the agrarian question, 29
- kairos*, 189, 211, 213
- Kant, Immanuel, x, 3–7, 16–17, 19, 50–3, 58–60, 63–4, 79–80, 82–6, 213
 schematism, 18
- Labarrière, Jean, 87
- labyrinth, 129–30
- Lautmann, Albert, 10, 27
- Leibniz, Gottfried W., vi, 12, 14–15, 28, 105, 111–14, 168, 196, 202
 and predicates, 142
 and Rembrandt, 141
- literature, 171, 177–8
- logic
 arborescent, 127
 genealogical, 127
 of sensation, 32
 rhizomatic, 146
The Logic of Sensation, 163
The Logic of Sense, 131–2
- magnitudes, 148–9, 51–2
- Mallarmé, Stephan, 81, 89, 114
- Mankiewicz, Joseph Leo, 69
- Matter and Memory*, 205, 208
- Melville, Herman, 40, 57, 211, 214
- memory, 75
- metaphor, vi, 171–2
- microphysics of qualities, 205–14
- milieu, 143–4
The Movement-Image, 205
- multiplicity, vi, ix, 119, 215–16
- narration, 163
- Nietzsche, Friedrich, 33, 48, 82, 90, 114
- nomad, 53
- nomadology, 36–53
- novel, 106–7
- objectile, 46, 125–6
- ordinary
 and remarkable, 12
- outside
 power of the, 25
- paramnesia, 117
- patience, 66
- perception, 10, 205

Index

- philosophy
 - as system, vi
 - invention of concepts, vi, 215
 - perpetual bifurcation, viii
- physics of qualities, 198
- Picasso
 - Marie Thérèse Walter portrait, 72–3
 - orders of, 68–9
- plane
 - of immanence, x, 41, 205–6
 - of consistency, 41
 - of organization, 38
 - of variation, x
- pleasure principle
 - beyond the-, 192, 193
- poet, 77–8
- Poincaré, Henri, 222, n6
- power of the false, 59
- Prigogine, Ilya
 - and Isabelle Stengers, 109
- problems, 128–9
- Proust, Marcel, 46, 70–4, 76–7
- prudence, 189–90
- pure past, 75

- Quincey, Thomas de, 7–8, 10

- recognition, 80
 - concordia facultatum*, 22
- reducing valve, 49
- Rembrandt H. van Rijn
 - and Leibniz, 130
 - ‘*Philosopher in Meditation*’, 121–40
- rhizome, 127, 128
- rhythm, 144, 146–7
- Riemann, Bernard, 147–8, 160, 161
- ritornello, 151, 170, 181–2, 184, 185, 187, 200, 202

- Schelling, Friedrich, 105, 106
- schematism, 18, 22

- schizoanalysis, 37
- semiotic
 - transformational, 139
- sensed as such, 25
- sensible, 24
- sensus communis*, 22
- Simondon, Gilbert, 8–9, 84, 206
- singular, 88
- singularities, 31
- Spinoza, Benedict, 162, 216
- spiritual automaton, 186–8
- Stendhal, Marie-Henri Boyle de, 11
- styles of thought
 - baroque, 133
 - megaric, cynic, stoic, 132–3
 - platonic, 132
 - presocratic, 132
- subject, 126
- subjectile, 46, 125–6

- territory, 182–3
- Thanatos*, 191–2
- thinking, 49, 116–17
- tick, 43
- time, 57–78
- The Time-Image*, 204
- transcendental
 - apperception, 19–20
 - ethics, 43–4
 - field, 31
 - not a copy of the empirical, 9
- transcendental empiricism, vii, x, 18–35, 67

- universe
 - evolution of the, 154–5

- Valéry, Paul, 106, 153
 - Eupalinos or the Architect*, 25–9, 61
- variation, ix, 69 146–61, 216
 - and plane of immanence, ix–x
- Vasarely, 89
 - static genesis, 9

INDEX

- Velasquez, Diego Rodriguez de
 Silva, 123–5
virtual, 31
voyage
 immobile, 45–6
Vorhandenheit, 32
- Welles, Orson
 ‘*Citizen Kane*’, 115
Wenders, Wim
 Wings of Desire, 210–11
 What is Philosophy?,
 135

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