change in nature and connections with other multiplicities" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 9).

While the notion of becoming has proved an enormously fertile ground for a surprisingly large number of post-Nietzschean thinkers—Derrida, Irigaray, and Levinas, to name but a few—it has functioned to provide nonteleological notions of direction, movement, and process. Part of a Heraclitean tradition, and strongly associated with the model of the Hegelian dialectic, becoming in Deleuze's writings has stronger affinities with the pre-Socratics, with Spinoza, and with the post-Nietzscheans than it may have in the texts of other contemporary French philosophers. However, exactly how such notions of multiplicity and becoming function in Deleuze's work and how they may (or may not) be of use in feminist challenges to the structure of binary oppositions, to the formalized notions of identity or equivalence that have been used to define and exclude women, remains an open question, one to be explored in further detail beyond the limited confines of this paper.

Furthermore, there seems to be an evident allegiance between Deleuze and Guattari's notions of political struggle, decentered, molecular, multiple struggles, diversified, nonaligned, or aligned in only provisional or temporary networks, in nonhierarchical, rhizomatic connections, taking place at those sites where repression or antiproduction is most intense—and feminist conceptions of, and practices surrounding political struggle. In a sense, it could be argued that the Deleuzian-Foucauldian understanding of politics[7] theorizes, in a clearer and more direct form than rival or alternative political philosophies (including Marxism, socialism, liberalism, and anarchism), the kinds of theoretical and political struggles in which feminists are involved. Such struggles cannot be conceived simply as collectivized or group actions (they imply notions of the collectivity or multiplicity and the group that have not, before Deleuze and Guattari, been adequately theorized); struggles occur not only in group-sized multiplicities, but also in those multiplicities internal to or functional through and across subjects, within subjects, against the control of the ego and the superego, against processes of oedipalization, which will enable a proliferation of becomings and the production of marginalities of all kinds. In short, Deleuze and Guattari's understanding of micropolitics, their affirmation of localized, concrete, nonrepresentative struggles, struggles without leaders, without hierarchical organizations, without a clear-cut program or blue-print for social change, without definitive goals and ends, confirms, and indeed, borrows from already existing forms of feminist political struggle, even if it rarely acknowledges this connection.

Finally, Deleuze and Guattari's notion of the body as a discontinuous, nontotalized series of processes, organs, flows, energies, corporeal substances

and incorporeal events, intensities, and durations may be of great relevance to those feminists attempting to reconceive bodies, especially women's bodies, outside of the binary polarizations imposed on the body by the mind/body, nature/culture, subject/object, and interior/ exterior oppositions. They provide an altogether different understanding of the body than those that have dominated the history of Western thought in terms of the linkage of the human body to other bodies, human and nonhuman, animate and inanimate; they link organs and biological processes to material objects and social practices while refusing to subordinate the body to a unity and homogeneity provided either by the body's subordination to consciousness or to organic organization. Following Spinoza, the body is regarded neither as a locus for a conscious subject nor as an organically determined object; instead, like the book itself, the body is analyzed and assessed more in terms of what it can do, the things it can perform, the linkages it establishes, the transformations it undergoes, the machinic connections it forms with other bodies, what it can link with, and how it can proliferate its capacities—a rare, affirmative understanding of the body:

> Spinoza's question: *what is a body capable of*? What affects is it capable of? Affects are becomings: sometimes they weaken us to the extent they diminish our strength of action and decompose our relations (sadness), sometimes they make us stronger through augmenting our force, and making us enter into a vaster and higher individual (joy). Spinoza never ceases to be astonished at the body: not having a body, but at what the body is capable of. Bodies are not defined by their genus and species, nor by their organs and functions, but by what they can do, the affects they are capable of, in passion as in action.[8]

The notion of the Body without Organs (BwO) will be explored in more detail later in this paper, but at least at first glance, feminist theorists need to devise alternative accounts of corporeality that go beyond the confines of the mind/body polarization if women's specificity is to be rethought, and the domination of phallocentric representations is to be overcome. If this means turning to philosophers whose work has in the past been vilified or treated as suspect by feminists—as has Nietzsche's work, not to mention Deleuze's—this seems to me to be a risk worth taking, given the enormous theoretical stakes invested in reconceptualizing the body, and with it, subjectivity, in rethinking the relations between men and women, and between women, in social relations.

In the fifth place, just as Deleuze and Guattari provide notions of the body alternative to those usually dominant in Western thought, so too, they have reconsidered the notion of desire in active and affirmative terms. It has been

plausibly argued[9] that in the tradition reaching from Plato to Lacan and beyond, desire has been understood as negative, abyssal, a lack at the level of ontology itself (this was most ably articulated in Hegel's understanding of the lack [of object] of desire being the necessary condition for the maintenance of desire), a lack in being that strives to be filled through the (impossible) attainment of an object—the object, for man, being, presumably, the attainment or possession of woman, woman being the perennial object of man's desire, though without a congruous desire herself (for woman to have desire is to put her on the same ontological level as man—a theoretical impossibility in phallocentric texts, hence the enigmatic and perpetual question of woman's desire: what does woman want?). Instead of understanding desire as a lack or a hole in being, desire is understood by Deleuze—again following Spinoza and Nietzsche—as immanent, as positive and productive, a fundamental, full, and creative relation. Desire is what produces, what makes things, forges connections, creates relations, produces machinic alignments. Instead of aligning desire with fantasy and opposing it to the real, as psychoanalysis does, for Deleuze, desire is what produces the real; instead of a yearning, desire is an actualization, a series of practices, action, production, bringing together, making machines, making reality. "Desire is a relation of effectuation, not of satisfaction."[10]

Since Plato, desire has been conceived under the dominance of the subject and the sign. Whether the subject has been conceived in terms of consciousness and ideas (as in Plato or Hegel) or the unconscious (as in Freud and Lacan) desire has been that yearning to fill in, to reproduce a lost plenitude, whether the plenitude of the Idea or that of the pre-Oedipal. So too, desire must transform itself into signification: for Lacan, it is the lack constitutive of desire that propels the subject into the order of signification, which, in its turn, marks the subject with a lack impossible to fill (this is the advent of demand from the order of the Real). It seeks its various satisfactions—satisfactions of the same order, governed by a master signifier, the phallus—always and only at the level of representations, whether in hallucinatory form (the dream as the fulfillment of desire) or in the form of verbalized free associations. Desire is then a property of the subject; it is enacted through representations and is thwarted or frustrated by the Real.

By contrast, for Deleuze and Guattari, following Spinoza, Platonism is inverted, if not reversed: desire is primary and given rather than lack; it is not produced, an effect of frustration or ontological lack, but is primitive and primary, not opposed to or postdating reality, but productive of reality. Desire does not take for itself a particular object whose attainment it requires; rather, it aims at nothing in particular above and beyond its own proliferation or self-expansion. It assembles things out of singularities, and

it breaks down things, assemblages, into their singularities: "If desire produces, its product is real. If desire is productive, it can be so in reality, and of reality" (Deleuze and Guattari 1977, p. 26). As production, desire does not provide blueprints, models, ideals, or goals. Rather, it experiments; it makes; it is fundamentally aleatory; it is bricolage. Such a notion of desire cannot but be of interest to feminist theory insofar as women have been the traditional depositories and guardians of the lack constitutive of (Platonic) desire, and insofar as the opposition between presence and lack, between reality and fantasy, has traditionally defined women and constrained them to inhabit the place of man's other. Lack only makes sense to the (male) subject insofar as some other (woman) personifies and quite literally embodies it for him. Any model of desire that dispenses with its reliance on the primacy of lack seems to be a positive step forward, and for that reason alone worthy of careful consideration.

And, in the sixth place, Deleuze and Guattari resurrect the question of the centrality of ethics, of the encounter with otherness in a way that may prove highly pertinent to feminist attempts to rethink relations between the mainstream and the margins, between dominant and subordinated groups, oppressor and oppressed, self and other, as well as between and within subjects. Here ethics is no longer conceived on the basis of an abstract system of moral rules and obligations, such as proposed by Kantian or Christian morality (that is, in terms of moral prescriptions and imperatives), nor in opposition to conceptions of politics (as it commonly has in, for example, Marxist theory). Rather, Deleuze and Guattari are participants in what might be described as the advent of a "postmodern ethics," an ethics posed in the light of the dissolution of both the rational, judging subject and the contract-based, liberal accounts of the individual's allegiance to the social community.

In the wake of Spinoza's understanding of ethics, ethics is conceived of as the capacity for action and passion, activity and passivity; good and bad refer to the ability to increase or decrease one's capacities and strengths and abilities. Given the vast and necessary interrelation and mutual affectivity and effectivity of all beings on all others (a notion, incidentally, still very far opposed to the rampant moralism underlying ecological and environmental politics, which also stress interrelations, but do so in a necessarily prescriptive and judgmental fashion, presuming notions of unity, wholeness, integration and cooperation rather than, as do Deleuze and Guattari, simply describing interrelations and connections without subordinating them to an overarching order, system, or totality), the question of ethics is raised whenever the question of a being's, or an assemblage's, capacities and abilities are raised. Unlike Levinasian ethics, which is still modeled on a subject-to-subject, self-to-other, relation, the relation of a being respected in its

autonomy from the other, as a necessarily independent autonomous being—the culmination and final flowering of a phenomenological notion of the subject—Deleuze and Guattari in no way privilege the human, autonomous, sovereign subject; the independent other; or the bonds of communication and representation between them. They are concerned more with what psychoanalysis calls "partial objects," organs, processes, and flows, which show no respect for the autonomy of the subject. Ethics is the sphere of judgments regarding the possibilities and actuality of connections, arrangements, lineages, machines:

> All individuals exist in Nature as on a plane of consistence whose entire figure, variable at each moment, they go to compose. They affect one another insofar as the relation that constitutes each individual forms a degree of power [*puissance*], a power of being affected. Everything in the universe is encounters, happy or unhappy encounters (Deleuze and Parnet 1987, p. 74).

There are, then, at least these points of shared interest, of potential interaction and linkage between the Deleuzian project and those designated as feminist. This is not to say that an "alliance" between feminism and Deleuzianism is possible or even fruitful, nor even that they may be able to offer each other new insights or methods; rather, not only are there possible conjunctions and interactions, but also possible points of disjunction, of disruption, and of mutual questioning that may prove as fruitful as any set of alignments or coalition of interests.

3. Rhizomatics, Multiplicity, and Becoming

In this and the following section, I will concentrate on a relatively small cluster of concepts that I believe may overlap with feminist interests: the notions of rhizome, assemblage, machine, desire, multiplicity, becoming, and the Body without Organs. As I understand them, these concepts are linked together as part of the schizoanalytic project of rejecting or displacing prevailing centrisms, unities, and rigid strata. In order to adequately understand their apparently idiosyncratic contributions, contributions that very commonly have appeared hermetically sealed to the outsider or the uninitiated, ridden with jargon and with a mysteriously ineffable systematicity, it is necessary to let go of a number of preconceptions and inherited conceptual schemas of notions of subjectivity and conventional modes of explanation. In Deleuze and Guattari's work, the subject is not an "entity" or thing, or a relation between mind (interior) and body (exterior). Instead, it must be

understood as a series of flows, energies, movements, and capacities, a series of fragments or segments capable of being linked together in ways other than those that congeal it into an identity. "Production" consists in those processes that create linkages between fragments—fragments of bodies and fragments of objects—and "machines" are heterogeneous, disparate, discontinuous assemblages of fragments brought together in conjunctions (*x* plus *y* plus *z*) or severed through disjunctions and breaks, a concept not unlike a complex form of bricolage or tinkering described by Lévi-Strauss. A "desiring machine" opposes the notion of unity or One: the elements or discontinuities that compose it do not belong either to an original totality that has been lost (Plato or Freud), or to one that finalizes or completes it—a telos (Hegel). They are multiplicities of (more or less) temporary alignments of segments. They do not *represent* the real; they *are* the real. They constitute, without distinction, individual, collective, and social reality. Desire does not create permanent multiplicities, which would produce what is stable, self-identical, the same. It experiments rather than standardizes, producing ever-new alignments, linkages, and connections. Rhizomatics, or schizoanalysis, does not study the coagulations of entities, the massifications of diverse flows and intensities, but lines of flow and flight, trajectories of territorialization, deterritorialization, and reterritorialization.

Probably the clearest characterization of this project comes from the introductory "plateau" of *A Thousand Plateaus*, called "Rhizome." Here Deleuze and Guattari make explicit that their project has nothing to do with conventional modes of explanation, interpretation, and analysis: they refuse the domination of linguistic/literary/semiological models, which all seek some kind of hidden depth underneath a manifest surface. Rather, they are interested precisely in connections and in interrelations that are never hidden, connections, between not a text and its meaning, but, say, a text and other objects, a text and its outside:

> We shall never ask what a book, a signifier and signified means, we shall not look for anything to understand in a book; instead, we shall wonder with what it functions, in connection with what it transmits intensities or doesn't, into what multiplicities it introduces and metamorphoses its own, with what body without organs it makes its own converge. A book only exists by means of an outside, a beyond. Thus, a book being itself a little machine, what measurable relationship does this literary machine have in turn with a war machine, a love machine, a revolutionary machine etc. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 4).

Writing, they suggest, has "nothing to do with signifying. It has to do with surveying, mapping, even realms that are yet to come" (Deleuze and Guattari

1987, p. 4). It is thus no longer appropriate to ask what a text means, what it says, what is the structure of its interiority, how to interpret or decipher it. Instead, one must ask what it does, how it connects with other things (including its reader, its author, its literary and nonliterary context). Rhizomatics opposes itself to both what Deleuze and Guattari call the tree image and what they call the root image. The tree metaphor is an emblem of linear, progressive, ordered systems (presumably it dates from the ideal model of argument derived from Greek philosophy now known as Porphyry's tree, which functions through the operation of disjunctive syllogism); the root metaphor also presumes a unity, but like the root itself, this unity is hidden or latent, and thus may present itself as if it were decentered or nonunified. Unlike the manifest unity of the tree, the unity of the root is more hidden; it evokes a kind of nostalgia for the lost past or an anticipated future. In opposition to both of these models of a text, Deleuze and Guattari use the metaphor of the rhizome, an underground—but perfectly manifest—network of multiple branching roots and shoots, with no central axis, no unified point of origin, and no given direction of growth—a proliferating, somewhat chaotic, and diversified system of growths:

> The rhizome is reducible neither to the One nor the multiple . . . It is not a multiple derived from the One, or to which the One is added (n+1). It is composed not of units but of dimensions, or rather, directions in motion. It has neither beginning nor end, but always a middle . . . from which it grows and which it overspills. It constitutes linear multiplicities with *n* dimensions having neither subject nor object . . . and from which the One is always subtracted (n-1) . . . Unlike a structure, which is defined by a set of points and positions, with binary relations between points and biunivocal relationships between the positions, the rhizome is made only of lines: lines of segmentarity and stratification as its dimensions . . . The rhizome operates by variation, expansion, conquest, capture, offshoots . . . The rhizome is acentered, non-hierarchical, non-signifying system (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 21).

The rhizome may be summarily described in the following terms:

1. It is based on connections, bringing together diverse fragments—not only different theories, but also theories with objects and practices;
2. It is based on heterogeneity: these multiple connections are not only massified linkages, but also microlinkages, which bring together very diverse domains, levels, dimensions, functions, effects, aims, and objects;
3. It is based on multiplicity: multiplicity here does not mean a multiplicity of singularities, of ones, a repetition of the self-same, but a genuine proliferation of processes that are neither ones nor twos;

4. It is based on ruptures, breaks, and discontinuities: any one of the rhizome's connections is capable of being severed or disconnected, creating the possibility of other, different connections; and
5. It is based on cartography—not a reproduction or tracing, model-making or paradigm-construction, but map-making or experimentation:

> The rhizome is altogether different, *a map and not a tracing.* The orchid does not reproduce the tracings of the wasp; it forms a map with the wasp, in a rhizome. What distinguishes the map from the tracing is that it is entirely oriented toward an experimentation in contact with the real. The map does not reproduce an unconscious closed in upon itself; it constructs the unconscious . . . The map is open and connectable in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification. It can be torn, reversed, adapted to any kind of mounting, reworked by an individual, group or social formation . . . A map has multiple entryways, as opposed to the tracing, which always comes back "to the same." The map has to do with performance, whereas the tracing always involves an alleged "competence" . . . *The tracing should always be put back on the map* (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 12).

Rhizomatics, then, is a name for a method and an objective: it names a decentered set of linkages between things, relations, processes, intensities, speeds or slownesses, flows—proliferations of surface connections. In this sense, rhizomatics is opposed to hermeneutics, psychoanalysis, and semiotics, each of which seeks, in its different way, to link an object (a text, a subject, a sign) with a hidden depth or latency—sense, the unconscious, the signified. Rhizomatics is a form of pragmatics: it is concerned with what can be done; how texts, concepts and subjects can be put to work, made to do things, make new linkages. Pivotal concepts within a rhizomatic cartography are the notions of the body without organs and becoming-woman, to which I will now turn.

4. Bodies Without Organs and Becomings . . .

Deleuze and Guattari's notion of the Body without Organs (BwO) constitutes their attempt both to denaturalize the human body and to place it in direct relations with the flows or particles of other bodies or entities. In relying on a Spinozist conception of the univocity of being, in which all things, regardless of their type, have the same ontological status, the BwO refers indistinguishably to human, animal, textual, sociocultural, and physical bodies. Rather than, as psychoanalysis does, regard the body as the

developmental union or aggregate of partial objects, organs, drives, and bits, each with their own significance and their own pleasures, which are, through oedipalization, brought into line with the body's organic unity, Deleuze and Guattari instead invoke Antonin Artaud's conception of the Body without Organs. This is the body disinvested of all fantasies, images, and projections, a body without a psychical interior, without internal cohesion or latent significance.

The Body without Organs is not a body evacuated of a psychic interiority; rather, it is a limit or a tendency to which all bodies aspire. Deleuze and Guattari speak of it as an egg, a surface of intensities before it is stratified, organized, and hierarchized. It lacks depth or internal organization, and can instead be regarded as a flow, or the arresting of a flow, of intensities:

> The BwO causes intensities to pass: it produces and distributes them in a spatium that is itself intensive, lacking extension . . . It is non-stratified, unformed, intense matter . . . that is why we treat the BwO as the full egg before the extension of the organism and the organization of the organs, before the formation of strata . . . (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 153).

The Body without Organs does not oppose or reject organs, but rather is opposed to the structure or organization of the body, insofar as it is stratified, regulated, ordered, and functional; insofar as it is subordinated to the exigencies of property and propriety. It is the body before and in excess of the coalescence of its intensities and their sedimentation into meaningful, functional, organized, transcendent totalities, which constitute the unification of the subject and of signification. Deleuze and Guattari regard the Body without Organs as a limit; a tendency; a becoming that resists centralized organization or meaningful investment; a point or process to which all bodies, through their stratifications, tend; a becoming that resists the processes of overcoding and organization according to the three great strata or identities it opposes: the union of the *organism*, the unification of the *subject*, and the structure of *significance*. The BwO resists any equation with a notion of identity or property: "The BwO is never yours or mine. It is always *a* body" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 164).

Deleuze and Guattari distinguish between two kinds of Body without Organs: the emptied Body without Organs, exemplified by the drug addict, the masochist, and the hypochondriac, and the full Body without Organs, in and through which intensities circulate and flow, where powers, energies and productions are engendered. In the case of the emptied Body without Organs, the body is not only evacuated of organs and forms of organization, but also of its intensities and forces. The hypochondriac, for example,

destroys both organs and the flow of matter and intensities; the masochist's BwO is a body sewn up, smothered, filled only with what he or she calls "pain waves." The junkie's Body without Organs is filled, by contrast, with "refrigerator waves," the Cold:

> [A junky] wants The Cold like he wants his junk—NOT OUTSIDE where it does him no good but INSIDE so he can sit around with a spine like a frozen hydraulic jack . . . his metabolism approaching Absolute Zero.[11]

The empty Body without Organs does not deny a becoming; rather, it establishes a line of flight that is unable to free the circulation of intensities, making other, further connections with other BwOs possible. It is a line of flight that ends in its own annihilation:

> Instead of making a body without organs sufficiently rich or full for the passage of intensities, drug addicts erect a vitrified or emptied body, or a cancerous one: the causal line, creative line or line of flight immediately turns into a line of death and abolition (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 285).

While being neither a place nor a plane, a scene, or a fantasy, the BwO is a field for the production, circulation, and intensification of desire, the locus of the immanence of desire. Although it is the field for the circulation of intensities, and although it induces deterritorializations, lines of flight, and movements of becoming, the ability to sustain itself is the condition that seems to be missing in the empty BwO. There must, it seems, be a minimal level of cohesion and integration in the BwO in order to prevent its obliteration: there must be small pockets of subjectivity and signification left in order for the BwO's survival in the face of the onslaughts of power and reality. A complete destratification renders even the BwO unfunctional:

> You have to keep enough of the organism for it to reform each dawn; and you have to keep small supplies of significance and subjectification, if only to turn them against their own systems when the circumstances demand it, when things, persons, even situations, force you to; and you have to keep small rations of subjectivity in sufficient quantity to enable you to respond to the dominant reality. Mimic the strata. You don't reach the BwO, and its plane of consistency, by wildly destratifying. That is why we encountered the paradox of those emptied and dreary bodies at the very beginning: they had emptied themselves of their organs instead of looking for the point at which they could patiently and momentarily dismantle the organization of the organs we call the organism (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, pp. 160-61).

Destratification, freeing lines of flight, the production of connections, and the movements of intensities and flows through and beyond the Body

without Organs are thus trajectories or tendencies rather than fixed states or final positions. Deleuze and Guattari advocate not a dissolution of identity, a complete destabilization and defamiliarization of identity, but rather microdestratifications, intensifications of *some* interactions but not necessarily all:

> Staying stratified—organized, signified, subjected—is not the worst that can happen; the worst that can happen is that you throw the strata into demented or suicidal collapse, which brings them back down on us heavier than ever (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 161).

The Body without Organs is the field of becomings. Becoming (-woman, -animal, -imperceptible) is, in feminist terms, perhaps the most controversial element of Deleuze and Guattari's work. In order to know what a body is, it is vital to know what it is capable of, what its energies are, what relations it establishes, and what interactions and effects it has on other bodies. The body cannot be conceived as a block, an entity, an object or a subject, an organized and integrated being. In order to make the body more amenable to transformations, realignments, reconnections with other Bodies without Organs, there are struggles within the body that require recognition.

As Deleuze and Guattari distinguish the Body without Organs from the body's organization as a singular, unified, organic and psychic totality, so too they distinguish between molar and molecular forms of subjectivity, minoritarian and majoritarian collective groupings. Becomings are always molecular, traversing and realigning molar "unities":

> If we consider the great binary aggregates, such as the sexes or classes, it is evident that they also cross over into molecular assemblages of a different nature, and that there is a double reciprocal dependency between them. For the two sexes imply a multiplicity of molecular combinations bringing into play not only the man in the woman and the woman in the man, but the relation of each to the animal, the plant, etc.: a thousand tiny sexes (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 213).

If molar unities, like the divisions of classes, races, and sexes, attempt to form and stabilize identities, fixities, systems that function homeostatically, sealing in their energies and intensities, molecular becomings traverse, create a path, destabilize, enable energy seepage within and through these molar unities. In his paper "Politics,"[12] Deleuze makes a distinction between three types of "lines" relevant to understanding the nexus between the individual and the social: First, there is the rigidly segmented line, the line that divides, orders, hierarchizes, and regulates social relations through binary codes,

creating the oppositions between sexes, classes, and races, and dividing the real into subjects and objects. This is a stratifying or *molar* line. Second, there is a more fluid, *molecular* line, which forms connections and relations beyond the rigidity of the molar line. It is composed of fluid lines, which map processes of becoming, change, movement, and reorganization. While it is not in itself "revolutionary" (if it is still meaningful today to say this), it accounts for both sociopolitical and micro becomings, demassifies molar segmentations, and creates overcoded territories, passages, or cracks between segments so that they may drift and yet something may pass between them. And, third, there is a more *nomadic* line, not always clearly distinguishable from the molecular line, which moves beyond given segments to destinations unknown in advance, lines of flight, mutations, even quantum leaps. Thus if the division, the binary opposition, between the sexes—or, for that matter, the global systems constituting patriarchy—can be considered molar lines of segmentation, then the process of becoming-woman—for both men and women—consists in the releasing of minoritarian fragments or particles of "sexuality" (sexuality no longer functioning on the level of the unified, genitalized organization of the sexed body), lines of flight, which break down and seep into binary aggregations. But this process of the multiplication of sexualities is only a step in the creation of a nomadic line, a line of becoming-imperceptible, which disaggregates the molar structures.

If the Body without Organs never "belongs" to a subject, nor functions simply as an object, if it is never "yours" or "mine," but simply *a* Body without Organs, then becomings, by contrast, are never generic, never intermediate: they are always becoming-something. Becomings are always specific movements, specific forms of motion and rest, speed and slowness, points and flows of intensity: they are always a multiplicity, the movement of transformation from one "thing" to another that in no way resembles it. Captain Ahab becomes-whale, Willard becomes-rat, Hans becomes-horse, the Wolf Man becomes-wolf.[13] These are not based on the human's imitation of the animal, a resemblance with the animal, or a mimicry of the animal's behavior or, by contrast, of the animal's ability to represent the subject's fantasies or psychic significances, its metaphoric or symbolic relation to the subject. Deleuze and Guattari suggest that becomings, and especially becoming-animal, involve a mediating third term, a relation to something else, neither human nor animal, to which the subject relates, and through which relation it enters into connections with the animal:

> An example: Do not imitate a dog, but make your organism enter into composition with something else in such a way that the particles emitted from the aggregate thus composed will be canine as a function of the rela-

> tions of movement and rest, or of molecular proximity, into which they enter. Clearly, this something else can be quite varied, and be more or less directly related to the animal in question: it can be the animal's natural food (dirt and worm), or its exterior relations with other animals (you can become-dog with cats, or become-monkey with a horse), or an apparatus or prosthesis to which a person subjects the animal (muzzle for reindeer, etc.), or something that does not have a localizable relation to the animal in question . . . we have seen how Slepian bases his attempt to become-dog on the idea of tying shoes to his hands using his mouth-muzzle (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 274).

While becoming-animal is a major line of flight from identity, the mode of becoming most privileged in Deleuze and Guattari's writings is becoming-woman, through which, they claim, all other becomings are made possible: "Although all becomings are already molecular, including becoming-woman, it must be said that all becomings begin with and pass through becoming-woman. It is the key to all other becomings" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 277). The process of becoming-woman, while never specified, cannot be based on any recognition of, identification with or imitation of woman as molar entities. It is for this reason they claim that not only must men become-woman, but so too must women. Presumably this means that for women, as much as for men, the process of becoming-woman is the destabilization of molar (feminine) identity:

> What we term a molar entity is, for example, the woman as defined by her form, endowed with organs and functions, and assigned as a subject. Becoming-woman is not imitating this entity or even transforming oneself into it . . . not imitating or assuming the female form, but emitting particles that enter the relation of movement and rest, or the zone of proximity, of a microfemininity, in other words, that produce in us a molecular woman (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 275).

Deleuze and Guattari explain that they are not here advocating the development of any form of "bi-sexuality." For them, bisexuality is simply an internalization of binarized sexuality, the miniaturization of the great molar polarities of the sexes without in any way contesting them. Becoming-woman disengages the segments and constraints of the molar identity in order to reinvest and be able to use other particles, flows, speeds, and intensities of the Body without Organs. This enables them, paradoxically, to suggest that even the most phallocentric and notorious male writers—they mention Lawrence and Miller—have, in their writings, become-woman, or relied on processes of becoming-woman, a statement whose validity remains

problematic from a feminist point of view. While it may be argued (as they do) that writers like Virginia Woolf produce such texts, and while it is plausible to claim, as Kristeva does, that men too, with certain risks to their masculine, phallic position, can write as women—Joyce, Mallarmé, Artaud, etc.—it remains considerably less convincing to hold up the most notoriously phallic and misogynist writers to exemplify this mode of becoming:

> When Virginia Woolf was questioned about a specifically women's writing, she was appalled at the idea of writing "as a woman." Rather, writing should produce a becoming-woman as atoms of womanhood capable of crossing and impregnating an entire social field, and of contaminating men, of sweeping them up in that becoming . . . The rise of women in English novel writing has spared no man: even those who pass for the most virile, the most phallocratic, such as Lawrence and Miller, in their turn continually tap into and emit particles that enter into the proximity or zones of indiscernibility of women. In writing, they become-women. The question is not, or not only, that of the organism, history, and subject of enunciation that oppose masculine to feminine in the great dualism machines. The question is fundamentally that of the body—the body they steal from us in order to fabricate opposable organs (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 276).

It is never clear who is the "they" and who is the "us" referred to here. If this description is appropriate (and it is not entirely clear to me how appropriate it is), then to become-woman, writers like Miller and Lawrence must "steal" the body—or something of the body—of women: but, then, in what ways is this in any sense critical of, rather than simply affirmative of, men's patriarchal exploitations of women? In what way does this contest, ameliorate, or act as restitution for the robbery of women's bodies by men, in the service of their goals, interests, machines, and habitual power positions?

This question is clearly linked to a series of others: Why is woman (or child or animal) privileged, at least in name, in the advocacy of becoming? If women, too, need to become-woman, and children to become-child, then why refer at all to women and children? Why not simply explain it in terms of the more general trajectory of becoming, the nonorganic, asubjective, and asignifying becoming-imperceptible? Is this another form of the phallic appropriation and exploitation of women and femininity as the object of male speculation and systems-building? Where does it leave women in relation to men, and children in relation to adults? What effects do such characterizations have on the great molar divisions between ages and sexes? In other words, what are its short- and long-term political effects?

To be fair to Deleuze and Guattari, they do attempt to clear up some of these confusions, although it remains uncertain how successful they are.

They describe all processes of becoming as "minoritarian" and molecular, rather than as majoritarian and molar. The minority is not a quantitative concept: It refers only to molecular processes, while the majority refers to the great divisions of groups in terms of prevailing power relations:

> Majority implies a state of domination, not the reverse . . . it is perhaps the special situation of women in relation to the man-standard that accounts for the fact that becomings, being minoritarian, always pass though a becoming-woman. It is important not to confuse "minoritarian," as becoming or process, with a "minority" as an aggregate or a state . . . There is no becoming-man because man is the molar entity par excellence, whereas becomings are molecular (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, pp. 291–2).

Becoming-woman involves a series of processes and movements outside of or beyond the fixity of subjectivity and the structure of stable unities. It is an escape from the systems of binary polarization that privilege men at the expense of women. In this sense, even if in no other, Deleuze and Guattari's work is clearly of some value to feminist theory. However, it then becomes clear that exactly what becoming-woman means or entails is different for the two sexes: for men, it implies a de- and restructuring of male sexuality, the bringing into play of microfemininities, of behaviors, impulses, and actions that may have been repressed or blocked in their development, but exactly what it means for women remains unspecified. Deleuze and Guattari state that for women to become-woman does not mean renouncing feminist struggles for the attainment of a self-determined (molar) identity and taking up a different path; the paths of becoming can only function, as they claim, through the relative stability afforded by subjective identity and signification:

> It is, of course, indispensable for women to conduct a molar politics, with a view to winning back their own organism, their own history, their own subjectivity . . . But it is dangerous to confine oneself to such a subject, which does not function without drying up a spring or stopping a flow (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 276).

Becoming-woman means going beyond identity and subjectivity, fragmenting and freeing up lines of flight, "liberating" a thousand tiny sexes that identity subsumes under the One. Deleuze and Guattari imply that man's becoming-woman relies on or presupposes woman's, that her becoming-woman is the condition of his:

> A woman has to become-woman, but in a becoming-woman of all man . . . A becoming-minoritarian exists only by virtue of a deterritorialized medium and subject that are like its elements. There is no subject of

> becoming except as a deterritorialized variable of a majority: there is no medium of becoming except as a deterritorialized variable of a minority (p. 292).

If becoming-woman is the medium through which all becomings must pass, it is, however, only a provisional becoming, or a stage in a trajectory or movement, which takes as its end the most microscopic and fragmenting of processes, which Deleuze and Guattari describe as "becoming-imperceptible." This becoming is the breakdown of all identities, molar and molecular, majoritarian and minoritarian; the freeing of infinitely microscopic lines; a process whose end is achieved only with complete dissolution and the production of the incredible shrinking "man":

> If becoming-woman is the first quantum, or molecular segment with the becomings-animal that link up with it coming next, what are they all rushing toward? Without a doubt, toward becoming-imperceptible. The imperceptible is the immanent end of becoming, its cosmic formula. For example, Matheson's Shrinking Man passes through the kingdoms of nature, slips between molecules, to become an unfindable particle in infinite meditation on the infinite (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 279).

There is, then, a kind of "progression" in becomings, an order or "system" in which becoming-woman is, for all subjects, a first step, proceeded by becoming-animal, and then toward becoming-imperceptible. Indiscernibility, imperceptibility, and impersonality remain the end points of becoming, their immanent direction or internal impetus, the freeing of absolutely minuscule microintensities to the nth degree. Establishing an identity as a woman is thus only setting the stage for the process of becoming-woman; becoming-woman is the condition of human-becomings; and human-becomings, in turn, must deterritorialize and become-animal. The chain of becomings follows the traditional scientific "order of being" from the most complicated organic forms through the animal world to inorganic matter, down to the smallest point or quantum of energy, the subsubatomic particle.

Such formulas in which the "liberation of women" is merely a stage or stepping stone in a broader struggle, must be viewed with great suspicion: these are common claims, claims that have been used to tie women to struggles that in fact have very little to do with them, or rather, to which women have been tied through a generalized "humanity," which is in fact a projection or representation of men's specific fantasies about what it is to be human. The Marxist subordination of women's struggles to the class struggle, the subsumption of women's call for identities as women under the

general call for the dissolution of all identities (Kristeva and Derrida), and the positioning of women's pleasures and desires as the means of access to the Other (Lacan and Levinas) all serve as relatively current examples of such phallocentrism. It is not something to which women are immune either: the fact that women perpetrate this maneuver is a function of the uncritical internalization of perspectives and interests devised and developed by men. This means, at the least, that feminists need to be wary of Deleuze and Guattari's work—as wary as of *any* theoretical framework or methodology. But it clearly does not mean that their work needs to be shunned, avoided, or ignored because of some risk of patriarchal contagion. After all, in spite of more and more subtle forms of political appropriation of women and femininity enacted by Marxism, psychoanalytic theory, deconstruction—and many other forms of theory—nevertheless, feminist theory is considerably richer because of its encounters and alliances with these theories than it would have been without them.

There is no doubt that rhizomatics has something of importance to offer feminists. If it does not actually augment feminist theory (which in any case would imply some kind of theoretical commensurability), then at least it may imply a complementarity, and it may also force critical reevaluations of the forms of struggles that women have undertaken and will continue to undertake against their containment within phallocentric discourses, knowledges, and representations. Deleuze and Guattari's work raises a number of crucial questions about the political investments of specific positions within feminism—liberal, Marxist, and socialist forms—which can be seen to participate in a molarization, a process of reterritorialization, a sedimentation of women's possibilities of becoming. It provides a mode of analysis and contestation of the ontological commitments and intellectual frameworks of models of knowledge that must surely be of some interest and value to feminists, insofar as it is experimental, innovative, and self-consciously political. Its concrete and specific value must remain an open question: This depends entirely on what feminists are able to do utilizing their work in the future, what systems of desire it can function to produce, and what networks or machines of power it can serve to support or destabilize. The more varied, the bolder such feminists thought-experiments may be, the easier it will become to assess Deleuze and Guattari's value for feminist theory. But feminists must remain wary, insofar as Deleuze and Guattari too sever becoming-woman from being-woman, and in making the specificities of becoming-woman crucial to man's quest for self-expansion, they render women's becoming, their subversions, and their minoritarian and marginal struggles subordinate to a movement toward imperceptibility, which could, in effect, amount to a political obliteration or marginalization of women's struggles.

Notes

1. There are some exceptions to this general claim. See, for example, Alice Jardine's *Gynesis: Configurations of Woman and Modernity* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985); Gaylyn Studlar, *In the Realm of Pleasure: Von Sternberg, Dietrich and the Masochistic Aesthetic* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988); and Rosi Braidotti, *Patterns of Dissonance* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991). As well, there are a number of unpublished feminist pieces of which I am aware, for example, Karin Emerton, "Figures of the Feminine" (1987); Petra Kelly, "Deleuze and Nietzsche: The Secret Link" (paper delivered to the MLA, 1988); and Marie Curnick, "Tales of Love" (1990).
2. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, vol. 2, *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).
3. Elizabeth Grosz, "Male Theories of Power" (unpublished paper, 1985).
4. Luce Irigaray, *This Sex which is not One*, trans. Catherine Porter with Carolyn Burke (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), pp. 140–41.
5. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, vol. 1, *Anti-Oedipus*, trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen Lane (New York: Viking Press, 1977).
6. See Gilles Deleuze's *The Logic of Sense*, trans. Mark Lester with Charles Stivale (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990) and Luce Irigaray's "Plato's Cave," in *Speculum of the Other Woman*, trans. Gillian Gill (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984).
7. See Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze, "Intellectuals and Power," in Donald F. Bouchard, ed., *Language, Counter-Memory-Practice* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977).
8. Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), p. 74.
9. In Dominique Grisoni, "The Onomatopoeia of Desire," in Peter Botsman, ed., *Theoretical Strategies*, trans. Paul Foss (Sydney: Local Consumption Publications, 1982).
10. Colin Gordon, "The Subtracting Machine," in *I and C*, no. 8: p. 32.
11. William Burroughs, *The Naked Lunch* (New York: Grove Press, 196), pp. xcv–xcvi.
12. Gilles Deleuze, "Politics," *On the Line*, trans. John Johnston (New York: Semiotexte Foreign Agents Series, 1983).
13. See also *Dialogues*, p. 73.

V. Minor Languages and Nomad Arts

11

On the Concept of Minor Literature From Kafka to Kateb Yacine

Réda Bensmaia

> We would call this a blur, a mixed-up history, a political situation, but linguists don't know about this, don't want to know about this, since, as linguists, they are "apolitical," pure scientists.
>
> —Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*

IN 1975, WHEN Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari presented their modest book on Kafka, many critics thought that the thesis defended in it could be chalked up to the militant "schizoanalysis" of *Anti-Oedipus*. For such critics, as for other skeptical readers of Deleuze and Guattari, this book was merely a more popular way of defending the ideas that they had previously put forward: linguistic pragmatism, desiring-machines, lines of escape, and other deterritorializing Bodies without Organs.[1] With the benefits of hindsight, it is much clearer now that this seemingly marginal book was not based on a need for publicity or propaganda; rather it was a book that ushered in a sound, new way of thinking and writing, and—more importantly—it was a text that discovered a new theoretical "continent": that of "minor literature." Indeed, before Deleuze and Guattari took on the task of bringing to light what is at stake (politically and ideologically, but also pragmatically and experimentally) in Kafka's work, Kafka still enjoyed a secure place in the hierarchy of "great authors," and one could hardly have thought it possible to discover such a theoretical time bomb within his "canonized" texts. If there were critics who dared broach the question of whether or not it was necessary to "burn Kafka" for the heresy of not conforming to genre codes or to the laws of narratology, no one was truly prepared to disclose the fact that

Kafka's work had sufficient resources to allow it to be no longer liable to the sort of questioning to which it had been subjected until that point. Kafka's name was still inextricably connected to a conception of literature according to which Flaubert, Goethe, Hegel, Marx, and Freud called the shots; only by invoking all these names in relation to Kafka could one claim access to his work and become one of the "initiated." Later, undoubtedly because Kafka's polymorphous work—somewhat in the sense in which Freud speaks of "polymorphous" sexuality—continued to resist the psychological analyses to which it was subjected, it was even to be pushed in the direction of theology and the cabala.

All this commotion would undoubtedly have continued or even escalated—has Kafka not been imagined as visiting professor at an American university in a short story by Philip Roth?!—had not Deleuze and Guattari intervened with their gentle jolt. This jolt was the result not of a new attempt to enrich Kafka's work artificially by trying to "swell it up through all the resources of symbolism, of oneirism, of esoteric sense, of a hidden signifier";[2] nor from a new attempt at a totalizing interpretation of Kafka's work; on the contrary, the break that Deleuze and Guattari brought about came from the radical reversal of this "perspective." For Deleuze and Guattari, the revolution that Kafka introduced is not the outcome of any particular philosophical proposition; neither does it stem from this or that thematic invention or rhetorical *dispositio*, but rather from the enactment of new operational principles for literature: in Kafka's hands, literature refuses to play the game of what people call "literature (with a capital L)"; for him literature becomes experimental, but in a new sense. Indeed, for Kafka, literature is no longer related to the desire to tell extraordinary and edifying stories; nor is it a question of inventing a new style or improving upon what the "masters" did, in the hope of relieving what Bloom calls the "anxiety of influence." It is the creation of a new regime of writing that enables us to account for what the writer currently apprehends as a situation of underdevelopment with which he or she experiments as if it were an extreme solitude or desert. The Kafka that Deleuze and Guattari give us anew is no longer seen as a writer preoccupied with the question of deciding in which language he should write, but rather as the writer who for the first time radically throws open the question of "literature" to the forces and the differences (of class, race, language, or gender) that run through it.

Creating the concept of "minor literature" with respect to Kafka's work, Deleuze and Guattari have brought about not merely a simple reterritorializing revaluation of literature, but a drastic change of the entire economy of "literature" itself as a compendium of hierarchically ordered literary genres or as a center of subjectification. Literature no longer begins with man in

general—"*Der Mensch überhaupt*"—but rather with this particular man or that particular woman: here a Jew, a Czech, one who speaks Yiddish and Czech but writes in German in a Prague ghetto; later on a Berber, but of Algerian nationality, who speaks French and Arabic but who must write in French for an illiterate public!; or again, a Mexican American who speaks Spanish at home but writes in English. "How many people," Deleuze and Guattari ask forcefully,

> today live in a language that is not their own? Or no longer, or not yet, even know their own and know poorly the major language that they are forced to use? This is the problem of immigrants, and especially of their children, the problem of minorities, the problem of a minor literature, *but also a problem for all of us*: how to tear a minor literature away from its own language, allowing it to challenge the language and making it follow a sober revolutionary path? How to become a nomad and an immigrant and a gypsy in relation to one's own language? Kafka answers: *steal the baby from its crib, walk the tightrope* (Deleuze and Guattari 1986, p. 19; emphasis mine).

In this short passage, we already have enough to go on to submit without fear of going astray that in the effort to reread Kafka, to tear him away from high literature and make him the precursor of a radically new political literature, there is not the least desire—not even a repressed one—to rediscover a canon or to canonize literature all over again.[3]

From such a perspective, writing quickly acquires a network of overcoding determinations that will prohibit the writer from ever assuming a preexisting identity, language, or even subjectivity. Being a "minor" writer, in the sense that Deleuze and Guattari give the expression on the basis of Kafka's work, is no longer a matter of a simple aesthetic choice, but the result of an exigency —no longer seen as dependent on the mere will of a subject felt as transparent to itself, but on an existential situation, as it were. However, having no standard or canonical means of expression at its disposal—no abstract universal in the form of *a single* national language, *a single* ethnic affiliation, *a single* prefabricated cultural identity—this existential situation calls into being a new economy of writing and of reading. The utter uniqueness of this situation is what shapes the three principal characteristics that Deleuze and Guattari identify in what they will henceforth include in the category of "minor literature."[4]

The first fundamental characteristic has to do with the forces that determine the relationship that the writers concerned have with the languages involved. "A minor literature doesn't come from a minor language; it is rather that which a minority constructs in a major language," write Deleuze and

Guattari, who proceed to elaborate as follows: "The first characteristic of minor literature in any case is that in it language is affected with a high coefficient of deterritorialization" (Deleuze and Guattari 1986, p. 16). This characterization clearly describes the situation of a writer such as Kafka "himself" as a Jew living in Prague who, with no other language than German really available as a cultural medium, will have to leave behind his mother tongue and begin to write in a foreign language. Whence the "impasses," the series of "impossibilities" that will confront him: the "impossibility of not writing . . . the impossibility of writing other than in German . . . the impossibility of writing in German" (Deleuze and Guattari 1986, p. 16). I have said that this is clearly Kafka's "himself," but it is easy to see that such also is the situation of the Algerian, Moroccan, or Tunisian writer—or, more generally, that of the *non-French* Francophone writer: one from Canada, for example, from the Antilles or Senegal, or from Mauritania. These writers will experience the same "impossibility" of not writing, because "national consciousness, uncertain or oppressed, necessarily exists by means of literature" (Deleuze and Guattari 1986, p. 16).[5]

The second characteristic of "minor literatures," according to Deleuze and Guattari, is that "everything in them is political" (Deleuze and Guattari 1986, p. 17). Referring to Kafka's work, they have no difficulty in showing that, contrary to the many *psychological* interpretations that had accustomed us to the idea of an "individualist" and/or "intimist" Kafka, or again, of Kafka as a fitting psychoanalytic subject (Marthe Robert), everything in Kafka is political—but not at all in the sense that he speaks of *nothing but* politics (in the politician's usage of the term); rather in the sense in which what takes precedence and governs the economy of daily life is no longer a "private affair," as Kafka says, but rather the concern of the political instance (*le politique*). Here, the individual no longer appears as the product of a particular isolated consciousness (even an "unhappy" or "split" one), but rather as an arrangement of *n* elements—in other words, as a desiring-machine that functions only because it is always already connected to other "machines." Most of the time these are stronger and more efficacious machines—both more efficient and productive, to be sure—but also more "determinant": commercial machines, economic machines, but also the horde of bureaucratic and judicial machines.[6]

The third characteristic of minor literature that Deleuze and Guattari discuss and which, from a certain perspective, is derived directly from the first two, "is that in it everything takes on a collective value" (Deleuze and Guattari 1986, p. 17). Indeed, because it is not the product of agents participating in a dominant culture or language and feeling themselves to be part of an always already constituted and transparent whole—because it results

from a situation "where there are no possibilities for an individuated enunciation" (Deleuze and Guattari 1986, p. 17)—minor literature will appear as the literature in which every statement, however slight, refers to a collectivity, or even to a community that is no longer *actual,* but essentially *virtual.* It is this state of affairs that gives minor literature its specific status and worth.[7] To speak in Althusserian terms, it is as if the system of "interpellations" that works fully in the regime of "great literature" no longer works. We must not forget that the regime of high literature is an essential system because it constitutes the transparency of the subject and its adhesion to the great symbolic subject of French or German language and nationality. As Kafka says, and as Deleuze and Guattari aptly repeat, "What in great literature goes on down below, constituting a not indispensable cellar of the structure, here takes place in the full light of day, what is there a matter of passing interest for a few, here absorbs everyone no less than as a matter of life and death" (Deleuze and Guattari 1986, p. 17).

Although recognizing here a founding and revolutionary theory—not only for "popular" literature and for literatures referred to as "marginal," but also for "literature" in general—a number of modern theorists have not failed to notice the limits or blind spots that, according to them, must be analyzed if the ruts of classical bourgeois literature are to be avoided.

In Louis A. Renza's view, Deleuze and Guattari, in writing their book on Kafka and the concept of minor literature, had attempted to introduce an antiauthoritarian and anti-"great-author" conception that would also be "third-worldly." Such a conception would finally open up a space and give voice to the literatures that escape "totalizing formulations of formalist, oedipal, bourgeois or Marxist modes of organization" (Renza 1984, p. 29). In fact, according to Renza, for Deleuze and Guattari, minor literature exemplifies the type of *relation to* and *practice of* literature that they had already problematized in their *Anti-Oedipus;* as such, minor literature would be seen as inscribed squarely within the rather anarchist problematic that involved replacing the preformed formal entities of yesteryear—subject, author, representation, history, science—with a theory of "desiring-machines," of "deterritorialized flows," and/or of "bodies without organs." This change in perspective, moreover, is in Renza's eyes the best index of the distance separating Deleuze and Guattari's conception of literature—a conception that the notion of "minor" literature enables them to radicalize—and a Marxist conception, for example. In fact, Renza believes, because it has tended to deny the impact of desire on the economy of social exchanges—a denial effected by "fetishizing the discourse of labor" (Renza 1984, p. 30)—Marxism itself, despite its sensitivity to the question of oppressed minorities, has missed the revolutionary dimensions of desire and become liable to a

schizoanalysis according to the rules. Moreover, it is the same logic that, according to Renza, allows Deleuze and Guattari to erect a guardrail around the oedipalizing intervention of Freudian psychoanalysis, and which leads them to criticize the Marxist regimentation (through labor) and domestication (through the "Oedipal nursery" [*la mise en pouponnière*]: "daddy-mommy-me"!) of the deterritorializing forces of desire. This critique of Freudo-Marxism is, in Renza's view, what causes Deleuze and Guattari to define an antibourgeois counterculture and to isolate a certain number of artistic works as characteristic examples of the new literature, i.e., of minor literature as a set of desiring-machines whose task it is to "short-circuit social production . . . by introducing an element of dysfunction."[8]

From such a perspective, minor literature—or, more precisely, the work called minor—would be *the ideal anti-Oedipal* text, which would conform to the theoretical exigencies of schizoanalysis, and which would come to illustrate somehow the parameters that schizoanalysis has formally assigned to it. In other words, for Renza, it is not the case that the "minor" text with its own formal and ideological characteristics made it necessary to remodel the genres and to reshuffle the cards; on the contrary, it is that a prior theoretical demand assigned a revolutionary role and function to a text *singled out arbitrarily*. From this perspective, Deleuze and Guattari are not seen as truly innovative, nor as having helped free us from the hermeneutic circle in which we were caught; rather, by setting out to challenge the validity of the criteria assigning to literary texts their place within the hierarchy of genres and (bourgeois) values, but ignoring those elements that do not fit *their* theory, Deleuze and Guattari end up establishing a system of values as rigid and dogmatic as the previous one and bringing about a return to the ideal of a literary canon. The minor literature that is then mobilized will appear simply as one kind (of literature) among others and will therefore lose its specificity.[9]

If Renza's criticism gives food for thought and calls us to vigilance, it seems nevertheless not to take into account the *politicohistorical mooring* from the vantage point of which Deleuze and Guattari have attempted to develop their analysis. For, if it is indeed true that the works of Kafka or of Edgar Allan Poe have been effectively coopted by the dominant bourgeois culture and strongly integrated into the literary canon, it is not automatically the case that they were predestined to suffer this fate. Quite the contrary, this recuperation could be one more indication of the potency of the majoritarian literary model, whose force derives precisely from the fact that it makes possible both the deflection of the destabilizing power (*dunamis*) of what can now be identified as minoritarian flows of texts, and their inscription after all as texts in the mainstream, the canon. In this sense, pulling

Kafka onto the side of minor literature, or using his work as an occasion for a reshuffling and a new theoretical deal, may be conceived as a strategy enabling a new literary theorist to kill two birds with one stone: first, to reevaluate the criteria for the definition of what "literature" is and, second, to wrest from the grip of "literature" works that would not have been integrated into the canon without having their critical (political and ideological) force *neutralized.* From such a standpoint, to appropriate Kafka or to claim his authority for the sake of minor literature would not so much reinforce the established system, as show its boundaries—suggesting a map of these at the same time as pointing to a way out of them.

It seems to me that David Lloyd understood these dynamics very well when, instead of focusing on the adequacy (or inadequacy) of any formal criterion of definition *in abstracto,* he set himself the task of providing us with new vital leads. In fact, as Lloyd sees it, while Renza may have succeeded in bringing out dramatically the contradictions inherent in all attempts to define the concept of minor literature—from Northrop Frye, through Harold Bloom and Fredrick Jameson, to Deleuze and Guattari—he nonetheless failed to assess correctly two fundamental elements: (1) the political function of the evaluations that he criticized and (2) the ideological function of the canon to which he referred without really managing to keep the necessary distance from it (Lloyd 1987, pp. 4–5). According to Lloyd, one of the touchstones for the questions posed in this debate is less the different conceptions of the subject or of subjectivity in general, less the redefinition and redistribution of literary genres for the sake of promoting a new canon, than it is the historicopolitical causes of the emergence of what we call, for the moment and for lack of a better term, "minor literature":

> Rather than shore up the notions of subjectivity that underpin canonical aesthetics, and rather than claiming still to prefigure a reconciled domain of human freedom in creativity as even surrealism does, *a minor literature pushes further the recognition of the disintegration of the individual subject of the bourgeois state, questioning the principles of originality and autonomy that underwrite that conception of the subject* (Lloyd 1987, pp. 24–25; my emphasis).

And in fact, as soon as we begin to analyze the intrinsic value of what is played out in texts that integrate the criteria proposed by Deleuze and Guattari—namely, deterritorialization of language, connection of the individual to political immediacy, collective arrangement of utterance—it becomes much easier to measure the scope of the changes that have occurred and to evaluate their nature. But the fact is that at this point the literary canon is no longer conceived in terms of an apolitical and ahistorical institutional norm

concerning only the university and the school, or the (individual) affair of the critics, but rather as a *normative institution* whose fate is linked to the nature of the *states* that are its counterparts. In such a context, minor literature can no longer be considered as just another category, but must be seen as a concept that makes it possible to orient thought in a completely different direction. If, for the time being, the literary canon fails to impose itself as a necessary and sufficient system of values, it is not only because literature has changed, but also because the institutions that used to present literature as eternal are in the process of disintegrating. There are minor literatures because peoples, races, and entire cultures were in the past reduced to silence. Minor literature appears, therefore, as the practical manifestation of that very voice: the voice of Algerians, for example, men and women, who can begin to speak not only of the violence of colonization, but also of their own differences—the difference between what the state wants them to be and what they themselves want to experiment with; differences between, on the one hand, imperial conceptions of a New World Order that takes into account only the well-understood interests of affluent countries and, on the other, the "minor" conceptions that naturally belong to peoples continuing to struggle against the underdevelopment that is the legacy of years and sometimes decades of slavery; differences, finally, between East and West and, more recently, between North and South. These are some of the differences beginning to be heard *in literature* but also elsewhere, on the political scene, for example—at the price, most often, of the most costly sacrifices.[10]

In order to substantiate my claims, I would like to devote the rest of this essay to the analysis, illustrated by the theatrical experience of the writer Kateb Yacine, of certain theoretical and practical difficulties that Francophone Algerian literature has encountered in its effort, despite the obstacles it faces, to create a language of its own, to elaborate a terrain, and to find an audience.

What is the situation of a country like Algeria at the time of independence? What terrain is available for getting a cultural life off the ground? What conditions confront Algerian writers? On the one hand, Algeria inherits a state of rampant mass deculturation, in view of which the very notion of an audience seems to be a luxury or, in the best of cases, a difficult objective to reach; on the other, the number of writers, artists (including filmmakers) and intellectuals is woefully insufficient in relation to its needs, and, for the most part, these writers and artists are wholly acculturated (almost all of them have, in the best of cases, been formed in the French school system). Not only, therefore, are (cultural) products and producers lacking, but the terrain itself is missing on which these products may take root and acquire a certain significance. That is to say that at the time of

Algeria's independence, cultural problems in general, and those of literature in particular, were being posed not *in universal and abstract terms of expression,* but, first and foremost, in terms of regional and concrete territorialization. In other words, we were faced with an attempt to create from scratch —but not casually—on the ruins of a social community that escaped disaster and dislocation only in *extremis* a new collective subject, or even a national subject. It is evident here that every decision and every engagement was, to borrow one of Kafka's expressions, a question "of life or death." To create or recreate a terrain or to define something as a national characteristic sounds natural enough—but out of what? Out of the forgotten, obliterated past? Out of the ruins of popular memory? Out of folklore? Tradition? Which folklore, which tradition? In fact, not one of these instances was strong enough and cohesive enough to anchor a national culture. And in any case, even when raised in this way, the questions are not very clear and the problems remain abstract because, whether by means of folklore, the past, tradition, or anything else of that ilk, the creation of a specific, authentic culture requires first of all a solution to the problem of the medium through which it must—or can—be accomplished: specifically, the problem of language. In which language should one write? In which language should one communicate? Which language should be used on the radio, on television, in films? French—this "paper language" that only intellectuals and lettered people speak and read? Arabic? But which Arabic? The language of the educated or that of the street? Or again: What does one do with the Berber language? Prohibit it? Ostracize it?

These are the concrete and vital problems that explain the crucial tensions, contradictions, and difficulties encountered by every artist in Algeria and in any other former French colony: to write for the writers, or to make films for the filmmakers, becomes an urgent question because, as we understand very well by now, every one of the choices they make is a *founding* choice; each one of their words carves out the very flesh of the nation to come. In all cases, it is a matter of creating the missing terrain—for the terrain is indeed missing—though from a certain point of view, what is missing is also the people itself.[11] It is a matter of finding a way out from the labyrinth of languages: a matter of staking one's territory like an animal, of never leaving one's *Umwelt*—with the understanding that this declaration of a missing people is not a renunciation, but rather "the new basis on which it is founded."[12]

We know today that this lack, as well as the movements of deterritorialization that accompany it, is inseparable from the problem of language: the situation of Francophones in a country that opts very rapidly for Arabization in schools and administrative bodies; the situation of Arab-speaking writers

in a country with an illiteracy rate of over 8.5 percent, and with French still the dominant language everywhere; the situation of the Berbers in the mountains and the Tuaregs in the Sahara, forced to abandon their own languages as they leave the desert or the rural areas. What is to be done with this blur of languages? Or, as Deleuze and Guattari put it, "How to become a nomad and an immigrant and a gypsy in relation to one's own language? Kafka answers: steal the baby from its crib, walk the tightrope" (Deleuze and Guattari 1986, p. 19). For Algerian writers, there have been only two possible paths to take. One has been to enrich the French language artificially, to "swell it up through all the resources of symbolism, of oneirism, of esoteric sense, of a hidden signifier" (p. 19), an approach resulting in some of the texts of writers such as Mohammed Dib, Rachid Boujedra, and, to a certain extent, Nabile Farès. But such efforts have implied once more "a desperate attempt at symbolic reterritorialization based in archetypes" (p. 19)—sexuality, blood, or death—that have only accentuated the break from the people. The alternative has been to move toward a greater sobriety, a poverty of means, a "white writing," out of which has come texts such as Boujedra's *L'escargot entêté* or the poems and later novels of Dib.

Faced with these limitations, Yacine very soon leaves off writing novels and poetry in order to give himself entirely over to theatrical production. This was a "minor" genre in Algeria when Yacine laid hold of it at the beginning of the 1970s, but he made it into an extraordinary instrument of metamorphosis, transforming a situation of extreme cultural poverty and stagnation into a revolutionary process. Having understood very early on the importance of the linguistic element in the situation/circumstances Algeria was going through during that period, Yacine quickly seized on the advantages to be gained by exploiting the resources of the popular theater. He understood at any rate that it made no sense to promote a theater limited to spoken Arabic in order to produce plays in a country with not one spoken language, but rather several vernacular languages (Arabic, French, and Berber), each with its own temporality and its own terrain. Yacine understood as well that if independence had emancipated Algeria from its politicoadministrative tutelage, it had not solved the problem of its relation to French as a vehicular language (of commercial exchange and bureaucratic transmission) and as a referential language (the instrument of politics and of *Gesellschaft*)! His understanding of this complex interplay, it seems to me, is what explains the affinities between his theater and the minor literature that Deleuze and Guattari present as emerging with Kafka. Yacine's theater, with the capacity to take all these elements into account, is able to function as a practical sociolinguistics and to fill the prevailing void. Because his work takes off from the same politicohistorical premises as Kafka's, it is no surprise

that it shares in the principal traits that characterize minor literature: Yacine has spontaneously transposed these features into his work.

The first thing that strikes the reader or the viewer of his plays is the treatment to which he subjects the languages he mobilizes. Yacine found a way to transform French in order to bend it to the needs of the cause he was defending; in order to speak to the people, to address the people, to lend it a voice when it was foreign to itself. He accomplishes this by means of *underdeveloping*—developing from below—French, in order to bend it to the political and ideological demands of his people, through the elimination of syntactic and lexical forms. We should not forget the taste for "innate genitality," as Antonin Artaud would have called it, in the semantic overload of words—an overload that often reaches the pitch of a cry, or of the popular song of Cheikh Mohammed el Anka and of Rai music.[13] Having said this, we must also acknowledge that Yacine was never oriented toward a cultural reterritorialization through spoken Arabic or Berber, and even less through a hypercultural usage of French or classical Arabic. On the contrary, since *both* French *and* Arabic were themselves deterritorialized in Algeria as in the entire Maghreb, Yacine chose to push ever further in the direction of an increasingly *intensive* use of French. Indeed, although in his novels French syntax was still more or less respected, in his theater Yacine definitely dismisses "standard" French in order to draw the language nearer to the most disarticulated usages, which are also the closest to popular practice. Thus, besides the common vernacular languages used (Arabic, Berber), the knowledgeable public could also recognize the French of the immigrant worker, the French of the Berber speaker, or the French of a particular town (Algiers, Oran, or Constantine) mixed with the different accents that correspond to these. This mishmash helps explain the "becoming" that Yacine has his characters undergo: not only Tunisian president Bourguiba's becoming "short neck,"[14] but also the general's becoming "killer consonants."[15]

The other characteristic feature of this theater is obviously its political dimension. Here, as well, we are faced with a theater that is political not because of the political themes it mobilizes, but essentially because it is a theater where every "individual concern" is always and immediately connected with politics. In Yacine's theater, if an individual concern is necessary, it is, above all, insofar as it is always another story, a much larger and more complex one—the story of colonization, most definitely, but also the story of racism, of the prison and the psychiatric asylum, of the French school system, etc.—all of these stories are vibrating within the private affair, which stems from them and is played out in them. It is thus that the familial triangle will always find itself broken and exploded: in Yacine, one always abandons his mother (the motherland) and the father is always father at one

remove, a phony father or a stepfather. The fact is that family ties were historically subordinated to many other laws besides those of an "integrated" society: when it is not the father who emigrates, leaving his offspring to a brother or a cousin, it is the sons who leave never to return, and who end up inventing their own genealogy.[16] Familial relations will then be replaced by *blocks of alliance,* and the Algerian will find more affinity with a Portuguese immigrant in France or a black American than with a compatriot who has accepted the "new deal" with one race, one language, and a single religion, Islam. In Yacine's universe, neither race nor religion, nor even language, sufficiently accounts for the mental world of a North African.

And it is in this context that one could say that Yacine's theater is a *political theater*, even a theater of grand politics, and not only a politicized theater. Whereas in dominant nations the family, the couple, and even the individual carry out their affairs as *private affairs*, in the theater of Yacine "the private affair merges with the social—or political—immediate."[17] Thus, as is also the case in the films of Glauber Rocha or Güney or in the novels of Gabriel García Márquez, "the myths of the people, prophetism and banditism [and, I would add, emigration and the impossibility of return] are the archaic obverse of capitalist violence, as if the people were turning and increasing against themselves the violence that they suffer from somewhere else out of a need for idolization" (Deleuze 1988, p. 218). It is this violence that Yacine, without knowing or even caring about what Kafka may have done, mobilizes in his theatrical work, which he transforms into the largest imaginable arena of agitprop, which "is no longer a result of a becoming conscious, but consists of *putting everything into a trance*, the people and its masters, and the camera [in Yacine's case, the mise-en-scène] itself, pushing everything into a state of aberration, in order to communicate violences as well as to make private business pass into the political, and political affairs into the private" (Deleuze 1988, p. 219). For Yacine and for many writers and filmmakers from former colonies, as for Kafka, it is no longer a question of invoking myths in order to discover their archaic sense and structure, "but of connecting archaic myth to the state of the drives in an absolutely contemporary society, hunger, thirst, sexuality, power, death, worship" (Deleuze and Guattari 1988, p. 219). As Yacine puts it, "plans are constantly being turned upside down!" Once again, it is not a matter of opposing "reality" (which one?) to myth, but, on the contrary, given the existing circumstances, of extracting from the myth a "lived actual" that would make it possible to account for the impossibility of living in the conditions that people have inherited. Such an impossibility could certainly drive people to madness, but it can also be transformed into a revolutionary instrument for attending to first things first—for example, to the need to give life and voice

to the people. But, for Yacine, defending the people no longer means hunkering down and retreating into oneself, but, on the contrary, showing that the people are never one but always plural: a multiplicity of peoples with intersecting destinies.[18]

In this way, popular theater takes over a potential revolutionary machine, not only for short-term ideological reasons, but rather because only this machine is able to fulfill the conditions of a collective utterance that is nowhere else to be found. One must be blind therefore, or irresponsible, to accuse Deleuze and Guattari of not being political enough, or of being shortsighted from a historical point of view. One must be deaf not to hear the shout of joy let out by all writers living and writing in the conditions that they describe the day that they were able to count Kafka as one of their own and to add the multiple resources of his "minor" art to the instruments that they had created against the silence and the indifference of the literary *establishment.* Minor literature had long since made its *practical entry* into the history of literature; but its *theoretical entry* had yet to be made. Thanks to the work of Deleuze and Guattari, and judging by the renewed interest it is currently receiving and, above all, by the rich debates it has provoked, one can say that this theoretical entrance has taken place—and all to the good of literature.

—Translated by Jennifer Curtiss Gage

Notes

1. Cf. Deleuze and Guattari on the *CsO* (*Corps sans organes*): "It is in no way a question of a fragmented, shattered body, or of organs without a body (OwB). The CsO is precisely the opposite. It is not a matter of fragmented/piecemeal . . . organs with respect to a lost unity, nor of a return to the undifferentiated with respect to a differentiable whole . . . The BwO is desire; it is that which and through which we desire" (*Mille plateaux: Capitalisme et schizophrénie* [Paris: Minuit, 1980], p. 203).
2. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature,* trans. Dana Polan (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), p. 19.
3. Here I have in mind, among other possible references, the beautiful, quite original text of Louis A. Renza, "*A White Heron*" *and the Question of Minor Literature* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984), in which one finds the following remarks: "For Deleuze and Guattari, *then,* 'minor literature is 'schizo' literature in its subatomic-like anti-oedipal and self-deconstructing release of literary 'intensities'" (p. 33; my emphasis); or the following, which is even more clearly stated and, in its context, appears as a symptom: "Unlike the formalist or Bloomian aesthetic conceptions of minor literature, *then,* Deleuze and Guattari's includes an ideological element. And unlike the Marxist ideological conception of minor literature, theirs attempts to account for its particular aesthetic operations. Yet *no less than these other conceptions,* Deleuze and Guattari's anti-oedipal or fissionary (but not

visionary) delineation of minor literature *ends up* inviting the return of a repressed desire for canonicity" (p. 34; emphasis mine).

4. In the general context of Renza's analysis, the quotation marks produce the intended effect of once again canonizing a text whose primary task was to remove itself from the canon, whether literary or critical! In the previous note, the "then" and "ends up" seem to me, at the very least, to clash both with the overall project and with the details of the Deleuze and Guattari project. As I try to suggest here, their project is not to canonize Kafka—how could they do so, since they make Kafka the "somber precursor" (Deleuze) of a kind of minor literature that owes him its *theoretical* existence!—but rather to tear his work away from the many attempts to reduce it to the literature of the major (signifying) regimes.

5. I am thinking here of the work of writers such as Abdelkébir Khatibi in Morocco, Abdel Wahhab Meddeb in Tunisia, and, of course, writers like Nabile Farès or Kateb Yacine in Algeria, or Edouard Glissant in the Caribbean. They also found themselves, in the days following their countries' independence, in the situation that Deleuze and Guattari describe: They must write, but—whether for technical or for ideological reasons, which I will address later on with regard to Yacine—they cannot use the French language simply as a matter of course. Whatever they do, this language will remain an "official language" and the instrument par excellence of the most tragic "inner exiles." "Never," writes Yacine, "even in my days of success with the teacher, did I stop feeling deep inside myself that second rending of the umbilical cord, that internal exile that brought the schoolchild closer to his mother only to yank him away, each time a little farther, from the murmuring blood, from the reproving tremors of a banished language, secretly, of one accord, no sooner struck than broken . . . *Thus it was that together I lost both my mother and her language, the only inalienable—and yet alienated—treasures*" (*Le polygône étoilé* [Paris: Seuil, 1956], pp. 181–182; my emphasis).

6. In setting forth the elements of this problematic, I recognize the debt that Deleuze and Guattari owe to Althusser's work, particularly his work on "ideological state apparatuses." "It will be recalled that after revealing the effects of the mirror-structure of Ideology—whether 'the interpellation of "individuals" as subjects,' or 'their subjection to the (Grand) Subject,' or the 'mutual recognition of subjects by themselves and by one another,' or, lastly 'the absolute guarantee that all is well'" Althusser remarks,

> Result: caught in this quadruple system of interpellation as subjects, of subjection to the Subject, of universal recognition and of absolute guarantee, the Subjects "work," they "work by themselves" in the vast majority of cases, with the exception of the "bad subjects" who on occasion provoke the intervention of one of the detachments of the repressive state apparatus. But the vast majority of (good) subjects work all right "all by themselves," i.e. by ideology (whose concrete forms are realized in the Ideological State Apparatuses). They are inserted into practices governed by the rituals of the ISAS, etc. [Louis Althusser, "Ideology and the State," in *On Ideology* (London: Verso, 1984), p. 181.

See also "Idéologie et appareils idéologiques d'état," *La Pensée* 151 (1970): p. 35.

7. For reasons that are quite understandable in the context in which Deleuze and Guattari inscribe their analysis of the emergence of minor literature—their task is to analyze the work of an author whose work cannot yet be defined except through a demarcation from the canon and from the genres that dominate the cultural and literary scene of the moment—the collective dimension is attributed to the rarity of talents in the face of what we could term the plethora of "masters." I will attempt, later on, to show that determination by means of rarity is problematic in that it tends (unconsciously?) to confirm the validity of a model—

that of *great literature*—according to the definition of which everything that is not included in the literary canon will be considered as insufficient, secondary, or even marginal.

Deleuze and Guattari seem completely aware of this problem, since a little further on in their book, after defining the three characteristics of minor literature—deterritorialization of language, connection of the individual with the political immediacy, collective arrangement of utterance—they spontaneously invoke the relation of the notion of minor literature to that of "marginal" literature. Now, as they do so, they show that the latter can be "well understood" only in comparison with the singular economy of minor literature: "There has been much discussion of the questions 'What is a marginal literature' and 'What is a popular literature, a proletarian literature?' The criteria are obviously difficult to establish if one doesn't start with a more objective concept—that of minor literature. Only the possibility of setting up a minor practice of a major language from within allows one to define popular literature, marginal literature, and so on" (Deleuze and Guattari 1986, p. 18; my emphasis).

One final remark on this subject. In his fine book on the Irish author James Clarence Mangan, David Lloyd exhibits an acute awareness of these difficulties and makes a number of important points that I would like to begin to relate to the present study. Having acknowledged the work of the pioneer Louis A. Renza (see note 1 above), Lloyd criticizes him for deferring discussion of the *political* functions of the different evaluations of minor literature that were made by the predecessors of Deleuze and Guattari, but straightaway Lloyd extends his criticism to a certain lack of vigilance on the part of Deleuze and Guattari themselves. Lloyd writes

> To produce an adequate theory of minor literature in any sense of the term, it is necessary to analyze historically the politics of culture. Deleuze and Guattari's work goes some way toward engaging this issue, though impressionistically and largely only synchronically. What they valuably indicate, however, is the extent to which recent interest in the question of "minor" literature recognizes the prior emergence of a combative field of literature that is expressly political insofar as the literature of the Third World, of "minorities" or formerly marginalized communities, *calls into question the hegemony of central cultural values. A retrospective, even belated, analysis discovers in articulating the political structure of the canon the terms of an aesthetic culture that have already been negated by a new literature* (David Lloyd, *Nationalism and Minor Literature: James Clarence Mangan and the Emergence of Irish Cultural Nationalism* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987], p. 5; my emphasis).

8. Gilles Deleuze and Fèlix Guattari, *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, vol. 1, *Anti-Oedipus*, trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane (New York: Viking Press, 1977), p. 31. Quoted in, *"A White Heron" and the Question of Minor Literature*, p. 31.

9. Cf. *"A White Heron" and the Question of Minor Literature*, pp. 32–36, particularly the following:

> Their brand of minor literature clearly becomes a *privileged double* of their antioedipal revolutionary desire to overthrow all versions of a here debased reactionary or reterritorializing major literature . . . Deleuze and Guattari thus *privilege* only a *certain kind* of minor literature, that which like Kafka's is in the process of interrogating the oedipean tropes of major literary praxis but which the major language or canonical critical codes can misrecognize as major according to their own standards (p. 34; my emphasis).

10. Who would have ever heard of Kateb Yacine, Nabile Farès, and Rachib Boujedra without the Algerian war and the independence that followed? Yacine had written and published very

beautiful texts before these events! But it is true that he still could be read only as a "minor" writer, in other words, as a *secondary* writer. As an Algerian writer, was he not still considered as a second-class French citizen from the outlying territories?

11. I am thinking here of what Gilles Deleuze writes in *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), pp. 216–18:

> [T]he people no longer exist, or not yet . . . *the people are missing* . . . No doubt this truth also applied to the West, but very few authors discovered it, *because it was hidden by the mechanisms of power and the systems of majority.* On the other hand, it was absolutely clear in the third world, where oppressed and exploited nations remained in a state of perpetual minorities, in a collective identity crisis. Third world and minorities gave rise to authors who would be in a position, in relation to their nation and their personal situation in that nation, to say: *the people are what is missing* (my emphasis, except for first).

12. *Cinema 2*, p. 217. These are the "conditions" that explain why, historically, it is the cinema or theater, and not literature, for example, that has achieved the objectives expected from the renaissance of Algerian culture, providing the vital medium that enables a people to recognize in themselves a national "character": as an identity in the diversity of local languages and cultures, as a unity in the multiplicity of *techne*s and manners, and, finally, as active solidarity amid the disparity of cities and countrysides.

13. Cheikh Mohammed el Anka was a singer of the *chaabi*, or popular, style—one of the most broadly appreciated genres of music, through which the most important political, erotic, and social messages were conveyed. Rai is a form of popular dance music with strong rhythms and lyrics that often deal with the burning issues of the day, whether political, social, sexual, or affective. It is no coincidence that Rai music has been condemned by representatives of the FIS (Islamic Salvation Front) in Algeria.

14. Bourguiba is transcribed as "*bourequibat*," which in colloquial Arabic is a diminutive of "neck" and can be translated as "small neck" or "spindly neck."

15. The reference here is to the General "*Q qui tue*" ("Killer Q") in Yacine's *La Gandourie sans uniforme*.

16. Cf. Mouloud Feraoun, *Le fils du pauvre* (Paris: Seuil, 1954) and Rachid Boujedra, *Topographie idéale pour une agression caractérisée* (Paris: Denoël, 1975).

17. Cf. *Cinema 2*, p. 218.

18. I have in mind here the play *L'homme aux sandales de caoutchouc* (Paris: Seuil, 1972), written in honor of Ho Chi Minh while he was still alive; this play ultimately became a hymn to the struggle of all oppressed peoples.

12

Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation

Dana Polan

OUT OF GILLES DELEUZE'S books, *Logique de la sensation* has been virtually passed over in silence. But for a review essay by Patrick Vauday at the time of its appearance and a very short appreciation by Christine Buci-Glucksmann,[1] *Logique* is a book that few writers seem to have felt is important—either for what it says about Bacon (my university's fine arts library has a number of books on Francis Bacon, but not Deleuze's), for what it teaches about aesthetic practice in the contemporary world, or, most important perhaps to our purposes here, for what it offers as confirmations or mutations in Deleuze's work when it comes to engage with the work of art.

This neglect seems to me unfortunate, and what I want to do in the following discussion is suggest some of the interest *Logique de la sensation* might hold for us. We can note, first of all, how interesting the book is simply as a reading of Bacon. In keeping with his attempt (as in *Kafka)* to rethink authorship away from psychologism, Deleuze figures here a Bacon who is almost a *scientist* of the visual arts, using the space of the tableau for operative experiments (*operatoire* is one of the recurrent words in the book). Deleuze's Bacon is, for example, quite different from the pop-psych version of the suffering artist represented in a short piece on Bacon that appeared in my local paper, the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, as I was preparing this essay.[2] Here, the meaning of art is to be found *in* the artist, in the very corporeality of his being. Donald Miller, the *Post-Gazette* art critic, receives a photo of Bacon and notes that he has "differently focused eyes." For Miller, this explains the style of the art with its "interlocking planes floating indistinctly into each other, as crossing focal points would." Miller even makes an appeal to the old mythology that art is born out of suffering: "I don't admire Bacon any less . . . If anything, I marvel how Bacon, like [Henry] Koerner, has enriched his creativity through his eye problem, creating a distinctive style."

To be sure, even as he avoids such myths of a creativity tied intensely to the suffering body, Deleuze is not wanting to get rid of notions of individual authorship altogether, and there are moments when *Logique de la sensation* slips back into that romanticist appreciation of individual expressivity that often pops out in Deleuze's texts on artists. On the one hand, as in *Kafka,* with its constant reference back to the *Letters* or *Diaries* (and to a lesser extent the testimony of friends), Deleuze reverts to a faith in the ability of the artist to reveal his/her intention in moments of intimate communication. *Logique de la sensation* relies heavily on Bacon's interview with David Sylvester, and the book often treats Bacon's words as a truth that can be applied to the understanding of the work's experimentation: to take just one example from a possible many, on the second page of *Logique,* Deleuze cites from the Sylvester interview the claim that "*with modesty*, Bacon recognizes that classic painting has often succeeded in tracing this other type of relation between Figures [that is, of nonnarrative relation] and that this is still the task of the painting of the future" (p. 10; my emphasis).

On the other hand, as in Deleuze's two volumes on cinema[3], the very comparison of the artist to other sorts of workers in the realm of concepts—whether they be philosophers or scientists—bolsters a romanticism of the artist by treating him/her as a veritable thinker, a true inhabitant of a world of ideas (even if these ideas are indistinguishable from the force and sensation that go along with them). Deleuze eschews the myth of the artist as an intuitive figure for whom creativity comes welling up as a sort of ineffable inspiration or intuition; for Deleuze, instead, it seems often that it is the very fact that the artist can *reflect* on his/her practice that gives the artist a worth, a value.

Nonetheless, for all its emphasis on a specialness of the artist, Deleuze's meditation on creators avoids a full romantic mythology of expressiveness in a number of ways. First of all, the very emphasis on the artist as someone who works experimentally breaks down typical boundaries of the aesthetic and the practical: the artist rejoins the general camp of cultural workers. Second, and connected to the first point, Deleuze's mode of discourse, here as in other books on single figures, works by a deliberate process of digression in which the writing veers away from the nominal subject of the book endlessly to make comparisons with other figures. Just as the Kafka book will be about Welles or Proust as well as Franz K., just as the Leibniz book will be as much about baroque artists up to the present, so too the Bacon book offers short disquisitions on figures ranging from Rembrandt to Joseph Conrad to (again) Proust to Jacques Tati to William Burroughs to Artaud. Some of this derives from Deleuze's overall interest in writing as a form of pick-up (as he terms it in *Dialogues*), but it seems to me it also works to

remind us that no artist is alone. Each artist takes his/her place in a tradition of experiments, and each artist can be read as simply one more side (or facet) of an overall project: here, with a concise explicitness, Deleuze names that project the search for *a logic of sensation.*

It is here that the quasi-romantic study of Bacon individually joins up with the larger romantic project of Deleuze: to go beyond the surface fixities of a culture and find those forces, those energies, those fluxes, those sensations that specific sociohistorical inscriptions have blocked and reified into social etiquettes and stultifying patterns of representation. Bacon, of course, seems ready-made for such a project, and one can almost have the sense that if Bacon didn't exist, Deleuze would have had to invent him for his argument. Of course, though, he does exist, and the proof of this is brought out doubly by material aspects of *Logique de la sensation.*

First, the back of the two volumes of *Logique* sport photomaton pictures of Bacon, making him seem present in directly vibrant ways. That one major argument of *Logique* deals very critically with the role of the photographic image in increasing the spread of clichés through our society only intensifies the irony of the cover of *Logique*'s appeal to a givenness of the artist through his photographic image. If, as I have already suggested, *Logique* is in a tension between a romanticism of the artist as a ground of knowledge about artistic practice, and a demythification of individuality by the reinsertion of each individual artistic praxis back into a field of general cultural experimentation, the back-cover photos of Bacon aid in the staging of this tension by offering us the image of the artist on the back of a book that critiques to a large degree the potential truth-value of images. And, in this respect, even the cover itself incorporates the tensions of the book's arguments about the need for a modern art of *defiguration* by, on the one hand, offering up the photographs with scratches, rips, technical flaws, and so on as if to figure the very breakdown of the figurative that *Logique* will discuss in its pages and, on the other hand, balancing the back-cover photography against the front-cover painting of a mutating face, as if to highlight the distinction between the powers of painterly defiguration and the limitations of photographic cliché.

Second, the very division of *Logique de la sensation* into two volumes—one just of Deleuze's commentary, one just of Bacon's paintings—sets up the tension of image and concept and yet suggests ways to overcome the developing of that tension into an irreconcilable split. How can one, on the one hand, argue that all aesthetic practices participate in a common activity of force and sensation and, on the other hand, still respect the material and formal specificity of each art? This is a question that has vexed theorists. To take just one example, film theorist Raymond Bellour argues that film is an "unattainable text," posing quite particular problems to close textual

analysis.[4] Such analysis necessitates a quotability of the analyzed work (as in the "lexie" of Roland Barthes's *S/Z*), but, as Bellour argues, film is not quotable, or rather it is not quotable in any way that does not freeze the image (see, for example, Alfred Guzzetti's book on Jean-Luc Godard's *Two or Three Things I Know about Her,* which puts frame enlargements on one page and commentary on the facing page) or translate the visual into the verbal. Short of doing one's textual analysis in the same medium as the analyzed work—so that Bellour himself, to analyze the sexual ideology of the Hollywood film, has made a critical videotape that includes, or quotes, extracts from the films—analysis can only seem to betray the image.

As I have suggested in a review-essay of Deleuze's book on Foucault, there seems to be, in Deleuze, an active engagement with the theoretical question of what it means to talk in one medium about the practices of another medium.[5] Aware that all acts of translation are betrayals, Deleuze seeks experimentally, nonetheless, for those ways, those moments, in which the verbal can *invoke* the visual. First, as I argue, there is in Deleuze's writing a constant recourse to the setting up of *tableaus*—verbal descriptions of scenes that in their stylistic richness gain all the intensity of a visual presence. Second, the very language that Deleuze uses to describe the operations of force and intensity is a vivid and materialized one that makes even the most ethereal concepts seem sensuously concrete. For all his discussion of the arts as conceptual, Deleuze understands the concepts as quite physical operations, rather than as ideal abstractions. His philosophical language is one of mappings and cartographies, lines of escape and vanishing points, rhizomatic and crystalline branchings, and so on.

With apparent paradox, this evocative verbal language seems to work its spell all the more when the visual is not present. It is as if once the language of evocation gets going and starts constructing the imagination of a visuality for the reader, any actual image could only be a reductive fixity, an impoverishment, a blocking of the imagination's powers. Hence, Deleuze eschews all photos in his two cinema books, letting his own language do the work of rendering the films in their forceful intensity.

In the case of *Logique de la sensation,* what might have been initially a practical decision to present the analysis in two easily manageable parts also seems to stage the tension between verbal and visual. Most important, it seems to me that there is no apparent, easy, logical, necessary relation between the two volumes. Although the volume of pure text sports little figures in the margin keyed to particular plates in the volume of images, the very turning back and forth between the two tomes leads to a constant fragmenting of Deleuze's own argument's flow (so that I decided to read the text twice, once flipping to the images, once just concentrating on the text;

another option would be to study the images very closely and then go to the text alone). Not merely an illustration of Deleuze's argument, the volume of images is a full and beautifully produced catalogue in its own right; not merely a catalogue essay, Deleuze's volume is a general theory of modern art in its own right. As I have argued for *Foucault*, Deleuze figures his theory of art with a writing style that itself overcomes the verbal/visual dichotomy by being intensely vivid, imagistic, tableauesque. Note, for example, how evocative, how unabstracted are the opening words of *Logique de la sensation*: "A roundness often delimits the place where the character—that is, the Figure—is seated. This roundness, or this oval, more or less, takes its place: it can overflow the edges of the tableau, be in the center of a triptych, etc." (p. 9).

What theory of art emerges then in Deleuze's evaluation of the visual? It is his concept of modern art that I want to stake out in the rest of this essay by simply going through the book and rehearsing its argument. Given the relative unfamiliarity of most scholars with *Logique de la sensation*, this explanatory operation is perhaps not without interest.

Deleuze begins with a note telling us that his book will be organized by rubrics, each dealing with an aspect of Bacon's paintings. Taken together, these rubrics are intended to build a "general" logic of sensation, "whose summit is founded in the sensations of colors." At the same time, in a gesture that is familiar in the work of Deleuze, he suggests that this logic of sensation also has a historical dimension—is directly historical. Indeed, if much of Deleuze's work is geared to finding a general force or sensation behind the superficial flux of historical movement, there is also a sense in which history takes its revenge on Deleuzian antihistory and shows how the search for a logic of sensation is governed by a framework that is finally temporal throughout. One thinks here of the claim in *L'image-movement* (and repeated in the special note added to the American edition) that Deleuze intends no historical argument about the development of cinemas. Yet the two volumes on cinema quickly become historical through, and at several levels, whether that of the progress from a simple movement within the single shot of "primitive cinema" to the complex movement constructed by montage, or the movement within and between the two volumes from a goal-oriented action cinema symptomatized by Hollywood story-telling to a postwar art cinema symptomatized by errancy, passive observation, and the pure perception of time.

In *Logique de la sensation*, too, an art history argument emerges. Here, however, in contrast to the cinema books, this history never seems even vaguely totalized (except insofar as Bacon is seen as a high point of the age-old quest for defiguration) and emerges only in flashes, deliberate digressions that offer glimpses of a narrative never fully rendered. I think, for example, of

the fascinating excursus in rubric 2 (pp. 13–14) on the effect of photography and modernity on art's history. Here Deleuze dispenses with the famous argument—from Malraux and now picked up by Bacon—that two conditions of modernity free modern art from the representational project: first, the rise of photography creates a new ease of documentation that will permit modern art to explore other, nondocumentary regions; second, secularization increasingly frees art from the need to *represent* religious themes and values.

Deleuze dispenses with the latter of these two arguments in a way that once and for all puts to rest the myth that it is only in our modern age that defiguration is achieved in art (to take just one example, remnants of this myth surface in Barthes's *Writing Degree Zero,* where Flaubert and 1850 stand as markers of a needed break from bourgeois representability). Deleuze argues intriguingly that traditional Christian religious art needs an element of defiguration, of abstraction, to fulfill its very aims. It needs this in order specifically to achieve a different and higher sort of representation that goes beyond realism's rendering of an earthly hereness to picture at one and the same time this figurative hereness *and* the more abstracted, unmaterial, spiritual realm of the beyond. As Deleuze puts it,

> Take an extreme example: the "Burial of Count d'Ogaz," by El Greco. A horizontal divides the tableau into two parts, inferior and superior, terrestrial and celestial. And in the bottom part, there is certainly a figuration or a narration that represents the burial of the count, even though all the coefficients of deformation of bodies, and notably of elongation, are already at work. But above, where the Count is received by Christ, there is a wild liberation, a total freedom: the figures stand up or stretch out, refine themselves without measure, outside all constraint. In spite of appearances, there is no longer any story to be told; Figures are delivered from the representative role and they enter directly into rapport with an order of celestial sensations (p. 13).

Deleuze's Francis Bacon, then, will be a modern artist, but not according to our usual sense of modernity as a radical break from the regressions of history and as a first and unique achieving of defiguration. For Deleuze, defiguration has a venerable history (just as *Logique du sens* finds antecedents for Lewis Carroll in the Stoics), and if there is a uniqueness or specificity to Bacon's defigurative project, it is that Bacon's historical moment is the moment of such phenomena of mass reproduction as the cinema and the photograph. Bacon is in a lineage with El Greco and others, but his place in that lineage is, of necessity, historically particular.

Deleuze's discussion begins fairly internally—with an analysis of Bacon's specific painterly practices—and then moves from formal analysis of the

tableaus to the larger art-historical implications of what Bacon is up to. Thus, the very first rubric, "*Le rond, La piste*," examines the procedures by which Bacon frequently delimits a central figure through the effect of surrounding that figure with some oval shape. And yet, very quickly, Deleuze directs his analysis in such a way that the division of formal investigation and historical or sociological inquiry reveals itself to be little more than an expedient heuristic. The formal and the historical blur inextricably. For instance, the very simple act of delimitation by means of an oval is rewritten by Deleuze as only a single and initial step in a higher logic or series of logics.

The first rubric gives us several examples of this rewriting. First, Deleuze reminds us that the delimitation by means of the oval is itself an open-ended process of experimentation: it renders "sensible a sort of trailblazing of the Figure in its place, or on itself. It is an operative field" (p. 9). Second, as Deleuze notes, the delimitation of the single figure will have to be situated in subsequent discussions in relation to Bacon's larger procedure of linking several figures together (as in the triptychs). Third, delimitation of a figure away from all narrative context is not the only means of defiguration, even if it is the one that Bacon in particular prefers: as Deleuze says, "painting has two possible paths for escaping the figurative: toward pure form, through abstraction, or toward the pure figural, through extraction or isolation" (p. 9). If Bacon opts for the latter, another branch of art opts for the former, and much of *Logique de la sensation* will discuss the option of abstraction as much as that of a denarrativizing isolation. And this constant attention by Deleuze to the multiple paths of art history connects to yet another way the first rubric takes its place within a higher logic: already, from the beginning, Deleuze digresses from Bacon to the whole field of art experimentation. For example, he announces (p. 11) that the links of the Baconian system with Egyptian and Byzantine and other artistic systems will have to be explored at some later point.

Just as the simple strategy of the oval will be generative, then, of other Baconian strategies, so too the first rubric of *Logique de la sensation* contains the basic crystals for the remainder of Deleuze's argument. Hence, the second rubric moves, as we have already noted, into general comments geared to overcoming standard arguments (the Malrauxian ones) as to a supposed privilege of modern art in the quest for defiguration. As indicated before, Deleuze quickly disposes of the argument that the religiosity of premodernist art destined it for a project of figuration. That argument relegated to the dust bins of history, Deleuze invokes the second argument, namely, that photography's chemical reproduction of images gives it a realism that frees up other arts from the desire for realism; but he ends the second rubric with the resolution of this issue hinted at, but not fleshed out. Again, in the two short

pages of rubric 2, we can see the argumentative-discursive strategy of Deleuze at work: he moves beyond the concerns immediately at hand (that is, Bacon's defigurative tactics) to general (historical) concerns, but he makes this move in a way that allows, indeed even necessitates, further discussion in later rubrics.

In regard to Malraux's second argument—photography frees up the arts so that they may go thirsting after defiguration—Deleuze accepts it *in part*. He admits that photography impacts on painting; there is a sort of anxiety of influence in which each painter begins his/her work knowing (or sensing) that that work is being done in a world already of the photograph: "[m]odern painting is invaded, besieged, by photos and clichés that install themselves on the canvas even before the painter has begun to work. In fact, it would be an error to believe that the painter works on a white and virgin surface. The surface is virtually already invested entirely by all sorts of clichés from which one must break away" (p. 14). But, where Malraux tended to see the freeing up of painting as a natural process wherein a nonvisual art easily discovered its true vocation, Deleuze argues that this process has nothing natural about it, nothing spontaneous, nothing inevitable. The world of the cliché comes to the artist as a threat, a pressure, and only a concerted effort, an intense job of work, can enable painting to eschew the cliché (this notion of art as hard work is another way Deleuze makes the practice of the painter complementary with that of the scientist or experimenter or engineer): "[H]aving renounced religious sentiment, but besieged by the photo, modern painting is in a much more difficult situation, no matter what one says, in trying to break with the figuration that would seem to be its miserable assigned lot" (p. 14).

One form of painterly hard work would be that of abstract art: "It needed the extraordinary work of abstract painting to tear modern art from figuration" (p. 14). But (and this "but" is immediately Deleuze's as much as mine) the break from figuration can also appear as a direct confrontation with figuration, a working through it, a defiguring of it. "But," asks Deleuze in the last line of rubric 2, "Isn't there another path for the tearing of modern art from figuration, one that is more direct and more sensible?"

This question allows the argument to move back to formal analysis, to an engagement with the internal systematicities of the Baconian job of work. Indeed, rubric 3 begins with the announcement of such a return: its first word is "*Revenons.*" But already the rhizomatic process of Deleuze, where any one activity reveals that it touches upon so many others, is at work here. If the first rubric had dealt especially with two elements, the figure and the surrounding oval, rubric 3's return clarifies that there are really three different elements at work here. "Let us return to Bacon's three pictorial

elements: large flat areas which are spatializing material structure; the Figures, Figures and their factness; place, that is, the round shape, the arena, or the contour which is the common limit of Figure and flat area" (p. 15). In a quasi-structuralist manner, Deleuze treats the three elements of the flat tableau—space, figure, and oval—virtually as pieces in a *combinatoire* out of which various painterly combinations are possible.

Thus, on the one hand, Deleuze echoes the argument of the first rubric to note how one relation of oval to figure can construct the Baconian painting as an activity of witnessing in which the figure is delimited from an action by virtue of its seeming to be "in attendance for that which is going to happen" (p. 15). Deleuze emphasizes that the witness is not a spectator: "These [are] witnesses, not in the sense of spectator, but as marker or constant in relation to which a variation is gauged" (p. 15). In such cases, the figure is pretty much a stability around which the open space of the tableau is caught in an athletic motion: "[T]he flat space is caught up precisely in a movement by which it forms a cylinder: it rolls around the contour, the site; and it envelops, it imprisons the Figure" (p. 16).

On the other hand, in many of Bacon's paintings, it is the figure that is involved in energetic motion. Here, we see a way in which Bacon's practice—the transformative and transforming shapes—seem ready-made for a Deleuzian analysis. As Deleuze notes, the Baconian figure is that of a body, specifically a body in the process of a full and violent becoming, racked by spasms, wrenching cries, vibrant thrusts of transmuting flesh. Here, the flat space ceases to be mere background and becomes instead a virtual destiny of the fleshy figure it holds within: "Hysteric scene. The whole series of spasms in Bacon is of this type: love, vomiting, excrement, always the body which tries to escape by one of its organs, to rejoin the flat surface, the material structure . . . And the cry, Bacon's cry, is the operation by which the entire body escapes through the mouth" (p. 17). Here the oval is not so much a delimiter that turns the figure in on itself so that it can achieve self-sufficient systematicity. Quite the contrary, the oval becomes a hole, an openness toward which the figure directs itself as if it has found one of Deleuze's famous "vanishing points" (*points de fuite*). Comparing Bacon to William Burroughs with his contractions of the body that are actually prosthetic mergings of the body with its surround, and to Lewis Carroll, with his mirrors that are not reflections of the body but seductions bringing the body beyond itself, Deleuze sets up the Baconian practice as a nonstop mutation.

Not surprisingly, just as he did with Kafka, Deleuze sums up the evolutionary mechanism in Bacon as a *becoming-animal*, the concern of rubric 4. Here, Deleuze modifies the initial step of his argument, where the figure was taken to be a whole element capable of connecting up to larger processes, but

not seeming divisible in itself; now, in contrast, in the fourth rubric, Deleuze examines how the figure itself is caught in an act of becoming in which it is not only the relation to the outside that is in mutation, but also the figure itself in its internal (dis)organization. In particular, the human figure reveals itself to be internally (and dynamically) divided in two productive ways. First, Deleuze notes that the figure in Bacon is that of the human body, specifically, of a body governed by a tension between *heads* and *faces*. Acknowledging in a footnote his debt to Félix Guattari, Deleuze explains how such a tension is worked out by Bacon:

> A portraitist, Bacon is a painter of heads and not of faces . . . [T]he face is a structured spatial organization that covers the head, while the head is a dependency of the body, even if it is not the endpoint of it. It is not that it lacks spirit [*esprit*] but rather that it is a spirit that is body, a corporeal and vital gust, an animal spirit, it is the animal spirit of man . . . It is thus a very special project that Bacon pursues as portraitist: to undo the face, to rediscover or cause to surge forth the head beneath the face" (p. 19).

As Deleuze argues, in Bacon there is a "*zone of indiscernability, of undecidability*, between man and animal" (p. 20; his emphasis).

Such indiscernibility is linked to the second tension Deleuze finds in Bacon's rendition of the figure of the body: namely, a tension between, on the one hand, flesh (*chair*) or meat (*viande*), and bone, on the other. Bones serve as a supportive or structuring matter that flesh mutates or moves away from: "Meat is that state of the body where flesh and bones confront locally, instead of being composed together structurally" (p. 20). Deleuze notes the importance, for Bacon, of the vertebral column—but not so much for any offer it gives to the body of solid, stable support as, quite the contrary, for the ways it serves virtually as a measure, a marker, against which the deviations of the flesh can be measured. Deleuze suggests that here we can uncover one reason for Bacon's fascination with scenes of crucifixion: on the one hand, the sublime religiosity of the crucifixion shows an attempt to redress the body upright toward the radiance of the heavens, but, on the other hand, all transcendent uplift is countered by the weighty pulling of the flesh downward toward its own animality. As Deleuze puts it, "[M]eat has a head by which it flees and descends from the cross" (p. 22).

Deleuze is moving toward an understanding of Bacon as a painter who defigures representation and breaks the figure from representation in hopes of rendering sensation in and of itself. The sixth rubric will deal explicitly, as its title announces, with "Painting and Sensation." But to get to this point, that is, for the development of Deleuze's own argument to echo fully the progress of Bacon's painterly work, Deleuze has to pass through a "Recapit-

ulative Note: Periods and Aspects of Bacon," the concern of the fifth rubric. Predictably though, Deleuze endorses the possibility of a recapitulation (the terms of which he borrows from David Sylvester's analysis of Bacon), while at the same time he seems to call into question any totalizing summation of the career.

Sylvester discerns three periods in Bacon, and Deleuze sums these up as "the first which brings into confrontation the precise Figure and the lively and hard open space; the second which treats a *'malerisch'* form against a tonal background rendered in strips [*à rideaux*]; the third, finally, which reunites 'the two opposed conventions,' and which returns to the lovely flat background while locally inventing effects of blurriness through scratching and rubbing" (p. 24). Deleuze, however, modifies this chronology in two ways that make any attempt at positive recapitulation less easy. First, he suggests that the three practices are simultaneous, not successive:

> And that's what's essential: there is certainly a succession of periods, but there are also coexistent aspects by virtue of the three simultaneous elements of the painting that are perpetually present. The armature or the material structure, the Figure in position, contour as a limit of the two, never cease constituting a system of the utmost precision (p. 24).

Second, any recapitulation is exceeded, has the lie put to it, by the fact that Bacon's own career is open-ended and moving toward a fourth phase, one in which the full breakdown of representation might be achieved: "the zone of blurring or sweeping away, which makes the Figure surge up, will now matter in and of itself, independently of all defined form: it will appear as a pure objectless Force . . . The Figure is dissipated" (p. 25).

It is the work of defiguration to achieve pure force that Deleuze sums up as a logic of sensation, whose overall power is hinted at in the sixth rubric. Going back to phenomenological readings of Cézanne, such as the famous one by Merleau-Ponty, Deleuze suggests that sensation emerges in the encounter of a perceiving subject with the disintegrating figure of the painting: "What is painted in the tableau is the body, not insofar as it is represented as object, but insofar as it is lived as experiencing sensation . . . Following Valéry, we can say that sensation is that which is transmitted directly by avoiding the detour or the boredom of a story [*histoire*] to be told" (pp. 27–28).

Histoire has a double sense of *story* and *history*, and Deleuze plays on this ambiguity to argue that the sensation of Bacon's defiguration is also, simultaneously, an attempt to get away from narrative and from historical reference. In particular, whatever sensation a Baconian painting engenders should not come from any anecdotal value in an object represented therein:

> Bacon has not stopped wanting to eliminate the "sensation," that is, the primary figuration of that which provokes a violent sensation . . . Bacon brings with himself all the violence of Ireland, the violence of Nazism, the violence of war . . . But whenever there is horror, a history is reintroduced, one has failed at rendering the cry . . . This is because violence has two very different meanings: "when one speaks of the violence of painting, this has nothing to do with the violence of war" (p. 29; the internal quotation is from Bacon).

Beyond figuration and representation, then, sensation comes from a pure power that "overflows all domains and traverses them. This power is that of Rhythm, which is deeper than vision, audition, etc. . . . 'A logic of the senses,' Cézanne said, 'that is non-rational, non-cerebral'" (p. 31). It is for this reason that Patrick Vauday in his review-essay of *Logique* argues that the book is a major revision of phenomenology's emphasis on subjectivity, but a subjectivity imagined as that of a fully centered, fully composed, fully integrated being. Deleuze's approach still strongly speaks of subjectivity, but it is now a subjectivity that is broken up, traversed by intensities, run through with energies—in short, as Deleuze puts it, *hystericized.*

"*L'hystérie*" is the title of the seventh rubric. Explaining Bacon in light of Artaud, Deleuze familiarly refers to the ways the postphenomenological workings of modern aesthetic practice produce a subjectivity, not of the *organism*, but of the *body without organs.* At the same time, though, Deleuze seeks to distinguish Bacon's practice—and the painterly tradition to which it belongs—from other modern logics of sensation that aim to break down the integrity of the human organism.

First, Deleuze makes use of Worringer (as he has in other writings on art) to set up a possible typology of modern artistic options. In particular, by using Worringer's understanding of a specificity of the Gothic tradition of art, Deleuze argues that Bacon's practice comes from a heritage that is doubly antagonistic: directed, on the one hand, against the "organic representation of classical art" and, on the other hand, against an abstraction that transforms representations into "geometric form." Bacon's Gothicism offers instead "a geometry that is no longer in the service of the essential and the eternal; it is a geometry put in the service of 'problems' or 'accidents,' ablation, adjunction, projection, intersection" (p. 34). And just as some art historians have argued in favor of the ties of Gothic art to an intense religiosity (see, most famously, Panofsky's *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism*[6]), Deleuze himself acknowledges a spiritual dimension to this search for an intensity that would be neither abstract nor representational: "Bacon's geometry gives witness to a high level of *spirituality* since it is a spiritual will that leads this geometry away from the organic and in search of elementary forces" (p. 34).

Beyond distinguishing different goals within the overall work of aesthetic practice, Deleuze also differentiates among the various arts and suggests there is a particular force to *painting* that is different from that of, say, literature (for example, Artaud) or music. As Deleuze puts it bluntly, "We want to say in fact that there is a special connection of painting to hysteria" (p. 37). As Deleuze clarifies, this is not a hysteria of the artist (Deleuze is not offering a psychobiography) so much as a hysteria of the medium of painting itself, based as it is on the direct effect of lines, colors, and so forth on the eye of the beholder. Indeed, Deleuze will suggest that there is an optical specificity of painting that means that no matter the particular psychology of the painter, that psychology gets translated or transmuted into something quite different when used for painting:

> Abjection becomes splendor, the horror of life becomes a very pure and very intense life . . . It is cerebral pessimism that painting transmutes into nervous optimism . . . This is the double definition of painting: subjectively, it invests our eye which ceases to be organic to become a polyvalent and transitory organ; objectively, it holds before us the reality of a body, of lines, and of colors liberated from organic representations (p. 37).

However, even as he grants special privilege to painting, Deleuze acknowledges that all the modern arts can share in the quest for a logic of sensation. In particular, each art resembles the others in the way it seeks to use the materials specific to it to render something beyond it: for example, as Deleuze notes, modern music often employs the aural as a way to capture the chromatic, and painting often uses the visual to grab at the invisible.

The dialectic of visible and invisible is a central concern of the eighth rubric, "*Peindre les forces.*" From an opening statement on the unity of the project of the modern arts, Deleuze focuses in progressively on the specific work of painting, on the particular contribution of Bacon to that work ("It seems that, in the history of painting, Bacon's Figures are one of the most marvelous responses to the question: how to render visible invisible forces?" [p. 40]), and on the particular role of the cry as a special strategy in Bacon. Deleuze asks of this privilege given to the cry, "Why does Bacon see in the cry one of the highest objects of painting?" (p. 41). Deleuze suggests that the cry has a spiritual function, but one altogether other than the interpretation usually given it by writers on Bacon who would see the cry as an agonized declaration of existential pain—an expression, we might say, of "the horror, the horror." For Deleuze, such a reading is superficial in the extreme: "The forces that make the cry, and that convulse the body and arrive at the mouth . . . are not at all confused with the visible spectacle before which one cries, nor with the assignable sensible objects whose action decomposes and recomposes our pain" (p. 41).

To read the Baconian cry as an expression of horror is, for Deleuze, to remain in a representational frame of mind. Against those who would take Bacon to be a depressing painter of the ravages of existence, Deleuze adopts the affirmative approach of "*savoir gai*": "When Bacon distinguishes two violences, that of spectacle and that of sensation, and says that one has to renounce the former to attain the latter, this is a sort of declaration of faith in life" (p. 41).

Why, then, bother to paint horror at all, why not accede directly to the sensations of joyful affirmation? Deleuze's answer is that starting with the superficial appearance of horror allows Bacon's painting to become a sort of triumphant battle with the forces of pessimistic representation. Instead of easily achieving painterly optimism right from the start, Bacon figures the heroic struggle of such optimism against all the pressures that would bring it crashing down into banality:

> We must render to Bacon as much as to Beckett or Kafka the following homage: they erected unbeatable Figures—unbeatable in their insistence, in their presence, at the very moment where they "represented" horror, mutilation, prosthesis; the fall or failure. They gave life a new power of a laughter that is extremely direct (p. 42).

Having now defined a specificity both of painting in relation to the other arts and of Bacon within the history of painting, Deleuze returns more directly to Bacon's particular practice, and in the ninth rubric initiates a discussion of "Couples and Triptychs" in Bacon. Where the earliest pages of *Logique* examined the simple dynamics of, for example, figure-ground relations, now the analysis itself and the combinatory it is examining are complicated by a multiplication of the basic painterly elements. As Deleuze puts it at the beginning of the rubric: "It thus happens that sensation passes through different levels, under the action of forces. But it also happens that two sensations confront each other, each with its own level or zone and cause their respective levels to communicate with each other. We are no longer in the realm of simple vibration, but in that of resonance" (p. 45).

Although he began *Logique* with a fairly formal analysis of fundamental elements within the Baconian tableau, Deleuze has progressively complicated his initial givens. He has situated Bacon within a larger art history and he now moves back to the particularities of Baconian form to show each and every strategy is no more than one option in a larger array of endeavors of the artist. On the one hand, for example, Bacon goes beyond the initial given of the figure by means of couples of figures. Deleuze even suggests that his initial emphasis on the solitary figure may have been little more than

heuristic and that, in fact, even the solitary figure is already coupled with other figures with which it is in an integral and necessary resonance: "At the limit, there are only coupled Figures in Bacon . . . Even the simple Figure is often coupled with its animal" (pp. 45–46).

On the other hand, taking a "privileged place in Bacon's oeuvre" (p. 48) are the triptychs, which Deleuze treats as a sort of dialectical surpassing of the vibratory power of the figure and the coupled figures. In a sense, Deleuze argues, the logic of sensation of the figure can only go so far, can achieve only a limited defiguration: insofar as the figure constitutes a given against which permutations are measured, there is always the danger that representation makes a reappearance and turns the figure into a stable meaning.

In the triptychs, however, no one figure stands alone; no one figure gains priority (not even the figure in the center). Even as the triptych increases the stakes of the quest for defiguration—insofar as the multiplication of figures might seem to encourage the return to the painting of narrativity, of logical and causal connections among figures—the triptych also renders all relations more vibratory, more mobile. We now have three panels, each filled with information, and this leads to increased possibilities of permutations and resonances among panels. Deleuze refers to John Russell's account of a reading or, rather, readings, of a Bacon triptych: With regard to the various figures, a number of hypotheses can be expressed, but there is never anything to ground any one interpretation at the expense of any other. What the viewer is left with finally is the sheer vibratory facticity, the thereness, or what Deleuze, borrowing from Bacon and quoting in English, terms the "matter of fact" nature of the painting, where things are simply painted and no final meaning is easily imparted to them. At the most, one might assign general roles to each of the three panels' dominant figures: activity, passivity, witnessing. But these roles are to be thought of less as deep significations of the work of art than as combinatory elements that give the painting new rhythmic powers.

Again, Deleuze's language implies that the arts are unified in their quest for an overall logic of sensation. Although he has given a special privilege to painting, Deleuze uses a musical vocabulary to invoke the powers of painting in relation to the depiction of sensation:

> [T]o paint sensation, which is essentially rhythm . . . But in simple sensation, rhythm still depends on the Figure, it presents itself as a *vibration* that traverses the body without organs, it is the vector of sensation, it is that which makes sensation pass from one level to another. [In contrast,] in the coupling of sensation, rhythm liberates itself already, since it confronts and reunites diverse levels of different sensations: it is now *resonance*, but it is

> still confused with the melodic lines, the points and counterpoints of a coupled Figure; it is the diagram of the coupled Figure. With the triptych finally, rhythm takes on an extraordinary amplitude, in a *forced movement* that gives it autonomy and gives us the impression of Time: the limits of sensation are overflown, exceeded in all directions (pp. 48–49; ellipses are in the original).

In Deleuze, digressive name-dropping is often quite revealing of the larger stakes for any single point he is presently making. In this instance, as if to insist on the unity of the arts at this level of overrun rhythmic sensation, Deleuze ends the rubric with a panoply of artistic references: Stravinsky, Beethoven, Messiaen, Rembrandt, Soutine, Claudel.

Similarly, Deleuze begins the tenth rubric—"Note: What Is a Triptych?"—with references to several artists: Messiaen, but also Paul Klee, who is said to have dealt in a painterly way with the same procedures of rhythm as the musicians. Indeed, if he has earlier argued that the rhythmic power of the triptych comes from its presenting of multiple elements that can then combine in unstable ways, Deleuze now argues that this activity occurs at levels of increasing abstraction (or defiguration) in which the painterly specificity of the work is progressively left behind and purer, non-medium-specific rhythms emerge. On the one hand, the triptychs often work figuratively by playing a witnessing figure against an acting one; on the other hand, and at an entirely different level, the function of these figures can reverse in cases where the dynamic is no longer the representative one of horizontal-vertical.

In other words, Deleuze argues that the function of the elements, of the figures, in the triptychs ultimately has little to do with any identity, any anthropomorphism, that one might have assumed to accrue to such figures. To act and to witness an act might seem functions of personages, but the interaction of these two functions is only one case of a larger field of possible interactions that often has little or nothing to do with notions of character at all. Thus, as the tenth rubric lays them out, we can find in the triptychs such interactions as vertical-horizontal, descent-rise, diastole-systole, naked-clothed, augmentation-diminution, and so on. Deleuze even notes that the prostheses, mutilations, and transformations that the body undergoes in Bacon's paintings are best read not as a sign of the horrors that flesh can undergo, but as elements that also allow variations into the painting so that the figure can be endlessly changing, even in its very shape and comportment.

No single value system—for example, any sort of moral judgment—could ever hope to lord over all these possibilities of vibratory, rhythmic transformation. Deleuze's approach is, first of all, not a Derridean deconstruction in

which a hierarchy of terms would be upset by parodic inversion; it is not a question, for example, of showing that the passive is really the active and vice versa, but of showing that the very description of either of these poles according to peremptory valuations is inappropriate. Although Deleuze is constrained by the limits of language to name the two sides of a relation, he seems concerned to emphasize that all such namings are arbitrary impositions whose fictionality has to be insisted upon: "In fact, one cannot identify descent-rise and contraction-dilation, systole-diastole; for example, a falling apart is also a descent and also a dilation and an expansion, but there is also contraction in a falling apart" (p. 53).

But for all the freedom that inheres in this open and nonhierarchical combination of elements *within* the space of the tableaus, artists themselves are not in a position of pure spontaneous freedom *before* their tableaus. In rubric 11, "The Painting Before Being Painted," Deleuze examines how even the empty space of the white canvas is, in a certain sense, already filled up before the painter even begins to work. On the one hand, as earlier rubrics have shown, no painter ever works apart from a tradition, a heritage, an anxiety of influence. On the other hand, in a much more negative direction, the painter lives in a world overrun by representations, by figurations, and there can be no pure beginning, no innocent act of putting brush to canvas.

Here, as I noted earlier, Deleuze's analysis becomes directly sociological as he confronts a modern society dominated by everyday signs and images, and more than in any other section, his language becomes energetic, passionate in its condemnation:

> We are besieged by photos which are illustrations, newspapers which are narrations, cinema-images, tele-images . . . Here there is an experience which is very important for the painter: a whole category of things that one can term "clichés" already occupy the canvas, even before beginning. It is dramatic . . . Clichés, clichés! One can't say that the situation has gotten any better since Cézanne (pp. 57–58).

Deleuze plays on the double meaning of *cliché* which, in French, indicates both a stereotyped thinking and a snapshot (the link being that both are born out of an instantaneous act that requires little effort and that results in a freezing of reality into a reified image). The photograph is a particularly dangerous form of short-circuited thinking and representation, since its chemically based realism gives it an air of authenticity, of innocent directness, that anchors and supports all its stereotyping (a point central to Roland Barthes's thinking on photographic messages). For Bacon, this is both the problem and challenge of photography. As Deleuze puts it, "Bacon scarcely believes [in the aesthetic pretension of photography] since he thinks that the

photo tends to crush sensation onto a single level and is powerless to put into sensation the difference of constitutive levels" (p. 59).

Throughout *Logique*, Deleuze, while avoiding a pure structuralism, has nonetheless imagined that aesthetic sensation always derives from the encounter of several elements, rather than the welling up of force inside a single thing. But in throwing attention back onto a world imaged therein, the photo unifies and robs itself of permutational possibilities. For Deleuze, photography can only become a complicated art in exceptional cases (he cites Muybridge's motion studies and, like Barthes, Eisenstein's photograms).

As Deleuze sees it, Bacon's painting starts always already with a realization that such painting has to exist in a world filled with photographic clichés. While "Bacon does not pretend to dictate universal solutions" (p. 62), his sense that photography's danger comes from a freezing that occurs automatically (as in the Kodak phrase cited by Susan Sontag: "You push the button, we do the rest") leads him to a very precise painterly practice. This practice, Deleuze notes, is that of trying to bring "chance" [*hasard*] back into the act of painting. Between the snapping of the camera button and the producing of the cliché, little but probability intervenes. Still, the painter can break down this automaticity:

> [Bacon will often] quickly make "free marks" in the interior of the painted image, in order to destroy the nascent figuration of it . . . The problem of the painter is not to enter into the canvas, because he is there already (prepictorial task), but to leave it, and by doing so to leave the cliché, leave probability (pictorial task). It is the manual marks of chance that will give him this possibility (pp. 60–61).

And even more, the very fact that the painter does this manually—that Bacon reacts to the automaticity of the camera with the physical activity of emphatic deformation—means that, again, Deleuze is able to treat the artist as cultural *worker*. Art is not spontaneity, but production, "manual labor" (p. 63, in the last line of the rubric).

In this respect, Bacon's practice of manual deformation can be specified and distinguished from other tactics of defiguration. Deleuze stakes out two in the twelfth rubric, "The Diagram": abstraction and action painting. In the case of abstraction (Deleuze is thinking of that geometric abstractionism characteristic of a Mondrian or a Kandinsky), the work of the hand is subordinate to a higher goal, an ulterior meaning. Through the effect of various binary codes that take over the painting (for example, horizontal lines versus vertical ones), the painting becomes a path to a spiritual energy. The modulated work of the hand is recoded in precise, rationalized terms (sharp lines, rectangles, and so on). In Deleuze's reading, "abstract forms belong to a

purely optical new space that doesn't have to be subordinate to manual or tactile elements . . . abstract painting elaborates less a diagram than a symbolic *code* based on major formal oppositions" (p. 67).

In the case of abstract expressionism and action painting, there is certainly much emphasis on the hand, on the here-and-now conditions by which the painter splashes paint onto the surface of the work. There is "the extension of a manual power, 'all over' [English in the original], from one end of the painting to the other" (p. 69). But this rendering tactile of the surface of the painting is so complete and extreme that paradoxically (a paradox that the abstract expressionists are not always aware of, as their own pronouncements suggest) optical sensation is diffused, confused, lost:

> These [the elements of the painting] are no longer tactile referents of vision but, because it is the manual space of what is seen, it is a violence done to the eye . . . Bacon is not attracted by abstract expressionism, by the power and mystery of the contourless line. This is because here, the diagram has taken over the whole painting, he says, and because its proliferation has created a veritable "mess" (*gachis*) . . . Sensation is achieved but remains in an irremediably confused state (pp. 69–71).

Against rationalized coding, and against contourless cacophony, Bacon will follow a third path in which the cliché remains but is deformed through localized operations:

> [T]he precision of sensation, the clearness of the Figure, the rigour of the contour continue to act underneath the smearing or the strokes that don't erase them but, rather, give them a power of vibration or illocalization (the mouth that smiles or cries). And Bacon's ulterior period will return to a localization of strokes in random and brushed over zones (p. 71).

Bacon's particular path is given its most theoretical discussion in rubric 13, "Analogy," one of the most important sections of the book—important less perhaps for what it says about Bacon specifically than for its reiteration of arguments that have been central to Deleuze's philosophy of art throughout his career. Deleuze intends the section's title to refer less to any sort of correspondence theory of art than to the linguistic distinction of digital and analogical communication (as in Bateson, whose sense that certain forms of communication, such as that of the schizophrenic, do not follow the sharp digital distinctions of officialized languages has been decisive for Deleuze). Earlier, I referred to certain operations of *Logique de la sensation*—especially its treatment of Bacon's paintings as sources of permutations—as quasi-structuralist, but the thirteenth rubric clarifies the neces-

sary limitations of such an image of Deleuze. Structural linguistics would be the province of an approach based on the isolation of fully discrete units that can enter into conflict with other units (for example, Saussure's phonemes, whose mutually exclusive oppositions create the meanings of words) but can only do so sharply, with no blurring or intermixing between them. Not at all setting out to avoid a linguistics or a semiotics, Deleuze nonetheless wants to create a theory of communication that would respect *gradations* of signification, that would not limit meaning to the rigorous opposition of totally differentiated bits of language. The procedure is quite explicit in the cinema books, where Deleuze opposes the dominant semiotics of film (that is, Metzian semiotics—a structural semiotics that searches for the large and discrete unities of film) with fluid semiotics concerned less with distinct elements than with signifying tonalities or graded shifts. To take just one example, standard semiotics of film argues that film has trouble dealing with tense (since the image appears in the present even if it is a representation of the past) and can only really achieve the representation of temporality through sharp, discrete oppositions of images (for example, the cut to a flashback that juxtaposes one image to another creates a binarism of past and present). For Deleuze however, especially in *L'image-temps*, the image itself can vibrate with the layers of temporality (as in the rich images of Welles or Mankiewicz); the image is itself not a single unit, but a graded richness, resonant with the modulations of past, present, and future.

"Modulation" is a key term here: Deleuze wants a semiotics attuned to the indiscrete variation, the tonal shift, the imprecise gradation. In this respect, Bacon's smears that defigure a representation but do so by transition, by a slow melting away of the body, are exemplary forms of painterly modulation.

> One can ask if painting hasn't always been the analogical language par excellence . . . In fact, painting as analogical language [as in Bacon] has three dimensions: *planes*, the connection or junction of planes (and first of all of vertical and horizontal planes) that replace perspective; *color*, the modulation of color which tends to suppress relations of value, chiaroscuro and the contrast of shadow and light; the *body*, mass and the disposition of the body which overflow the organism and break down the relation of form and content (pp. 74, 76–77).

In the tradition of Cézanne, Bacon's painting is not an encoder of reality (in the sense of the linguistic code as rigorous structuring), but a modulator of it.

The effort in these later rubrics to outline a taxonomy of languages, more particularly, of artistic languages, has led to less and less reference on Deleuze's part to Bacon's specific version of artistic language: indeed, the

later rubrics are immediately distinguishable by their increased length (as if the general theorization of art requires more pages) and by the gradual dropping away of the marginal numbers keyed to the images in the pictures volume (as if the general theory required only minimal grounding in specific cases). It might seem that Deleuze has abandoned Bacon, but the title of rubric 14 makes clear that Deleuze's approach to the relations of the individual artist and the overall movement of art history is a dialectical one: "Every painter sums up [or "takes up": *résume*] in his own way the history of painting." Indeed, if earlier I noted that the first sections of *Logique*, with their references to Bacon's own pronouncements in interviews, seemed to invest in a romanticism of the individual artist, and if the later sections seem to deal more with the traditions of art and the pressures confronting art—the painting before being painted—Deleuze's approach finally seems to be one of mediation, an attempt to argue that art history is both about logics of history and about individual praxes in art. Paraphrasing Sartre from *Questions de méthode*, we might say that for Deleuze, Francis Bacon is an important modern painter, but not every important modern painter is Francis Bacon. As I said earlier, the painter is not a pure spontaneity, but a situated being who always works in relation to an already done—for example, to that coagulated antihistory that Sartre refers to as the *practico-inerte*.

If I mention Sartre, it is because he undoubtedly went the farthest of modern French thinkers in trying to think the personal career as a replaying of history. For all our clichéd attempts to imagine Sartrean Marxism in opposition to structuralism and poststructuralism (an attempt, to be sure, that Sartre himself engaged in), Sartre's influence can be felt in *Logique*'s desire to deal with the whole of artistic tradition and, at the same time, with one individual figure's assumption of that tradition; indeed, in *Logique*, Deleuze makes explicit use of *L'Etre et le Néant*[7] and *L'Idiot de la famille*[8], Sartre's masterwork of existential biography. In Sartre's terms, the individual is to be thought of as a concrete universal (see, for example, *Qu'est-ce que la littérature?*) or a universal singular (as he puts it in *Critique de la raison dialectique*). Each individual is not only in history, but insofar as he/she takes identity from all that history has been, each individual is also a full summation of history, a total incarnation of it, even as he/she is this history in irreproducibly personal ways.

No one else is Francis Bacon—there is an irreducible specificity to his being-in-the-world—but as with every other artist, one can read off of Bacon's work the totality of art history, a totality his work endlessly retotalizes and projects toward the future. "It is no longer just Bacon but the whole of Occidental art history that is in question," as the fourteenth rubric puts it (p. 80).

The dialectic of universal and singular is given immediate representation by the juxtaposition of rubrics 14 and 15. On the one hand, the fourteenth rubric sets out to define the traditions, the situations, that each and every artist confronts by the very fact of being an artist. Ranging through Egyptian, Greek, Christian, and modern art, Deleuze constructs a taxonomy of possibilities of figuration and defiguration around such options as essential/accidental, haptic/optic, light/shadow, color/light, figure/narrative, a whole range of "new and complex combinations or correlations" (p. 83).

On the other hand, the fifteenth rubric, "*La traversée de Bacon*," insists on the specificity and individuality of Bacon's particular assumption of artistic tradition. To take just one example, the fourteenth rubric borrows from Alois Riegl to define the contribution of Egyptian art as a haptic aesthetic based on the flattening of space in the bas-relief; the rendering frontal of this space; the simultaneous distinguishing and unifying of foreground and background by contour; the consequent establishing of space as essential, an enclosed unity impervious to accident; the rendering of space as flat geometric plane; and, most important, the figuring of human and animal alike as perfect, essential geometric forms. So the fifteenth rubric, in both continuity and contrast, treats Bacon as an inheritor of the Egyptian tradition who brings to the tradition important and inescapable modifications. For instance, if the geometrization of space flattens space and renders it tactile in a way that tempts Bacon dearly, at the same time Egyptian art essentializes space (and represents objects such as Man) in a way that Bacon can only abhor:

> One could say that Bacon is first of all an Egyptian . . . representation: foreground and background, connected to one another by contour, are on the same close haptic plane of vision—but here already an important difference insinuates itself into the Egyptian world, like a first catastrophe: the foreground form falls, inseparable from a plunging (*chute*). The foreground form is no longer essence; it has become accident, Man is an accident (p. 87).

Most of all, Deleuze finds a specificity of Bacon in the ways he deals with traditions of color passed down from Cézanne, and from Gauguin, and Van Gogh. If Egyptian art derives its strongest effects from the geometry of lines and contours, another tradition finds its sensations in modulations of color—color not as sharp opposition, but as undulating oscillation or gradation, or analogical (rather than digital) variation: "It is color, it is relations of color that constitute a haptic world and meaning, as a function of hot and cold, of expansion and contraction" (p. 88).

Distinguished from geometric tradition, colorist approaches are also distinguished from those in which the modulation of *light* is the dominant practice: "Light is time, but space is color. One terms 'colorists' those painters who tend to substitute for relations of value [as in the handling of light] relations of tonality, and who tend to 'render' not only form, but also light and shadow and time by the pure relations of color" (p. 89). In other words, the colorists can do in their own way what the artists of light do. But as Deleuze emphasizes, to say this is not to value one tradition over another: "Certainly, it is not a question of a better solution, but of a tendency that traverses painting and leaves behind characteristic masterpieces, distinct from those of other tendencies" (p. 89).

Within colorism, several subtendencies are visible, beginning with the Cézannean tradition: "Modulation by pure distinctive strokes and following the order of the spectrum was the specifically Cézannean invention for achieving the haptic sense of color." But for Deleuze, this tendency runs several risks: for example, beyond "the danger of reconstituting a code" (p. 90), there is also the danger of the background becoming so solid that it enters into no play of modulation with the foreground forms, "as if the singularity of the body detached itself from a uniform, indifferent, abstract flat domain" (p. 90). Yet there is possible a different colorist modulation that separates itself off from Cézanne's options; here the separation of flat background and foreground figure is combatted by, on the one hand, a vivid tone and saturation in the background that gives it not only the quality of "passage" from one color to another, but of an overall sense of movement, transformation and modulation; and, on the other hand, "broken tones for the foreground form which construct another sort of passage in which the color seems to cook and come out of a fire" (p. 90).

It is in this post-Cézanne modernity that Bacon's specificity is to be found: "The 'modern portrait' would be color and broken tones, in contrast with the classic portrait which is light and blended colors . . . Bacon is one of the great colorists since Van Gogh and Gauguin" (p. 91).

Devoting the sixteenth rubric to a "Note on Color," Deleuze argues that color is the ultimate force of permutation, the prime modulator, in Bacon's artistic practice. Having in early sections suggested that Bacon operates his permutation around three strategic elements—structure, figure, contour—Deleuze now argues that all three are little more than pieces of a larger permutational or modulatory assemblage governed by the vibratory powers of color: "*all three converge toward color, in color*. And it is modulation—that is, the relations of color—that explains simultaneously the unity of the whole, the repartition of each element, and the manner in which each acts in the others" (p. 93; Deleuze's emphasis).

For example, if one wonders how the background surface can form a structure or armature for the whole of the painting, the answer is in the handling of color. Either there is an internal modulation within the surface through a play of color values, or, more commonly, there are several background surfaces, each one of which enters into modulation with the rest. And even here, several variations are possible: one surface can be divided up into solidly distinguishable subsurfaces ("separate surfaces with different intensities or even different colors" [p. 94]); any one surface can be delimited by the surface of another color that frames it, cuts it off, surrounds it, and so on; or, as is often the case, a band of another color can cut across the colored surface.

If color modulates the background surface in these ways, it also operates its effects on the foreground figure. Deleuze notes how the primacy of blue and red in Bacon's faces serves as a reminder of the fleshy, meaty aspect of the face, but in this way the colors open up the figure to temporality, becoming flesh in mutation. As Deleuze puts it, "*color-structure* gives way to *color-force*; because each dominant, each broken tone indicates the immediate exercise of a force upon a corresponding zone of the body or the head, it renders force immediately visible" (p. 90; Deleuze's emphasis).

Even contour, which Deleuze earlier has treated as an effect of lines and shapes within shapes, is now discussed as an aftereffect of plays of color. Color is clearly the generative matrix of Bacon's modern art:

> Colorism (modulation) does not consist only of relations of hot and cold, of expansion and contraction, that vary in relation to the considered colors. It consists also of the regimes of color, of the connections between the regimes, of the accords between pure tones and broken tones. What one calls haptic vision is precisely this sense of colors (pp. 96–97).

Borrowing from Riegl, Deleuze refers to Bacon's logic of sensation as *haptic* to emphasize that it is simultaneously optical and manual, an art that overcomes divisions of spiritual and material. If Deleuze has attempted throughout *Logique de la sensation* to avoid valuative hierarchies that promote one term (usually a supposedly less carnal one) over another, the last rubric, "The Eye and the Hand," brings this antijudgmental project to its extreme point:

> To characterize the connection of eye and hand, it is certainly not enough to say that the eye is infinitely richer, and passes through dynamic tensions, logical reversals, organic exchanges and vicariances . . . We will speak of the *haptic* each time there is no longer strict subordination in one direction or the other . . . but when sight discovers in itself a function of touching that belongs to it and to it alone and which is independent of its optical function (p. 99).

In the case of Bacon, Deleuze suggests that his particular mode of bringing the manual into the optical is by means of a gradual injection, dramatized by the sweep of the hand, the stroke, the smear that defigures the figure and opens it up analogically to a whole of possible other representations. Deleuze refers twice to this process as an "injection"—a "drop-by-drop," a "coagulation," an "evolution," "as if one passed gradually from the hand to the haptic eye, from the manual diagram to the haptic vision" (p. 102). The haptic then, as Deleuze tells us in the last lines of *Logique*, is the surpassing (*dépassement*, the word used in French to translate the Hegelian *Aufhebung*) of hand and eye into a higher logic—that of the haptic, a singular logic not of sensations, but of sensation in and of itself.

In his cinema books, Deleuze refers to the work on the cinematic signifier by Jean-Luc Godard as a "pedagogy of the image," in which the paring down of the image, or, conversely, the rendering complex of the image, offers an instruction in seeing things and their representations alike in new ways. Godard is treated as a sort of scientist of imagery for whom films become virtual laboratory experiments inquiring into the power and play of images. Deleuze's general desire is to treat artists as workers (figures of production in the sense of *L'Anti-Oedipe*) and even as thinkers or conceptualists, not unlike thinkers or conceptualists in allied fields (such as philosophy, which generally operates on ideas rather than images). But in this respect, we might say that *Logique de la sensation* is Deleuze's own "pedagogy of the image," constructing for us the representation of a painterly practice that deforms the world to make us see anew. The project might seem to have parallels with that of the Russian formalists of the 1920s, for whom art was to serve to defamiliarize things rendered invisible by our habit, our taking for granted of them. Like the formalists, Deleuze wants to cut through the reifications of cliché and stereotype and habit to regain the intensity of a perception. There is undoubtedly a romanticism here, a longing for a purity of force stultified by modern living. But where the formalists targeted a utilitarian revolutionary society that in its drive to modernize determined that things were used as means to pragmatic ends and not appreciated aesthetically in and of themselves, Deleuze is writing in a very different historical context, with different historical targets. True, utilitarian culture comes in for its own critique—as in the Kafka book where the practice of minor language has to be directed to a large degree against the pragmatic language of bureaucracy (the bureaucracy of governments, but also of the large firm such as the one that Kafka himself works for)—but more often Deleuze's context is that of our contemporary society of consumption. This society has a place for images; indeed, almost more than anything else, it seems voraciously to need to consume images. But it is precisely this turning of the image into an easily

ingested thing—for example, the photographic cliché, in which the seeing goes too quickly past the photo to a represented world—that Deleuze wants to defamiliarize. For all its concentration on the details of the artistic work of a single figure, *Logique de la sensation* may also be one of Gilles Deleuze's most general books, offering new insights into the possibilities of art in our society of the spectacle.

Notes

1. Patrick Vauday, review of *Logique de la sensation*, in *Critique* no. 426 (1982); Christine Buci-Glucksmann, "Le plissé baroque de la peinture," in *Magazine littéraire* no. 257 (September 1988). References to Gilles Deleuze, *Logique de la sensation* (Paris: Editions de la différence, 1981) will be given in the text.
2. Donald Miller, Art Column, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 6 October 1990: p. 16.
3. *Cinéma 1: L'image-mouvement* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1983); *Cinéma 2: L'image-temps* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1985).
4. Raymond Bellour, "The Unattainable Text," in *Screen* 16, no. 3 (1975).
5. Dana Polan, "Powers of Vision, Visions of Power," *Camera Obscura* 18 (September 1988).
6. Erwin Panofsky, *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism* (Latrobe, PA: Archabbey Press, 1951).
7. Jean-Paul Sartre, *L'Être et le néant: Essai d'ontologie phénomenologique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1943).
8. *L'Idiot de la famille: Gustave Flaubert de 1821–1852* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971–72).

13

The Cinema, Reader of Gilles Deleuze

Marie-Claire Ropars-Wuilleumier

IN THE PAGES that follow one should not look for a systematic account of the two books that the cinema led Gilles Deleuze to write.[1] In the form of organization they adopt—that of nonlinearity—and in the conceptual order they engage—that of divided thought—the two books defy any synthesis other than a direct one. And even this sort of synthesis might betray an exposition that takes the form of becoming. It seems much more in keeping with the spirit of this work, then, to divert its course and even its discursive cohesiveness and instead to outline several theoretical options and points of uncertainty whereby a reflection on the cinema becomes a philosopher's machine for reflection.

Indeed, the force of this work lies in its explicit decision to adopt a line of research that, far from shutting itself within cinematic space, would instead project transversely those concepts that the cinema has helped to establish. Rendered explicit at the end of the second volume, this approach is in fact in operation throughout the whole of the work: It is neither a question of applying a philosophical theory to cinema, nor even of constructing a new theory for the cinema, but rather of thinking with this object, working at one and the same time in and outside its field. We need to acknowledge all the implications of this limit position, characteristic of Deleuze's numerous works, concerning his choice of object and what the choice facilitates: The cinema, like any intelligible system, will be capable of intervening as an accelerator of reflection, even though this reflection does not pretend to derive the substance of its thought from the cinema alone.

Thus positioning himself between philosophy and cinema, Deleuze constructs two parameters for the filmic image—movement and time, or rather time through movement—but only in order to read them through Bergson while rereading Bergson alongside them. Like the world, the cinema

is Bergsonian, in spite of what Bergson himself said, because it reactivates the concept of duration. Here, matter (which is image-movement) changes into memory (thus, into image-time), and the present, never identical to itself, is doubled with the virtual image of the past it will become. The consequences of Deleuze's reading are significant for the theorization of cinema, which all too often privileges material over process. The cinema is time, the image is only a movement-image; the cinematic present does not exist in itself. Deleuze articulates these indispensable formulations in terms of a specifically philosophical trajectory; going beyond Bergson (who, in being applied to film, can be pulled away from depth psychology and turned to the very perception of things), it is to Nietzsche that Deleuze intends to graft the cinema, a Nietzsche for whom the circular becoming of time precipitates (as it does in modern cinema) short-circuits, bifurcations, detours, and irrational divisions, where the notion of intensity is substituted for that of truth.

The stakes, thus conceived, are extensive: the cinema operationalizes the image of an open totality, at once moving and nonorientable, where the temporality that envelops us offers itself in its doubly contradictory dimension—incessant flux and instantaneous disjunction. But in joining Nietzsche and Bergson cinematically, Deleuze in fact makes a new connection in his own approach. That paradoxical time legible in the cinema of modernity—incommensurable moments in Robbe-Grillet, undecidable memories of Resnais, the serialized instants of Godard, crystalline amnesia according to Welles—returns to a "logic of sense" (*logique du sens*) that fifteen years earlier Deleuze had charted in Lewis Carroll as the logic of paradox.[2] Sense confirms itself only in the experience of nonsense, because it expresses itself only in a language that, while speaking, runs after the sense of what it says.

Here, Deleuze appears to apply his notion of the paradoxical constitution of sense in relation to another mode of expression; the image takes the place of the sign, and time is serialized in the manner of the discourse of the song of the White Knight.[3] The question that then arises—and which Deleuze himself does not ask, at least not explicitly—would involve cinema's specific role in thinking through the relations between sense and language. Deleuze's emphasis on time and his account of the multiple forms of dissociation that time mobilizes project a more focused analysis, where the heterogeneity of cinema (the complexity of its signifying processes) leads to a general theoretical investigation: How does cinematic language intervene in the paradox of language? In what ways, or through what sorts of operations on signs, does the cinema reactivate the trajectory of modern thought that runs from Nietzsche to Blanchot in the quest for a syntax that neutralizes the quotidian uses of speech? Deleuze refuses to formulate these questions explicitly and takes a rigorously antilinguistic point of view on the cinema. And if he reproaches Metzian semiotics for substituting statements (*énoncé*) and

syntagms for the plastic mass of visual material, his critique is not aimed at semiotic investigation per se, but, more radically, at the Saussurean conception of language where the signifier always ends up changing into the signified. For Deleuze, then, to work with the cinema means turning to the prelinguistic, to a material which bears, without expressing it, that which a language can express (*sans l'énoncer l'énoncable d'une langue*) prior to all processes of signification. This perspective would be productive if it led to the examination in each enunciation, even when materialized in linguistic forms, of the activity of withdrawal or overflow that transports enunciation beyond the expression (*énoncé*) of sense. But in deciding to oppose the plenitude of the image, asignifying and asyntactic, to every operation of a signifying nature, Deleuze chooses another option. Initially aesthetic, Deleuze's project can only become analytic by resorting to a semiotic model where all signs are formed and conceptualized on the basis of the image alone. In choosing Peirce against Metz, Deleuze thus cedes to the appeal of sight, which rules over the dispersion of all filmic signals, including the sonoral.[4] But, at the same time, he commits himself to the exigencies of classification, where the goal is not to question the multiple connections of the linguistic and the visual, but rather to assemble, classify, and totalize under the sign of the image, even if a mobile one, the ensemble of filmic figures by inscribing there the ensemble of films.

This reconciliation of the Peircean logic of exhaustive cataloguing and the Nietzschean logic of boundless paradox is accomplished only with difficulty. A double enterprise—classification, on the one hand, and displacement, on the other—inscribes Deleuze's thought in a contradictoriness witnessed by the division of the work into two volumes. Up to now, I have privileged the analyses in the second volume, i.e., those which examine the paradox of time in modern cinema. But referring explicitly to Peirce, the first volume intends to recover the different types of Peircean signs from the various components of classical cinema. Thus, a fissure (simultaneously aesthetic and historical) is described that around 1950 divides an "organic" cinema (whose temporality remains governed by the movement of action and the linear development of narrative) from a "crystalline" cinema (where time offers itself up directly to thought in the form of demultiplication and serialization).[5] Not only is Deleuze forced in the second volume to give up his Peircean models with respect to this current of modernity, but the difficulties of his division between classical and modern oblige him to return (in terms of fragmentary modernity) to auteurs like Bresson or Buñuel, who in the first volume had been analyzed in terms of classical narrativity.

More generally, the very foundations of the first volume tumble down in the second: The first volume proceeds by means of categories leading to traditional divisions in the history of cinema, while the second proceeds by

operations that void the traditionally established typologies. Predictably, the point of greatest conflict involves the question of montage. More precisely, Eisenstein's conflictual hypotheses are treated in terms of organic synthesis in volume one, and are necessarily reexamined in volume two, where it becomes difficult to deal with visual breaks and audiovisual permutations without referring them to a problematic of discontinuity and disconnection. But it is not so much to montage as a syntax that Deleuze refers; the attraction and the limits of his analyses derive from his insistence on restoring to the perceptual continuum—whether optical or sonorous—the activity of crystallization or dissociation that montage makes readable in filmic modernity. Whether it is a question of the body or the brain, of memories or faces, of earth or voice, it is to matter, visible and in movement, that Deleuze obstinately pays the tribute of intelligibility. And filmic mass—this unexpressed expressible (*énoncable-nonénoncé*) of a language without signs—is transformed by Deleuze into a kind of speech (*parole*) that never stops collecting, citing, situating, and repositing, in short, which never stops expressing and enumerating that which is innumerable and unnameable in the cinema.

The problematic dichotomy of classical and modern, of the organic and the crystalline, of the Open (in Rike's terms) and of the Outside (in Blanchot's terms), is thus affirmed without accounting for the contradictions it induces or the questions it inspires concerning the traditional historical periodization of an art. And if Deleuze attributes this fracture to the cinema, it is to cinema conceived of as a totality where the most contradictory currents in its history would be united without conflict in their essence. The word "Whole" (*le Tout*) is without doubt one of the most recurrent in Deleuze's work. Cinematic totalization, even if contradictory, seems to replace here the impossible ensemble that the logic of sense inscribed within the heart of thought: that the totality of the seventh art form could well be open-ended, divided, dissociated, disjunctive; that analysis could distinguish, even while linking them, Renoir and Fellini, Kubrick and Resnais, Duras and Straub, Warhol and Garrel. What is essential is that the cinema, just like the world, comprehends and reconciles them all in a space where matter offers itself to mind in order to contemplate the unthinkable of thought.

One can discern here, beyond all the ambiguities and hesitations that a work of this scope admits, a more radical tension concerning the bet Deleuze made in playing the cinema. On the one hand, the cinema intervenes as a critical analyzer, capable of crystallizing the stakes of a conceptual modernity where the power of the false renders as unrealizable the distinctiveness of the categories of true and false, real and imaginary, which form the basis of classical philosophy. In this, Deleuze's recourse to cinema extends the attentiveness of Nietzsche or Klossowski, Lewis Carroll or Borges, which multiplies

in time and in space the paradoxical game of a unity that is not one. But on the other hand, through Deleuze's filmic incantation there can be heard the echo of a demand for love that does not come from love for film alone. The cinema, Deleuze tells us, is a form of "catholicity" (Deleuze 1983, pp. 222–223) that, insofar as it is universal, gathers up everything (*tout*), accepts everything (*tout*), and reconciles us with the whole of everything (*le tout*). If the Bergsonian universe can be conceived in terms of a cinematic model—Deleuze's initial proposition—this is first of all because the cinema aids us in recognizing the world and living with it. And this is his ultimate proposition: This living takes place within the realm of belief, not that of certitude, but rather a form of living guided by the will for "redemption," where the wholeness (*le tout*) of the aesthetic would respond to the nothingness of the ethical. A rupture between man and the world has been carried out, but the cinema offers a mirror where this rupture can be read, and in being read, is sutured. Not a reconciliation, but a conciliation, is offered by film, which negotiates an exchange between the image and the real. This second voice in Deleuze comes to the surface here and there in a few phrases. But the general tone of his text remains a theoretical speculation where personal propositions melt, through the effects of free indirect discourse, into propositions determined by films, by all the films which make up the whole (*le tout*) of cinema.

To speak with the cinema: no doubt this would constitute the median line where, without blurring, the exigencies of analysis and the quest for mediation would intersect. But no word can be the first on the matter. Deleuze's final decision (and by no means his least interesting) consists of using as the materials for his analysis nothing but analyses that have already been completed, whose authors and bibliographic references he scrupulously notes. This is neither a form of modesty nor a declaration of weakness on Deleuze's part. This practice of reference, which is new in Deleuze, seems first of all attributable to the cinema itself, whose singularity derives only from what it accomplishes by transforming itself into words. But more radically, this "second-hand" tactic responds to Deleuze's desire to break theoretically with the empire of the sign and with the exact coincidence of signifier and signified.[6] By manipulating fragments that already have an established meaning—hypotheses, ideas, or viewpoints inspired by screening films—Deleuze makes it possible for himself to put them into movement, to make their meanings circulate, and to break their initial meanings by inscribing them into his own system of thought. The signifieds he collects thus change into the signifiers of another argument, which, without betraying them, assigns them a new place and function because of the way he opens up cinema to philosophy. This process is of interest in that it can consume any bit of writing. Taking its material from everywhere, it modifies this material

and offers it to a new theorization, reminding us, as if there were need for this, that the analysis of films is not the ultimate goal of a reflection on cinema. But a price is exacted for such circumspect reading: By discarding every study of a semiological or textual sort, Deleuze limits his corpus to the domain of auteurs, whose affects and forms focus this theoretical venture. Certainly, it is by means of these auteurs that Deleuze constructs his principal figure, the crystal where time scintillates. But positing a theory of space-time does not prevent a thematic anchoring of the examples that sustain his theory. This return of a localized signified in the form of auteurs, more or less bothersome depending on the case, sometimes blocks the deployment of a transversal thought where the cinema conceives itself in formulating the historical and conceptual problems that it poses to understanding. Without doubt, this indicates a cinephilic connivance that nonetheless sustains Deleuze's aesthetic project: The love of signs (in the semiotic and not the linguistic sense of the word)[7] fuels a love of cinema, defined as a cinema of auteurs. Surreptitiously, the auteur is rendered here as facilitating a connection: Even while making analysis invoke its most abstract directions, at the same time each auteur's name inscribes, through an affect of memory, the trace of a presence that the cinema indefatigably renews.

It is the ultimate detour of a text in search of its end to furnish a summation where it promised a system. This selective synthesis would risk prevailing over the recognition of disjunction if, in a final reversal, it did not finally locate itself in a "synthetic" image of cinema (*l'image d'un cinéma synthétiseur*). A veritable "spiritual automaton" (Deleuze 1983, p. 343), connecting man to machine, blends contradictions and materializes the dream of a world where disjunctions communicate and where fusion operates within rupture. Here, we need to reread the last sentence of *Logique du sens* (in Deleuze 1983, p. 290). Beyond paradox, where the equivocation of language always speaks, an instantaneous and dazzling event pursues itself—that event when the univocality of sense suddenly emerges from a poetry freed of figures, maintaining the trace of the deepest sonorities, primary and adjacent to language. This ephemeral instant, when sense and being coincide, belongs to the cinema as an art of the figure, in that cinema restores the possibility of making this instant coexist with the awareness of paradox. By means of an impossible taxonomy of cinema, it is the integer (*intégrale*) of these fragments that makes itself heard: a sum of instances transformed into essences, where, in Deleuze's reading, the cinema answers to the nostalgia of a poetry without writing.

—*Translated by Dana Polan*

Notes

1. *Cinéma 1, L'image mouvement* and *Cinéma 2, L'image temps* (Paris: Minuit, 1983 and 1985, respectively). [Page references to the first volume are to the English language edition; references to the second volume are to the French edition. —Trans.]
2. In Gilles Deleuze, *Logique du sens* (Paris: Minuit, 1969).
3. *Logique du sens*, Fifth Series, pp. 41–49. In order to comment on the paradox of a regression to infinity, Deleuze refers to a dialogue between Alice and a knight about the name of a song in *Through the Looking Glass* (New York: Random House, 1946), pp. 131–136.
4. Deleuze explains his choice in chapter 12 of *Cinéma 1* and chapter 2 of *Cinéma 2*. He uses the collection of Peirce's writings presented by G. Deledalle, *Charles S. Peirce, Écrits sur le signe* (Paris: Seuil, 1978).
5. On the opposition of these two regimes, see the beginning of chapter 6 in *Cinéma 2*.
6. In the sense that Antoine Compagnon gives to this idea in *La seconde main, ou le travail de la citation* (Paris: Seuil, 1979).
7. See Gilles Deleuze, "Sur le régime cristallin," *Hors cadre* 4 (1986).

VI. Lines of Flight

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Cartography of the Year 1000: Variations on *A Thousand Plateaus*

Jean-Clet Martin

1. Kyrielles

THE MONASTIC ORDER is inseparable from an order of somber light, driven wild by blue hues and red pillars. Their embossed gold succeeds in pushing the whispering darkness back toward the terrible weight of a blind sky. In this dark space, where light diffuses itself from the inside, thought drones out its war chant, marking thereby the dazzling intermittencies of an outside without measure. Cold and deep, a crypt closes upon its black ink, like an egg run through by a fragile limestone that the most external forces make indestructible. Above, the heavy carapace of a domed basilica traversed by an imperceptible clarity is absorbed in the acoustic power of the edifice. Two noncentered hemispheres intersect and create a two-headed monster, growing from the middle, at the place where, between crypt and basilica, a membrane softly forms a curve and struggles to gain height across the length of a double itinerant line marked with aleatory stations and disparate sanctuaries connected on the basis of irrational links. On top of the crypt, the dome struggles and slowly traces a passage toward the edifice above. Between the monastery and the hypogeum, as Georges Duby observes, there is experimentation going on, with a new model of construction.[1] On the median line that separates the two hemispheres, the technique of the dome is being developed, and a very special space is opening up. The disparate parts of this space intersect and fit each other according to an overlapping of perspectives that makes them indiscernible and totally incommensurable. This is the monastic space, capable of engendering things from the middle, across the length of an intermediary membrane on either side of which things begin to arch, and diverging ambulatories find their own modulations.

The force of the monastic art is expressed in the discovery of this space of overlap and this line of experimentation. With them, incompatible wholes begin to coexist; no centers of resonance ever emerge on this vector capable of absorbing the disparity of places in a perfectly homogeneous totality. As the basilica multiplies the chapels on its periphery and assembles a multiplicity of level, the church proliferates into several abodes and incorporates more and more floors. The diagonal that allows the church to do this is capable of bringing together heterogeneous dimensions without reducing them to unity. At every level of the building, the distribution of singularities changes the rules; from top to bottom, an intensive line is deployed that cannot be subdivided into levels without changing its nature at every step of its division. From the dome above to the square below, from the chancel to the underground crypt, a fall of intensity is initiated that liberates, with every step, other dynamic spaces and brings about dissimilar worlds, disparate orders of light, as well as differentiated figural complexes with irreducible faunas and floras on their surfaces. This is a veritable patchwork, which brings together elements snatched from Roman ruins, barbarian embroideries, curtains made of Byzantine silk, demonic effigies. Between the crypt and its sarcophagi, the chancel and its altars, the rules of distribution and dispersion change nature, without any law or superior principle being capable of legislating and extending its homogeneous jurisdiction over them. In every level of the monastic edifice, we encounter the problem that Romanesque architecture tries to solve.

Deleuze's entire philosophy constantly reminds us that a problem constitutes a multiplicity or a distribution of singularities in the vicinity of which curves and diagrams are determined, nonactual and yet real. Albert Lautman, in his theory of differential equations, liked to distinguish between two totally distinct and yet complementary realities: on the one hand, the distribution of singular points inside a vectorial field as the locus of problems, and on the other, the form of integral curves in their vicinity as cases of the solution.[2] From this point of view, a problem is able to receive a variety of solutions, an outline of which may be traced by a diagram. In mathematics, for example, we can divide a straight line in many ways. To determine this procedure, together with its variables, is, in fact, to constitute a diagram. Now, sectioning a straight line defines a problem, because one can divide it in a lot of ways, and one must choose among them. However, drawing a right angle inside a half circle is a simple theorem, because within the half circle every angle is a right angle. But, on the other hand, drawing an equilateral triangle inside a circle defines a problem, because this operation requires a choice for which there is no theorem. This is why Deleuze speaks of the problem as a choice for which no theorem is available.[3] To find

the dimension of the problem is to engage, in a certain fashion, in becoming-idiot, in the sense in which Clément Rosset defines "idiocy," that is, as the site of the singular.[4] To confront a problem is to get tangled up in singularities in order to disentangle arabesques, through a strange choice that necessarily transcends all constituted knowledges (*savoirs*).

A wild light inhabits the monastic art as it chooses a single material for the entire construction. It is indeed a singular and eccentric choice that gives up the wooden frame for the dome of stones. This art, which is a little mad as it opts for one and only one material, casts its immoderate dice and generates a problem that no previous knowledge or theorematic formalization can resolve. The builders of cathedrals are grand visionaries who search for the conditions of a problem buried deeper than all available knowledge. From this perspective, one must welcome Duby's observation, which identifies as "hesitant experience" and "happy improvisations" the processes of monastic art, which go on "without rules, compass or plan."[5]

Indeed, as we move from the wooden structure to the domes of stone, the outlines of the diagram change and begin to determine a different dispersion of singularities and different characteristics of expression, which now constrain the artisan. It is also the case that the development of the dome cannot be separated from the social movement and the transformation of speed-vectors that continually agitate the Europe of the year one thousand. From this point of view, peregrinations and crusades determine changes of itineraries, halts, and deviations, which are related to technical innovations; they also determine mutations of forms that participate in the same movement of deterritorialization.[6] The necessity of offering hospitality to the hordes of itinerants opens the monastery wide and causes lines to flee in all directions and to intersect in diagonal ribs. It is inane, therefore, to believe that the Gothic is the mere flight away from the dark cloisters sheltering the remains of unknown sepulchers. Monastic art is already carried on a Gothic wave; demanding more light, it does not give up its association with the psalmodic model: As a result, it forms an original (*inédit*) assemblage.[7] Jacques Chailley's definition of the choral permits the best possible understanding of the psalmody: "It is a kind of first matter serving in the elaboration of many different forms whose traditional character has determined a style."[8] Psalmody, with its fluid outline, is a pure, dynamic material, a variable flow of acoustic singularities, the essence of which is modulation. The modulation of the plain chant traces a continuous, nonmetric, and antiphonic line, the division of which determines a radical change in tone, accent, intensity, and pitch in the emission of singularities.

Psalmody has no regular cutouts; rather it takes the appearance of a nonmeasured musical time. Released like a brutal and violent war chant, the

choral is the line of a murderous confrontation between the regular and the singular; it is the intensive line, every break of which ends up in improvised tonic accents. The repetitiveness of psalmody must not be confused with the division of time in homogeneous segments or with the isochronous recurrence of identical elements. Psalmodic repetition is modulation and the division of the pitch of the emission, so that tonic and intensive values bring about dissymmetries and incommensurabilities in durations, which latter, from a metric point of view, are in fact equal. Repetition, from the architectural point of view, inscribes itself inside a dynamic and heterogeneous space, between ambulatories and sanctuaries. As for psalmodic repetition, it is a kyrielle able to emit tonic accents. As Deleuze remarks, these accents are repeated in unequal intervals, creating remarkable points whose nature is unequal and heterogeneous.[9] Hence, the diagram that corresponds to the monastic problem stirs up singularities. In their vicinity, melodic curves, diverging telluric waves, intensive lines, and crisscrossing scalar assemblages are determined according to the world's irreducible levels: We are faced with a veritable intensive, monophonic, and monochromatic cascade. This is a cascade similar to the one that Duby reveals in a convincing analysis in which the entire stirring power of the diagram becomes visible as it cuts across music, acoustics, mathematics, and architecture, and follows the altogether different rhythms of a univocal plane of consistency.

The ecclesiastical Romanesque, according to Duby, is both an equation and a fugue. Its architect, the "worshipping psalmist" is a pure visionary able to compose psalmodic assemblages and networks of intertwined numerical relations. Duby thinks that the transversal relation between equation and fugue is a trap set up to capture the human mind and to carry it as far as the unknown. We think, on the contrary, that it is a problem binding us to a line of flight and a molecular becoming, tearing us to pieces and dragging us along toward the four corners of the horizon where winds, rivers, sky, and earth ring out in many harmonies.[10] It cannot therefore be contested that Romanesque architecture denotes all at once secrecy, white magic, and aesthetics: "[I]t occurred to some, very pure and striving hard to pierce the mysteries and to enter unknown, fascinating and frightening territories, that they may very well exist beyond what the human senses and reason are able to grasp." It is to these territories that a minor science belongs—a science that Deleuze aptly calls "itinerant" and "nomad."

Monastic art should not be envisaged as a mere mutation in the static relation form-matter: What Deleuze attributes to the gothic, we must also attribute to the secret labor of the dome, between crypt and basilica. Upon this median line, Deleuze's entire philosophy comes alive. For the extrinsic relation form-matter, which characterizes the Romanesque in a strict sense,

the monastic art of the year one thousand substitutes an intermediary space and some sort of dynamics between material and forces.[11]

Geometry, as a royal science, moves to a complete determination of matter and imposes upon all its forces a constraining flow; it is a punctual system, traced from one point to another according to a theorem. As always, matter constitutes an amorphous receptacle to which the form, as pure act, proposes and imposes its extrinsic quiddity and its a priori definable essence, separated from the accidental individuation of matter. Far from the monastery, rigorous geometry eliminates all material accidents for the sake of a totality capable of offsetting pernicious effects. Points everywhere are offered as ends of trajectories, lines, and curves, and they, through a transcendental regulative principle, control the itinerary. For all these reasons, as we can see, it is impossible to bring monastic art under the strict category of the Romanesque, because, as the analyses of Duby underscore, this art is never the offspring of rigorous geometry. Monastic art is the art of the problem, of the protogeometric choice, of a groping experience struggling to follow the heterogeneous bifurcations of the lines of material forces among which the monsters display a universal splashing. The proliferation on the narthex of embryonic animal forms that are alien to all classifications according to genus and species aptly testifies to this art of the problem; it also testifies to its ability to reveal the individuation of the living according to the distribution of all preindividual singularities upon one, and only one, plane of consistency. In the figures of the narthex, and tied to the constraints of the Christian eschatology, we find the demonic growth of a series of monsters that remain alien to all taxonomies.

This larval swarming, which is present in all categories, defines the conditions of a static genesis causing the bifurcation of the species under consideration. The monstrosity of the monastic narthex mobilizes a diverging anexact form capable of biting into every type of the living, the way that an embryo experiments with the distribution of singularities according to a diagram where the limits of a natural specification are obliterated. To the fundamental disparity of the monster that grows in the middle of all biological classes, there corresponds a vague essence that straddles over all constituted genres and every life-form in order to constitute life as a problem. Sculpture, on its own line, joins the problem out of which all monastic diagrams are born according to differentiated thresholds, and encounters, in its extreme points, the architectural diagram.

Monastic architecture must, in fact, be carried along by the material on which it is inscribed; it must take account of all the accidents of matter and coordinate its own movement with the forces of the material utilized. The wooden structure and the dome of stones cannot be bent in the same

manner due to very essential reasons touching on a vague essentiality that has nothing to do with the ruinous distinctions of hylomorphism and its beneficiary royal, euclidean geometry. The essence of matter is the vague essence that makes disjunctions and bifurcations of the lines of force coexist like the divergences of an umbel. The forms "umbel" and "lens" denote with accuracy the sort of definition that Husserl gives to the vague or fluid essences that, in their fields of extension, differ from the frozen exactness of ideal concepts and genres.[12] Vague essences, Deleuze writes, are not the foundations of theorematic geometry; they designate instead the place of a constant approximation of a limit and a space of rhizomatic overlappings. Straddling several categorical registers, vague essences point at the anexact form of the disparate, vagabond, and nomad essence.[13] The internal structure of matter and its ability to be placed in variation totally transcend the hylomorphic model, just as, from another point of view, crusades and psalmody escape the state apparatus and the pontifical organization.[14] All the vagabond movements, susceptible to following the lines of force of the material and obliged to take into account the chances and the singularities of a vector field, define curves that are not easily submitted to the demands of a theorematic form, external to an allegedly amorphous space and to neutral matter. Saint Bernard was not fooled when he condemned, as heretical, the exuberance of Cluny. Cluny names the place of a protogeometry that escapes hylomorphism. It is an art of pure treason. This approximate geometry, with its vague essences, is characterized by the heretic usage to which it submits equations. Instead of being transcendent and distant forces for the organization of matter, its equations are the result of the superior art of the problem and of the force lines of the material itself. We are, therefore, faced with an ambulatory and itinerant science capable of coming to terms, blow by blow, with the singularities and traits of the expressions of the material that run along its dynamic lines. Theorematic science, on the other hand, under the representative demand to reproduce the model, could not have supported the discovery of techniques essential for the development of the dome. From the wooden structure to the dome, the nature of the diagram changes and, as it does, the insufficiency of theorems becomes more evident. The size of the wood, its veins and flexibility, cannot be compared to the size of stone, its veins, resistance, and rigidity. As we move from one register to another, singularities change; they display a dynamic, disjunctive, and diverging space and mobilize a set of variables that are apportioned according to different rules of distribution.

Hence, the determination of the monastic art as a problem is the following: a system of singularities corresponds to a variety of differential variations. The singularities are capable of being actualized according to

diverging lines of realization, like a Lautman scheme that can distinguish between the distribution of singularities inside a vector field and the form that integral curves take in their vicinity. We find, therefore, a group of singularities admitting a determined number of virtual relations: The wooden structure and the dome, each in its own way, is an actualization and a differentiation. In order to be precise, we must say that, as we move from wood to stone, the problem stays the same but the diagram varies. We find, somehow, a group of determinable singularities distributed in a vector field that includes a determined number of differential relations. With respect to the latter, the usage of the dome and of the wooden structure represent, each in its way, an actualized determination and, in relation to the problem under consideration, an effective variable. From the wooden construction to the dome, we are able to count a number of singularities in the vicinity of which the dynamic formation of a space and the differential determination of an intensive line of force are actualized. One could therefore say, with justification, that the dome and the wooden structure are the realizations of a group of singularities that could also be actualized in other differential relations, in other intensive series, which would preexist, somehow, their actualization. In other words, neither the dome nor the wooden structure exhaust the potentialities of the monastic problem. In the directional space of the monastery, there is only one flow of matter-movement that encompasses all the differential relations of preindividual singularities. This continuous flow, which bears the singularities, can be actualized in a determined number of variables, to the extent that every singularity can be extended in all directions until it reaches another singularity and can form converging assemblages and differentiated series. It follows that as soon as the singularities are no longer compatible, as soon as they are no longer extended according to compossible vicinities, they begin to form diverging series, irreducible dynamic species, and lines of bifurcation. From this point of view, wooden structure and dome denote diverging assemblages able to make given singularities converge around a determined series.[15]

At this point, the entire extrinsic distinction between matter and form may be challenged. There is not—nor can there be—any amorphous matter or separate form; instead, we must think of the material as a vein, animated from the inside, or as matter-energy in continuous variation. Upon this basis, a multiplicity of virtually coexisting singularities is actualized according to the immanent plan that the artisan must follow. In other words, the preindividual space where the vague essences bifurcate constitutes a modular zone, which is intermediary between matter and form. In it, all coexisting combinations, in a creative throw of the dice, release their singularities in all directions as in countless, diverging arabesques. To follow the

intensive modulations of a unique material in its intensive journey, rather than imposing a transcendent form on matter; to be involved in an itinerant process; to be distributed in space according to an upward fall, along a line of variable speeds—these are the wanderings of a nomad science. Straddling all the diverging series, in between all the dynamic spaces that coexist virtually, like a demon, man of music and man of war, artisan and geometer, the architect chants his kyrielles and draws a mobile diagonal across a vectorial field with countless curves. The worshipping psalmist breaks into his war chant and, with his terrible hands, from the depths of the crypt, causes to be cast an enormous throw of the dice, which then rolls with multiple echoes across thresholds of incompossible colliding worlds.

2. Cryptics

In relation to the arts of construction, the force of Deleuze's analyses is manifested in the strict correlation that they establish between the mutation of the architectural diagram and the mutation of the corresponding social formations. In fact, we find in Deleuze two organizations of the social field and two politics, the *compars* and the *dispars,* characterized by the spread of the smooth space and the organization of a striated space, respectively.[16] From the relation between the two spaces there emerges a multilinear block where monastic architecture and the peregrination characteristic of the Middle Ages intersect. In the last analysis, between the space of the production of the architectural mutations and the direction of a space defining the vectorial space of Europe during the year one thousand, there is consistency and abstract machinic assemblage, despite the fact that these two determine different concrete arrangements. In order to reach the plane of consistency, which, for convenience's sake, we call "cryptics," we must ride this absolute line of deterritorialization, which is capable of bringing about the consistency of the most diverging longitudes and latitudes.

In the secret piles of broken relics and incommensurable ossuaries, in the labyrinth of partial and incommensurable objects that a crypt flimsily assembles, our most stubborn convictions and obstinate certainties reach an inexpungeable gaiety that shakes off their calm assurance and premature authority. The fragmented humor by means of which our crypts disorganize the *compars* space of the *sensus communis,* in order to garner a collection without a guiding thread, finds its most joyful expression in a beautiful text of Umberto Eco, which, complacently, takes us to the depths of a sanctuary filled with objects of a strange variety. This text deserves to be reproduced in its entirety:

> There was, in a case of aquamarine, a nail of the cross. In an ampoule, lying on a cushion of little withered roses, there was a portion of the crown of thorns; and in another box, again on a blanket of dried flowers, a yellowed shred of the tablecloth from the last supper. And then there was the purse of Saint Matthew, of silver links; and in a cylinder, bound by a violet ribbon eaten by time and sealed with gold, a bone from Saint Anne's arm. I saw, wonder of wonders, under a glass bell, on a red cushion embroidered with pearls, a piece of the manger of Bethlehem, and a hand's length of the purple tunic of Saint John the Evangelist, two links of the chains that bound the ankles of the apostle Peter in Rome, the skull of Saint Adalbert, the sword of Saint Stephen, a tibia of Saint Margaret, a finger of Saint Vitalis, a rib of Saint Sophia, the chin of Saint Eobanus, the upper part of Saint Chrysostom's shoulder blade, the engagement ring of Saint Joseph, a tooth of the Baptist, Moses's rod, a tattered scrap of very fine lace from the Virgin Mary's wedding dress.[17]

All these futile and yet venerable objects make a strange collection whose principle—truth to tell—is not immediately visible, being in this sense comparable to Borges's Chinese bestiary explored by Foucault in the context of heterotopy.[18] Plunged in the most blinding obscurity, the arrangement that made possible this display of fragments remains very problematic. As the common space of all encounters, the notion "support" remains the familiar pedestal of all Western existence, the space of similarities; the table of analogical judgments, categories, and multiplications; and the horizon for the display of the play of resemblances. But, on the other hand, the enumeration of the fragments directly challenges the thought of support and destabilizes the power of identities to the profit of a radical exploding of the aggregate and of a totally inordinate relation between support and driving force, figure and speed. There is no hidden sense, therefore, dissimulated behind the appearances, waiting to be exhumed from its founding retreat. Nor is there, up high, a totality able to seal off the collection. On the contrary, this heteroclite retinue of relics, with its aleatory distribution, does not lack (literally) anything; it rather deploys a plane of consistency that is very different both from the euphoria of the support and from its triumphal relief. Neither concealed depth nor final overhang, the humor of such an arrangement has at its disposal only a secret platitude on the basis of which it distributes its singularities in the disparate space of the crypt. One could say that Eco's description joins a curve in the vicinity of many and different singularities, according to the very special logic that Foucault and Deleuze found to be present in the formation statements. A statement is a discursive formation cutting through many levels and orders; it is a multiplicity that escapes structural normalization and hermeneutic interpretation. Although

it may be a secret, it does not have a hidden sense, even if this sense is not immediately visible. This is the reason why it needs a particular handling—archaeological, topological, and problematic.[19] Eco's description may be compared to a statement to the extent that the aleatory series of relics maintains a number of propositions that are chosen around a function—not a category. Among fabrics, bones, jewels, and other objects, this text weaves a diagonal that gives them consistency without reducing the latter to a categorical unity. There is no hidden principle to find behind this description that would be a rule for the production of discourse, because the latter is assembled around a pure primitive function that cuts across heterogeneous orders, disparate structures, and irreducible classes of objects. Eco's statement defines a multiplicity, an emission of singularities, which looks like a curve as it passes in the multiplicity's vicinity in the form of a derived function. Eco's description forms a statement and refers immediately to a corresponding state of affairs or to a nondiscursive reality upon which it legislates. It refers to an order of visibility and to a set of autonomous practices that constitute a multiplicity and give rise to pragmatics and semantics, for linguistics is not enough to account for it. For the time being, we do not wish to thematize this problematic relation between statement and visibility, form of content and form of expression. It is enough to observe the two aspects of the assemblage (statement-state of affairs) and to indicate how the collection of singular fragments is translated into positions of derived subjects: saints, apostles, monarchs, and so on.

As we saw already, the basilica-crypt monolith forms two hemispheres with an intermediary membrane running through them as if they were a brain. The crypt, dug out from the bare rock, has expressive qualities very different from the qualities of the superimposed building, which is put together stone by stone. Here, on a fork or a bifurcation, two worlds coexist, and a universe of incompossibilities develops inside the monastic space. The world of the crypt and the world of the basilica deploy their own diverging ambulatories. Along these incompatible itineraries, the movement of the world traces the dance of the pilgrims, linking together the different sanctuaries like so many views of a kaleidoscope agitated according to various speeds and slownesses. Duby correctly states that "the liturgy unveils itself like a slow, majestic rondo, along the nave and the ambulatories, around the sacrificial stone, between the stones of the walls and under the stones of the dome."[20] Along this intensive path of the dance, there are as many worlds as there are pauses and rests. On each step of the rondo, worlds begin to swarm about. Thus, as Deleuze emphasizes, the dance traces a line of transition from one world to another, a veritable break in and an exploration of worlds, each one of which is closed onto itself.[21] All the sanctuaries alongside the nave refer

to independent worlds, which are animated by the dance of the pilgrims and interconnected according to variable speeds and itineraries. We could then say that the indiscernible ambulatories of the crypt and the basilica form waves of fibers and world-movements on the trajectory of which the pilgrim is placed into orbit and made to trace the steps of a catatonic dance. The basilica, therefore, defines a world where disparate sanctuaries are piled up; as for the crypt, it marks the birth of an exploded ossuary, with disseminated fragments and harlequinlike sepulchers. In it, relics are distributed like the molecules of an excited brain. One can think of the crypt's ossuary as "fragments which have been soldered back again." The distribution of these fragments takes place according to a schema that is comparable to Clarkon's chains; that is, to chains of neurons carrying semidependent singularities in a way that differs from strictly determined sequences or from totally undetermined linkages. In other words, the schema is that of a semialeatory process situated between chance and necessity. Instead of tracing a homogeneous line with the usual isometric recurrence of identical sequences, the sequence of relics fluctuates on a network of multiple lines that overlap and intersect at junctions and interchanges. In these interchanges and junctions, independent lines meet, like unpredictable occurrences, which are necessary despite the fact that they are traversed by series that are not themselves determined (the encounter of independent series).

Thus we must rethink the crypt as a space that cuts across a great many structures or as a space of dispersion including a great many wholes and honeycombed reliquaries with many incongruous compartments. Think, for example, of the collective staurotheques of the church of Saint Mathias or of the dome of Saint George, where upon one and the same stage incommensurable particles coexist.[22] In general, the receptacle of these reliquaries assumes the form of a double cross. Arranged symmetrically in two sets, the display boxes permit the inspection of relics and of authentic parchments bearing the names of individual saints. Every protective cover is framed by gold and ivory in order to prevent the overlapping of display boxes. This pile of hermetic frames fits snugly inside another encompassing frame, and it is here, in the form of a cross, that the four branches of the tree of life are determined according to an orthonomous play of frames that separates territories and attributes to each saint the part that belongs to him or her. We are confronted by a system of predetermined places capable of making a swarm of saints coexist peacefully: Saints Lorains, Mathias, Euchairius, or, even, Abbot Jacobus and Friar Isenbrandus, the donors of the staurotheque. This is indeed a curious machine, with its sign and display regimes, and we cannot really see the totality of practices and forces that it encounters. And yet something does not run smoothly; the pacific structure of the double axis

is not successful; it turns sour and is spoiled as if by an inappropriate seasoning. The tree of life, the sedentary distribution trying to work out the double articulation of the true cross, suddenly fails. Indexing the face and the need to comply with the pontifical will concerning the reliquaries are entirely bypassed by the bedeviled work of the goldsmiths. Here again, a different dance rumbles underneath the sedentary distributions—an entire rhizome that, ever since the Scythians, spreads and runs through reliquary art.[23]

In fact, one cannot fail to notice the heterotopic character of these collective reliquaries—veritable sealed boxes—whose common base literally implodes as it organizes the spaces of encounters and proximities. That monstrosity characterizes reliquaries is due to the fact that the relation of our faculties to an object presumed to be the same is, in this case, destroyed: common names fritter away under the extraordinary humor that Eco, in his way, retrieves. In this sense, the collective reliquary hides no contradiction that an amiable process of dialectical reconciliation could overcome. It develops, instead, degrees of humor that assign to each thing its place and its usage along a schizophrenic path. No common sense ever achieves here the establishment of hierarchies through the attribution of a transcendental subject or of an object taking the form of the same. Fragrances of sainthood, display cases, and sacred adorations are deployed around inorganic reliquaries of irreducible dimensions, inside a miraculating and peregrinating body without organs, which differs from itself as much as a stretched chord differs with each new degree of tension—discordant harmony of all faculties and division of the indivisible. We are therefore faced with a double reliquary order, the organic and the inorganic. We have, first of all, a symmetrical and arborescent distribution traversed by the true cross, apportioning territories and attributing parts: a sedentary distribution. But at the edge of this organic system, one can get a glimpse of a nomadic distribution of sealed boxes communicating according to the greatest possible distance: a transversal connection of fragments. Two senses of "synthesis" are present: According to the first, fixed subjects and stable signs—Saint Mathias and his emblem; Saint Euchairius and his symbol—are distributed within a system of homogeneous sites, which is then overcoded by a transcendent principle of distribution. But according to the second, the whole is, in fact, molecularized; like a fragrance of sainthood rising to the surface, it passes through all the barriers of an aleatory and inorganic itinerary, which cannot be reduced to the homogeneous structures of the whole. It forms a wild arabesque that straddles all sealed boxes, encompasses incompossible worlds, and causes a multiplicity of discordant faculties to cohere on the impersonal and the subjective line of a saraband or farandole. The power of the disjunctive synthesis is indeed here: it affirms separate terms across their distances and

in all their difference as a set of fragments beating time according to different rhythms, as they turn and begin to diverge, without limiting or excluding one another. From this point of view the art of the goldsmith does not eliminate the disjunctions by identifying the contradictions; on the contrary, it affirms all the distances between the sealed boxes on an indivisible curve, as it lines up fragments, one at the end of the other, like the two extremities of a segment within a space that cannot be decomposed.[24] From this point of view, relics designate the pieces of a puzzle the solution to which has been destroyed by the affirmation of all distances: heterotopia. But across these distances, the goldsmith weaves his web and releases folds and false agreements, as he machines a heterogeneous system marked by inorganic unity. The many relics have, in fact, a unity, the way that a cloud of insects has a unity; in it each volatile particle evolves, and conserves all along without any center of gravity, the greatest possible distances from all the other particles. The collective reliquary thus stands for a veritable multiplicity, for a war machine that fights against the power apparatuses expressed in the double axis of the sedentary distribution.

If Duby has tried, in his own way, to define psalmody as a war chant,[25] Deleuze, from another point of view, has conceived of metallurgy as a weapon and as a movement of decoding that brings about a terrible war machine.[26] According to Deleuze, the weapon establishes an essential relation between jewelry and nomad art. According to Duby, there is a close relationship between the art of the steppes and the art of relics, for in the art of relics we find, once again, the aggressiveness of engraving, of the fibula and the arabesque, which turns living forms into abstractions and extracts from them an inorganic dimension.[27] In fact, fibulas, golden plates, and the jewels that decorate the reliquary cannot but confirm its mobile (*meuble*) nature, because to the extent that it moves and changes places, they belong to its texture: they are the traces of many faces and the umbels of diverging rays. Reliquary cases and the collective staurotheques are dispersed throughout Europe according to a continuous migration. Inlaid jewels initiate trajectories of pure speed and scintillate in every direction, creating thereby a system of interstices capable of smashing to pieces the very idea of a substrate. Thus, as Deleuze shows conclusively, metallurgy escapes the form-matter relationship for the sake of the motif-support interstice, where the earth is only a ground, or even better, where there is no more ground at all, for the substrate is now as mobile as the motif: emerging from the background, sidestepping foundations, growing into a smooth space. The support here has nothing to do with the subjacence of a substrate; it develops, instead, a field of mobile vectors. Boxes and reliquaries are supports only on the condition that they are mobile pieces of furniture (*meuble*), vector-speeds, or

vectors of deterritorialization. As such they cause the generalized flight of ecclesiastical power as they carry it along a line of war where sedentary coordinates give way and leave behind a great number of packs.

3. From Ossuaries to Packs

There are fragments and there are fragments. What characterizes, in a very general way, the fragment is that it denotes a certain incompleteness. Splinter or remains, it is the supplement of a totality often unassignable, always drawn into itself and inaccessible. From this point of view, it is toward the lack of an unconditioned totality that the fragment obstinately gravitates, and this adequately defines the concealed essence of the fragment. This is why the Greek soul, expressed in fragments and tatters, is already inscribed in the reactive desire to fill the lack, through the restitution of the lost unity. But it is obvious that, in the monastic art of the year one thousand, the relation between fragment and whole begins to sketch out different itineraries:

> When a part is valid for itself, when a fragment speaks in itself, when a sign appears, it may be in two very different fashions: either because it permits us to divine the whole from which it is taken, to reconstitute the organism or the statue to which it belongs, and to seek out the other part which belongs to it—or else, on the contrary, because there is no other part which corresponds to it, no totality into which it can enter, no unity from which it is torn and to which it can be restored.[28]

It is at this precise point that the entire theory of the support and of the totalizing relief finds itself defused to the advantage of a logic of multiplicities. Multiplicities can be conceived only when the dimension of foundations is removed and subtracted according to a value defined by the n–1.[29] We cannot think about multiplicities except by subtracting from them the unity that allegedly grants them their origin. A multiplicity never denotes a simple multiple of the one; rather it is a variety from which unity has been removed. In this removal, the relation of the one to the multiple is no longer pertinent. But we must, at all costs, stop conceiving this removal and subtraction of unity as simply the labor of the negative. The question is not merely how to transcend the one as support, or how to gather again the multiple under an identical principle in order to negate them in a dialectical fashion. The question is, rather, how to begin to think again, without a stable support or invariable principle, as we learn how to assemble sign-regimes and states of affairs upon the flat dimension of a plane of consistency. There is not, nor can there be, a hidden principle or a transcending form capable of over-

coding words and things. But this double negation must not be conceived on the model of a negative ontology. We do not say what the multiplicity is not; we must, on the contrary, say that n–1 is the formula that affirms the being of differences—a very positive formula that does not necessarily signify the power of the verb "to be." The multiplicity is the affirmation of all differences inside the dimension n–1, and, as such, it privileges the disjunctive conjunction as the realm of interstices, to the detriment of the verb "to be." In short, the collective and asubjective reliquary allows us to thematize the affirmation of all impersonal fragments.

The fact that in the case of the reliquary we do not discover a totality underlying the work of fragmentation means that this substance is indeed missing, not in the sense of lacking, but rather "missing" in a very positive way. Not only is the receptacle of the staurotheque irreducible to the idea of the support, not only is it extremely mobile, but it is also run through by motif-speeds, by traits of expression and distances, which, being themselves mobile, render unthinkable every organic unity: jewels, enamels, fibulas, and buckles display their piercing light rays as a cloud of luminous stars, a veritable swarm of shiny points turning around themselves, like a volatile whole. From time to time, a bone, a skull, or a tooth comes to punctuate this ballet of mobile singularities. The fact is that these fragments can never be conceived on the basis of a lost unity or a concealed totality. In the n–1 eclipses of the Middle Ages, the somber whole of the organic unity is subtracted from the relics. The tibia of Saint Margarite and the lower jaw of Saint Eobanus find their own proper value on the condition that organic unity retreats. In fact, all these relics denote perfectly autonomous elements, with no link to the whole from which they were removed. Here, the power of a nonorganic life begins to beat according to disparate rhythms. It is the power of a life liberated from the constraints of unity, totality, and organic purposiveness—dust of stars and solar singularities. A very special mode of individuation occurs in the form of the anexact ossuary. As Deleuze indicates so well, "a bone or a skull is never alone. Bones are a multiplicity."[30] Each of these elements ties up to the next in an unqualifiable distance and a monstrous proximity. There is no unity shared by all to make organic the growth of an ossuary, but only monstrous and devious links relating the bones to each other, without ever forming a whole. And yet, this disjunctive synthesis brings about life, albeit a life that does not pass through contradiction—the motor engine of dialectics. This is a life with animated interstices contracting, dilating, and dividing in a myriad of shapes, as in a kaleidoscope that someone has shaken. Here, fragments liberate themselves from organic constraints and make up singularities in the vicinity of which a continuous arabesque is deployed, capable of connecting them again, in a semialeatory

farandole. A host of relics is animated and comes alive the way that dancers do as they form, in variable interstices, one single figure and motif. Each one of their jolts separates them and liberates new and different structures. We must, therefore, conceive the atomized bodies of the saints as germs of a new life, as seeds that have burst through the pavement—seeds of light and dancing particles of dust. This inorganic life, which spreads along the interstices, is not actualized only in the case of the crypt. It is also expressed inside sign-regimes marked by a particular proper name—the name of a saint with frightful, incorporeal effects.

Sign-regimes are everywhere; signifying sign-regimes have no privilege. Together with Deleuze, we will retain two, the despotic and the passional: a semiotic system of cheating and a semiotic system of betrayal, two quite different modes of incorpeal transformation. Around the year one thousand, it is the pontifical authority that best actualizes the despotic regime. This sign-regime, with the pope at its center, succeeds in making all European holy places converge and resonate around Rome. The papal despotism is a center of significance whose radiance causes the stratification of all barbaric invasions. It also brings about the reterritorialization of every speed-vector and every celerity upon a church whose concentric circles have the pontifical seat for center, and have a host of sanguinary evangelists leaping from one circle to the next. The despotic center of significance, with its order words and pontifical bulls, spreads over all Europe its own net of stratification, like a punctual system whose points converge around a central knot. The relation between church and barbarians, and the reterritorialization that results from it, along with the Church's God and its hell, mark the spot of an unclean betrayal. Every discourse whose function it is to convert the invaders testifies to betrayal. Becoming Christian is the index of an incorporeal transformation, attributable to things and bodies without belonging to them. It is the sign-regime that turns us into damned souls. Nevertheless, the sign-regime, which expresses the act of condemnation and the attribution of sin, despite the fact that it reterritorializes, may, in many respects, include a germ of deterritorialization in relation to the states of affairs that we are discussing. Of course, Rome sends its missionaries everywhere, loaded with restraining order words and apocalyptic faces capable of creating black holes and endowing with purpose all movements and all migrations from one point to another. The actions of Boniface constitute an excellent example. Under his leadership, "spurious priests, fornicating deacons and bad bishops were all removed. The calibre of the clergy was better controlled by insisting that future priests take an examination in the Holy Scriptures. The bishops were ordered to supervise their dioceses more closely."[31]

The work of Boniface mobilizes a paranoiac-despotic sign-regime that, from the pope to the archbishops, from the archbishops to the bishops, and from the bishops to the priests, succeeds in maintaining absolute unity. To survey and to control—through the establishment of places of worship—instruction and formation, knowledge and power, represent, along with the institution of confession, the primary tasks of the Church. As a consequence, all these black holes begin to resonate under the same melodic name. But in order to bring about this harmony it is necessary to make the pontifical efficacy clear, and the supremacy of the Christian God visible, through a massive recourse to miracles. We must make people see that a God who dies on the cross is not a sign of powerlessness and, by transforming this weakness into force, show that this apparent death is not the last one, that there are plenty of other dreadful, atrocious, and eternal sufferings. Around this reactive conversion is deployed the scene of a despotic, discursive formation, along with the spectacular dimension of the corresponding sign-regime; in other words, an entire symbolics able to open up the space of Christian visibility.

This entire stage is the space of a foul betrayal and the repugnant spectacle of a perversion by means of which, at last, the vanquished take their revenge and make palpable the victory of the reactive forces. It is the domination of an insidious sickness that will climax in the form of nihilism; later on, it will be diagnosed by Nietzsche. Faceness is the name of this visibility. The face is the icon that characterizes the signifying regime, and its space of presentation and exposure, through which humans will be forced to create a memory. As Deleuze observes, face, lie, and treachery constitute the body of this regime upon whose surface order words become legible. Such a semiotics is, of course, inscribed on other faces, as well, like a branding or tattooing operation; it is readable on the horrified faces of those who are tortured, on the strident grimaces of faces undone by fright, and on the sputtering and crackling of the skin that decomposes in the heat of the scaffold. It is the face of the tortured that the despotic regime invents in order to block every line of flight and every deterritorialization, or in order to turn people's instincts against themselves. This semiotics, along with the corresponding traits of faceness, includes a line of flight and a point of deterritorialization, although this point is always affected by a negative value, transformed into memory, and coded according to the logic of the scapegoat. Heretical experience is, in this respect, paradigmatic, since it reveals a gap, a deviation from the center of despotic significance. This gap is constantly enlarged for the sole purpose of being filled and of endowing the entropic sign-regime with more signifiers. The heretical deviation can be inscribed only inside an already constituted semiotic order. Whatever it timidly unravels, it puts back

together in a better way—in its own wake—and this is the mark of every transgression. But if the despotic sign-regime, along with its faceness, succeeds in locking up exits, it does not, by itself, dominate the entire play of assemblages. An assemblage has no closure; it is always inside a system of thresholds and multilinear breaks, even if it allows itself to be stratified by an arborescent, punctual system. There is no reason, according to Deleuze, to identify a civilization, an epoch, or the history of a people with the radiation of an exclusive semiotic system, the way that Heidegger does: "There is such mixture within the same period or the same people that we can say no more than that a given people, language or period assures the relative dominance of a certain regime. Perhaps all semiotics are mixed and not only combine with various forms of content but also combine different regimes of signs."[32]

From this point of view, the idea of the closure of a system by a dominant regime with unlimited powers of reappropriation makes no sense, because every system is multilinear and in perpetual heterogeneity. We cannot go beyond a sign-regime, because it is inscribed inside a heterogenesis that causes it to flee through thresholds and breaks; a sign-regime is an assemblage of recombined fragments. The question, then, is how to prepare a map of sign-regimes, a veritable topology, which would have, for a given epoch, all sorts of longitudes and latitudes: how to compose a multilinear whole with entrances and exits that can be modulated in different ways so that no "ontotheology" can ever reproduce it ahead of its time or determine it a priori toward a tragic end?

To create the map of the year one thousand is to trace three lines, at least, capable of intersecting one another in always new assemblages; it is to construct, as a primitive function, a problematic and diagrammatic dimension, and, as a derivative function, a concrete dimension of assemblages. Among derivative functions, we place a line of hard segmentarity—the face of the despot and his order words—together with a line of supple segmentarity—which has different forms of expression and content: here belongs, for example, the proper name of the saint or of the relic. But there is also a third line, a primitive function this time, and the median vector of pure deterritorialization that carries along in its presence everything between crypt and basilica, form and matter, disparate sanctuaries and fragmented ossuaries, motif and support. It carries them along according to an aparallel becoming in the trajectory of which pure, preindividual singularities collide. With the line of hard segmentarity, which joins together order words and despotic faces, we must associate another line, which connects proper names and relics, passional, subjective regimes, and reliquary displays. Many segments make up this supple line, which crosses thresholds as diverse as those of architecture, geometry, dance, and metallurgy. It has points of

subjectivization different from those of the first line; in relation to them, a relic, as a form of content, is linked up with a proper name of a saint, as a form of expression. There is a proliferation of singularities and a diffusion of proper names on this supple line; pontifical despotism can no longer force them to converge. Here, the saint replaces the priest as the pope's subject, and succeeds in placing all order words in continuous variation. The saint deploys, therefore, an incorporeal transformation that differs from Christianity and represents a miraculating dimension of pure betrayal. Between the two, the line of absolute deterritorialization traces a zigzag from which there emerges the hordes and the packs of pilgrims. This is the line of crusades causing, under the constraints of peregrination, all sorts of mutations: architectural, scientific, and political, to name only a few. The line of pure betrayal carries the hard segmentarity of the despotic regime and the supple line of the passional regime along a vector of intensive speed. These lines cannot be subdivided without changing nature. Thus, as it tries to regulate migratory movements, the Church is deterritorialized and barbarized, whereas, at the same time, the passional system, with its relics and its proper names, migrates in all directions, despite the fact that, from time to time, it is reterritorialized upon pontifical order words. This block of becoming, with its geohistorical lines, traces a map and a topography without hidden significations or transcendent purposiveness, and turns history into heterogeneous static genesis—a topological mutation instead of an ontological sending off (*envoi*) with a closed destination.

In this respect, the art of the relics and the use of proper names are paradigmatic: they escape, one way or another, the signifying demands of the despotic sign-regime. This art, as Duby remarks, could cause a lot of shock. The most learned men of the Church were frequently surprised by the proliferation of reliquaries in the form of inorganic bodies, and by the throngs of people fascinated by these simulacra.[33] Daniel-Rops openly revolts against such barbaric practices, which, thanks to their assimilation by the Church, drag it endlessly on a line of increasing barbarism: "In the Dark Ages there was the danger that Christianity might succumb to the general 'barbarization,' that instead of elevating the newly baptized, it might slip into violence and vice along with them."[34] Double now is the risk of gliding upon a smooth space. There is, first of all, an entire series of pagan practices of Germanic background around which Christian temples are erected; they, in various forms, work through the new cult. On the other hand, peregrination and the taste for migration, although present already in the Jewish culture, will come to know a formidable explosion on the occasion of the Christian reterritorialization, and the Church will find it very difficult to contain this wild errance. Mobile and diffuse groups are

constituted; immense human tides, with their knights, monks, outlaws, troubadours, and jugglers, begin to deviate following a clinamen where the flesh rises to the surface in a huge mixture of bodies and in swirling fluxes that bend, intersect, and extend themselves in all directions according to diverse longitudes and latitudes. The Europe of the Middle Ages is best defined as a pure field of vectors from which packs spring up, on the basis of a very supple mode of individuation. The latter disrupts the link of baptism along a curve, or a continuous ballad, capable of integrating the most different practices and of forming thereby hordes with fluid outlines growing by the edges laterally. All these packs of fornicating brothers, bandits, heretics, and artisans form an arabesque slope, whose interval in relation to the tangent assumes, at every step, the name of a saint. Inside these packs, every saint's proper name takes the appearance of a particular curve, and the pontifical order words disintegrate, affected by a continuous decline. This is what causes the official language of the Church to flee in the direction of an intensive bilingualism: "The invaders picked up Latin and began to speak it, but what dreadful Latin it was! It was the low Latin of the common people . . . A vulgar tongue emerged which simplified the vocabulary, replacing proper words with popular slang expressions, eliminating the classical adverbs and substituting others formed by adding the ending 'ment' to the adjective, using 'de' and 'ad' instead of case endings, and turning syntax topsyturvy."[35] In short, in this continuous atomization, the pontifical and imperial language begins to stutter; it follows a line of minorizing translation that links, in an aparallel way, the deterritorialization of Latin to the expropriation of Germanism. This evolution carries along the dominant language and its order words in the direction of singular becomings.

To this deterritorialization of people and languages, the pontifical power will react in many ways: through the enactment of indulgences and offerings of forgiveness it will institute a system of jubilees capable of giving a purpose to the movements of peregrination, and of fixing goals that fit the correct jurisdiction. This, in turn, will introduce to the molecular space turbulence and deviations. Looking for ways to reterritorialize the pilgrimage, the Church will gradually, and by means of a system of rewards and penalties, replace geographic displacements with the practice of flagellation as a sedentary penitence. It is true that, contrary to all expectations, this practice will form, around the fifteenth century, a new geography, a new type of becoming, and a new body without organs. But, in the meantime, we witness a veritable inflation of jubilees, under the impulse of a growing deterritorialization. By means of these jubilees, pontifical power reaffirms its authority and succeeds in striating the rhizome. By such means, we see the face of the

pope replace the face of Saint Peter and become the center toward which those who travel to Rome[36] converge, without ceasing to be reterritorialized upon the name of the saint. The legalization of the pilgrims' movement, therefore, initially requires that deviations be given a purpose and be reindexed upon the face of the pope, where the jubilees succeed in taking shape. But it also requires that the peregrination be integrated in a trajectory that is controlled by hospices empowered to deliver the certificates appropriate to the prescribed punishment. Fixed itineraries and straight lines dotted with stations of hospitality regulated by extremely rigorous codes replace the old, wild migrations. Hence, on every kind of pilgrim a particular juridical status is imposed, fixing the order of symbols and emblems, as well as the nature of the uniform. But under this strict and constraining jurisdiction, the knots never cease to be undone and to form an enormous war machine liberating a formidable charge of nomadism, doubling up every migrant with a nomad potential on a line of absolute deviation.[37]

Between the states of affairs that we discussed (sanctuaries, reliquaries, hospices, and pilgrims) and the corresponding sign-regimes (juridical codes for pilgrims, jubilees, indulgences, insignia, and prayers)—between form of content and form of expression—an incorporeal event is counteractualized. It traces a line of flight where the marchers of God rush on, according to variable speeds and intensities or longitudes and latitudes. In the crossroads of the latter pairing, packs of traitors surge up and the Church, despite its efforts, cannot integrate them into the triangle: Rome, Jerusalem, Saint Jacques de Compostelle. Everywhere, new hordes, with their own relics and their own proper names, begin to betray: Saint Roch against the pest; Saint Blaise against sore throats; Saint Matthew against dementia . . .[38] In certain regions, illnesses assume the name of the saint specialized in their cure. Proper names and relics designate a real war machine, with verbs like "to peregrinate," "to decline," "to miraculate" used to express its effects. Under those infinitives, all the pontifical faces and bulls start to skid, carried along by an arrangement of becoming capable of bringing about a sign-regime and a very particular mixture of bodies. Fistula becomes the illness of Saint Fiacre; epilepsy, the illness of Saint John; scabies, the illness of Saint Meon; the gout, the illness of Saint Maurus. At the same time, and following an incorporeal transformation, all these names become the names of lands—splinters of disparate worlds without relations—and are taken up in a ballad that recombines them upon a cryptic plane of consistency. For all these reasons, a saint's personal history and the faces that the Church tries to symbolize on its reliquaries end up as mere copies of an empirical dimension that cannot but dissolve, as an abstract machine carries it along. This machine is capable of placing, in a continuous variation, architecture, metal-

lurgy, and all discursive formations, according to a line of crusades where packs and ossuaries swarm into infinity.

From architecture to psalmody, from psalmody to relics, and from relics to peregrination, an abstract machine is outlined, without any hidden support or principal overhang, and it develops its concrete differentiated assemblages according to the flat dimension of continuous multiplicities (n–1). Here, I have joined together these multiplicities on a map of the year one thousand, as in a rhizosphere with fluid coordinates, oriented toward diverging thresholds, translated into irreducible proper names, and placed in variation through illimitative verbs of becoming. In this context, I have looked for aesthetic thresholds able to mobilize knowledge (*savoir*) in a direction different from the scientific, in order to translate an architectural work into the problematic terms to which it belongs. I would have liked to develop more than I did the other thresholds—ethical, juridical, political—tied to different discursive practices, and to follow as a nomad "that foreign land where a literary form, a scientific proposition, a common phrase, a schizophrenic piece of non-sense and so on are also statements, but lack a common denominator and cannot be reduced or made equivalent in any discursive way."[39] It is inside this directional space and in continuous transformation that I would have liked to forge my concepts, like an itinerant artisan, with all the tact required by the material-force and support-motif complex, cleansed of their constraining theorems. I would then be able to follow the intensive lines of flight and to allow our vague essence to wander (*errer*) in every course (*parcours*) and every discourse. Perhaps we must, henceforth, learn to decline (*décliner*) all this, simultaneously, with an overgrown ear, on the trajectories of a nomadic philosophy.

—Translated by Constantin V. Boundas

Notes

1. Georges Duby, *L'Europe du Moyen-Age* (Paris: Champs Flammarion, 1984), p. 50, and *Saint Bernard: L'art cistercien* (Paris: Champs Flammarion, 1979), p. 45.
2. Albert Lautman, *Le Problème du temps* (Paris: Hermann, 1946), p. 41.
3. Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2, The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (London: Athlone, 1989), p. 177.
4. Clément Rosset, *Le Réel: Traité de l'idiotie* (Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, 1977).
5. *Saint Bernard. L'art cistercien,* p. 155.
6. Deleuze and Guattari's decisive analysis spread over the entire "Treatise on Nomadology" in *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, vol. 2, *A Thousand Plateaus,* trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1987) and the book of Paul Alphandéry, *La chretienté et l'idée de croisade (Paris:* Albin Michel, 1954).
7. Elie Faure, *L'Art medieval* (Paris: Folio/Essais, 1985), pp. 253–257.
8. *Encyclopedia Universalis*, vol. 4 (Paris: Editions Encyclopedia Universalis, 1985), p. 984. See also Jacques Chailley, *Le musique medievale* (Paris, 1951).
9. Gilles Deleuze, *Différence et répétition* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968), p. 33. On ritornello and deterritorialization, see *A Thousand Plateaus*, chapter 11.
10. *L'Europe du Moyen-Age,* pp. 53–55.
11. *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 364–365.
12. Edmund Husserl, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, trans. W. R. Boyce Gibson (New York: Collier, 1962), p. 74. See also *On the Origin of Geometry.*
13. *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 367–368, 407.
14. On the relation between psalmody and war chant, see *Saint Bernard: L'Art cistercien,* pp. 42–43.
15. Deleuze makes use of the same procedure of differentiation with respect to the ironsword and the cast steel saber; see *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 404–407.
16. *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 369–370.
17. Umberto Eco, *The Name of the Rose*, trans. William Weaver (New York: Warner Books, 1984), pp. 512–513.
18. Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Random House, 1970), preface.
19. Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Harper, 1972). See also Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, trans. Sean Hand (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), pp. 13–14.
20. *L'Europe du Moyen-Age,* p. 51.
21. *Cinema 2*, pp. 63–64.
22. M. M. Gothier, *Les routes de la foi* (Paris: Bibliothèque des Arts), pp. 68 and 72.
23. On the relationship between this art and the Scythians, see Henri Daniel-Rops, *L'Eglise des temps barbares* (Paris: Fayard, 1950), p. 371. See also *Saint Bernard: L'Art cistercien,* p. 50.

24. On disjunctive logic, see Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, vol. 1, *Anti-Oedipus*, trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane (New York: Viking Press, 1977), pp. 68–84.
25. *Saint Bernard: L'Art cistercien*, pp. 42–43.
26. *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 400–402.
27. *Saint Bernard: L'Art cistercien*, p. 50.
28. Gilles Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, trans. R. Howard (New York: George Braziller, 1972), p. 100.
29. *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 21.
30. *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 30.
31. Henri Daniel-Rops, *The Church in the Dark Ages*, trans. Audrey Butler (New York: Dutton, 1959), p. 383.
32. *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 119.
33. *L'Europe du Moyen-Age*, p. 59.
34. *The Church in the Dark Ages*, p. 377.
35. *The Church in the Dark Ages*, p. 330.
36. "*Romieux*": pilgrims going to Rome.
37. *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 383–384.
38. P. A. Segal, *Les marcheurs de Dieu* (Paris: A. Colin, 1974), p. 35.
39. *Foucault*, p. 20.

15

The Society of Dismembered Body Parts

Alphonso Lingis

for Steve Hornibrook

THE NOTION OF SOCIETIES formed by contract posits law as the transcendent, universally valid, and transtemporal horizon of the contents of contracts. The notion of contract posits individuals as autonomous agents, individuals individuated as seats of understanding and will.

Our culture also maintains the image of a social body, as a multiplicity of individuals integrated as so many functions of an organism. The body writ small that serves as the analogon for societies consists of a set of parts and organs defined by their functions, which are fixed and complementary with one another.

Recent structuralism identified the social fabric with the system regulating the exchange of words, women, goods, and services. Ferdinand de Saussure's linguistics had separated the value of terms from their meanings: to consider the meaning of a term is to consider the way it designates its referent; to consider the value of a term is to consider the other terms that can substitute for it. It was this view of language as an economic system, a field of circulation of terms bearing messages, that made it possible to view the kinship structures that determine the division of tasks and of power in tribal societies as rules made by men for the distribution and exchange of women. The icons and practices of power, ritual, ceremony, religion, myths, and ideologies will also be envisioned as structured fields for the circulation of different kinds of values.

In the exchangist model, the terms of the social field are not simply individuals, the personas presupposed by the social contract theory. It is fundamental to the exchangist model that the terms be susceptible to several uses, be interchangeable. It is this feature that makes it incompatible with the old

organic image of society, which depicted society as an integrated hierarchy of terms defined by their functions.

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus*[1] offers a new mapping of the libidinal body—the libidinal body of the primary process—which will serve to guide what the theorists have to say about societies. If, when we envision our bodies as organisms, we envision them as integrated sets of functions, the libidinal body being depicted in Deleuze and Guattari is not such an organism; it is the anorganic body, the orgasmic body. What we usually call the body as organism is the body of secondary process libido, the oedipalized body.

An anorganic body is not defined by its constitutive organization, but by its states. *Anti-Oedipus* distinguishes different states of the body. From birth, the orifices couple on to organs they find contiguous with them, and draw in nutritive flows. With the forces of its own strong jowls the infantile mouth draws in the milk, along with gulps of air and warmth. These forces produce plenitude, satisfaction, and contentment, which is not simply an affect shimmering over the inner content. For contentment is itself a force; the infantile body closes its orifices, curls up upon itself, closes its eyes and ears to outside fluxes, makes itself an anorganic plenum—a "body without organs," in Artaud's expression. This undifferentiated and closed plenum produces and reproduces itself; Deleuze and Guattari identify the id, and the primary repression that produces the id, with this state of the body. Its contentment is a primary mode of death drive, which is not a compulsion to disintegrate into the quiescence of the inert, but a primary catatonia.

Freud discerned libidinous pleasure already in the slavering and drooling with which the infant, over and beyond contentment, spreads a surface of pleasure. Every organ-coupling can, by an anaclitic deviation, be turned to the excess production of erotogenic surfaces; the mouth can draw in the nutrients but also slaver and drool, google and babble; the anus can release the excrement but also spread it in a surface of warm pleasure. The pleasure surfaces that are thus extended are surfaces of contact, indiscernibly infantile face and maternal breast, infant cheeks and blanket. Here the organs figure not as orifices leading into the inner functional body, but as productive apparatuses attached to the surfaces of the closed plenum of the body, functioning polymorphously perversely to extend pleasure surfaces. The surfaces are surfaces of sensuality, surfaces not of contentment, but of what Freud called excitations, freely mobile excitations. Flows of energy that irradiate, condense, intersect, build, ripple. Excitations are not properly "sensations," that is, sense data, givens of meaning and orientation, or information bits to be fed into the inner functional body. They are contact phenomena and reveal the other as the convex reveals the concave face of a surface. The

infant extends its surplus energies in extending surfaces, discovers the pleasures of surfaces, discovers the pleasures of having surfaces, of being outside, being born. This extension of the pleasure surfaces to which life attaches itself blocks the compulsion to return to the womb, the primary death drive.

These freely mobile excitations converge, affect themselves with their own intensities, discharge in eddies of egoism. Nomadic, multiple, ephemeral surface egos, where surplus energies are consumed in pleasure, eddies of egoism that consume themselves.

The infant contented—mouth, eyes, ears, fists closed—gives us the very image of the anorganic plenum to which the organs are attached, the "body without organs." Freud even reduced a great deal of the charm of babies to our fascination with the image of narcissism, of closed individuality. Yet the infantile body is anything but a separate substance. From the first it is in symbiosis with mother, earth mother, and earth; in symbiosis with mother, who is harassed, preoccupied, weighed down with the weight of the world—the social, imperial world. The closed plenum upon which organs are attached, producing surface effects, pleasure surfaces, and eddies of egoism, reduces to the individual mass of the body only in the discourse and practices of our epoch. That the closed plenum upon which our organs are attached is identified with the mass of our own individual bodies is the residue of a historical process of deterritorialization, abstraction, formalization.

The Deleuze-Guattari analysis distinguishes productive apparatuses, "machines" or engines where energy is produced, reproduced, distributed, consumed. Genetics places, at the point of origin of living systems in the nonliving, the maintenance of codes—the DNA and RNA molecules. If vital systems can be called "machines," it is because their operations are not simply random; they are coded, or, rather, are loci where coding forms and maintains itself.

For Deleuze and Guattari the question of the nature of the social system or structure or fabric is formulated as a question of code. "Society is not first of all a milieu for exchange where the essential would be to circulate or to cause to circulate, but rather a socius of inscription where the essential thing is to mark and to be marked" (p. 142). The social machinery operates essentially to record, channel, regulate the coded flows of libidinal energies. Three different kinds of codings determine the socius as the body of the earth (in nomadic societies), as the body of the despot (in imperial societies), and as the body of capital (in capitalist societies).

Savage societies—nomadic, hunter-gatherer societies—subdivide the people, but not the territory. The earth is the body without organs, the undivided plenum upon which the productive machinery, the organs of men, are

attached; societies are territorial or terrestrial. Men are not viewed or treated as disconnected, separated, from the earth, as sovereign lords of the earth. Savages therefore do not experience human bodies as integral, whole units. The organs and limbs, experienced as productive of substances, flows, and energies, are experienced not as integrated into one another, but as separately attached to the earth.

An individual does not enter the society by assuming civic rights and responsibilities, as a juridical person. An individual does not enter the society by taking up a post in the distribution of tasks that the society has organized, by fulfilling a productive or defensive role. In nomadic societies pretty much every individual performs the whole gamut of tasks; an individual enters the society by initiation. In the initiation ceremonies he will be marked; more exactly, energy-productive organs and limbs will be separately marked. He will be tattooed, scarified, perforated, circumcised, subincised, clitoridectomized. Among the Lani of Irian Jaya, the eagle people perforate the ears of the initiate and insert into them the plumes of eagles, marking his belonging to the high crags where the eagles dwell; among the Kapuaku the initiated will have the septum of their nostrils perforated and the tusks of wild boars inserted, marking their belonging to the dense forest; among the Azmat the initiated will have the ridges of their ears perforated and the teeth of crocodiles inserted, marking their belonging to the swamps and rivers; among the Australian aborigines men at initiation will have the opening of their penis cut back, in monthly operations, until it is open to the root, so that they will urinate stooping like women, marking their belonging to the fertile body of maternal earth. Myths tell of these couplings, these marked and separate productive organs and limbs, and their attachment to the earth: Parvati is dismembered, and her body parts fall to the earth; at Varanasi her vulva falls and, attached to the Ganga, forms a whirlpool; at Rishikesh her eyes fall and form lakes in the Himalayan clefts; at Brindabar her breasts fall and form mountains on the plains. The marked penis of Shiva falls to the earth, forming lingam, stalactites, and outcroppings in rivers, in caves, in high mountains.

It is by attaching the impulsive organs of the bodies of the clan to the earth that the social body constitutes itself. Primitive societies are not constituted by a pact among its members, but by an attachment to the earth; the tribe is a group that inhabits, and that hunts and gathers together on, the productive surface of the earth that is not divided and parceled out among them. It is in being marked—in being tattooed, scarified, circumcised, subincised—that these men constitute a society, a social body or socius.

This conception Deleuze and Guattari direct against the exchangist conception of society, such as that presupposed by Claude Lévi-Strauss. Society is not a network that gets elaborated in the measure that individuals

exchange women, goods, services, and messages with one another, and, in the delay between giving and receiving, contract obligations that are represented by claims. In primitive society I do not have relationships only with those individuals with whom I have exchanged women or goods. I may owe no one anything, but when the clan goes on a hunt, is attacked by wild beasts or human enemies, or pulls up its camp and moves elsewhere, I who live in this area, who have been marked with the tattoo of the leopard people or wear in my perforated septum the tusks of wild boars, have obligations to all those who are so marked. It may well be that I will suffer loss without getting the equivalent in return from the others, or even that I will risk or lose my life. The original obligation, the original debt, is not something contracted personally, when I received something in a transaction in which I agreed to give the equivalent in return. The original subject of obligation is not the persona, the subject as an autonomous and independent agent of initiatives; it is my body, more exactly, my productive body parts, which have been incorporated into the social code by being marked, inscribed, incised, circumcised, subincised, scarified, tattooed. When danger threatens the group, all those who by initiation have been marked with the sign of the boar are obliged to lend their arms to the task. When the group needs to reproduce, and approaches another moiety during the annual betrothal feast, all women who have been clitoridectomized are obliged to bring their reproductive bodies to the feast and accept a man of the other moiety.

Savages do not belong to society as persons, individuals, juridic subjects, but as organs attached to the full body of the earth. The society is the marking of this attachment. The multiplicity of the attached organs extends a productive surface. Deleuze and Guattari do not conceive of the social bond between individuals to be formed by each legislating for the others, nor do they take it to be formed by contracts among individuals who exchange words, women, goods, and services. They conceive it not as a contract nor as an exchange, but as couplings. Couplings not of individuals, but of organs.

Savage society is constituted by the coupling of voice with hearing: Primitive cultures are epic, narrative, oral cultures. In New Guinea, the hunter-gatherer societies, divided into seven hundred mutually incomprehensible languages (fully a third of the languages of humanity) have never engaged in any empire-building. They have no hereditary or elected chiefs. Most of these societies are head-hunting societies. Head-hunting is not war; neither territory, nor booty, nor women are captured in their battles. Rather, each young man seeks out the most brave and the most spectacular warrior on the field to kill, in order to cannibalize his body so as to interiorize his spirit. Men who have killed more than one are not respected and do not gain power over the group; they are regarded as twisted killers. Big men are big by virtue of

two things: The power of language, and the capacity to organize feasts in which the people assemble, reaffirm their bonds, and communicate with distant peoples. They have astonishing memories and linguistic capabilities; they are capable of telling their ancestries back dozens of generations, capable of recalling and retelling in captivating ways the history of the people, its luck and its feasts, its heroisms and its ordeals. It is especially this power to hold an audience spellbound long nights that constitutes their prestige. The languages themselves are extraordinarily difficult to learn; not only is their grammar extremely complex, but they have developed great elaborations of ceremonious, poetic, and epic styles.

A second coupling is that of hand with surfaces of inscription. Primitive societies are not manufacturing, but graphic societies. They inscribe the earth with their paths, their dances; they inscribe the walls of their caves or huts; they inscribe their bodies. Savages do not so much build things, shelters and monuments, as do handcraft; they develop not architectural powers, but manual dexterity. They cut twigs to mark their paths, carve tools, weave baskets and clothing. The markings made do not express ideas, but reveal the dexterity of hands. The inscription is not related to the voice; they develop no alphabet or ideograms. Hands learn skills not by having explained to them the meaning and the methods of handling and manipulating, not by being shown the diagram or the model, but instead by immediate induction: the hands of the child imitate the movements of hands of the men and women. One learns to throw the boomerang by throwing it oneself in the company of the skilled. Like in Zen archery, there are no manuals, no discussions with the master: the master holds and tightens and his bow; one does the same, again and again.

A third coupling is that of eye with pain. The pain inflicted, in the initiation rites, is public, theatrical: one watches, the eye does not circumscribe, survey, comprehend; it winces, it senses the pain. As the young Maasai maiden is being scarified, the thorn inserted again and again to raise scars in regular patterns across her back, down her thighs, all afternoon, the others watch, eyes like flies feasting on the pain.

Savage inscription cuts into living flesh; the markings, perforations, inscriptions, incisions, circumcisions, subincisions, clitoridectomies are painful. Savage societies are machines of cruelty. The pain is by no means minimized; initiation rites redouble the pain, include gratuitous fastings, long incarcerations in dark men's houses, beatings, bleedings. Infections, deaths occur. The markings are done in long public feasts. It is clear that there is a collective pleasure in this savagery, this cruelty that so revolts us, and that also excites us, childhood readers of *National Geographic*, colonialists, mission-

aries, who soon indulge our own cruelties, unleashing upon the savages insults, beatings, hard labor, enslavement. Those who live long among savages soon acquire cruel habits. I remember spending a week with a missionary, a member of the order of Saint Francis, who had been in Irian Jaya for twenty-seven years, and helping him each morning in the clinic he had set up and personally staffed. I was surprised, then intrigued, then revolted by the roughness with which he tore off bandages, by the extra touch of cruelty with which he manhandled and jabbed children while vaccinating them. Those he baptized—initiated into his parish—were also perforated, scarred, marked.

Nietzsche, in the second essay of *The Genealogy of Morals,* speaks of the excitant that pain is for the spectator. When one lies with the sick one, the suffering and the moanings invade the space, invade one's own body, depress and devitalize in the contagion of suffering. But when one actively inflicts pain, on oneself or on others, there is excitement and jubilation in the spectacle of the pain. The eye is a crystal ball, where the pain suffered is transfigured into pleasure received.

Nietzsche observes that the one who is cheated by another who owed him some commodity or service is satisfied, not when justice intervenes and forces the debtor to bring what he owed, but when justice punishes the debtor. What is this? Nietzsche asks. How is it that the creditor could accept the transaction contracted for as fulfilled when the goods were not delivered but the debtor suffered? How can pain be some kind of payment? It is that the original social contract was not for goods and services but for the pleasure of those goods and services. It is that the spectacle of the pain of another can be a pleasure equivalent to the pleasure in those goods and services.

But the original marking is not the result of transactions between individuals freely entered into by which one becomes creditor and the other debtor, a marking that will be effaced when the goods contracted for are delivered. The prime marking, the prime coding, is the socialization itself, which isolates the productive organs of the body and codes their coupling with the body of the earth: the tattooing, scarifying, circumcising, subincising, clitoridectomizing. These markings sear with pain. Nietzsche does not go far enough, when he says that these brandings serve to mark the memory—or to create a memory—with a few "Thou shalt nots." The rites in which they are inflicted are public rites, festive occasions in which the clan affirms its unity. They are destined for the eyes that watch, and that derive from them from the start the surplus value of pleasure. It is not originally a pleasure owed them, contracted for; it is the original surplus value that the socialization itself generates. It is only afterward that one so marked will enter into limited transactions with

other members of the group, will deliberately and on his own contract debts that he will pay or not pay, and if he does not pay, he will have to give his creditors the pleasure of seeing him suffer.

The markings with which savage societies record, channel, regulate the coded flows of the energies produced in the couplings are not *read*. Savage inscriptions are not signs that refer to concepts; they are diagrams and paths for the hand. The leopard footprint one sees on the path does not refer to the name and notion of leopard, but links up directly with the leopard itself. The leopard claw-print that one sees inscribed by human hand on the path or on the body of the initiate does not refer to the voice that utters the name "leopard" and conceives the meaning of that name; it directly designates the leopard itself. The eye does not read this sign; it sees the mark of the beast; it winces; it senses the pain. But now it is the leopard itself that functions as a sign. One takes those marked with the mark of the leopard to be a tribe, a society. (I remember visiting a mine on the Arctic Ocean at the border between Finland and the Soviet Union; the young miner who showed me the mine put out every cigarette he smoked on his hand, which was covered with scar tissue. Then I saw that the other young miners all had the backs of their hands covered with scar tissue. When I saw the scars, I did not read them as marks of words that could be pronounced, like tattoos where one can read things—"47th battalion, Nam"—rather, when my eye fell on them it flinched, seeing the burning cigarette being crushed and sensing the pain. And it is this burning cigarette I took to be a sign of the fiery and defiant young men who had come from the south and gone there, to the mines on the brink of the Arctic Ocean, and whose branding of their own hands functioned as a seal of their fraternity. The eye does not read the meaning in a sign; it *jumps* from the mark to the pain and the burning cigarette, and then jumps to the fraternity signaled by the burning cigarettes.)

Savage societies are transformed or incorporated into barbarian societies, sedentary and imperial, by a change in the nature of the codings. By an overcoding, all the lines of filiation and alliance are made to converge upon the body of the despot. As the productive organs are attached to the closed plenum of the body of the despot, they are detached from the earth, deterritorialized.

Barbarian societies are also characterized by a change in the couplings of the organs that extend the productive surface of the social order. The hand is coupled onto a graphics that is aligned with the voice. The coupling of voice with hearing through the intermediary of writing produces wholly new effects. The eye is uncoupled from pain, anesthetized. Writing begins with

empires.[2] It is contrived for use in imperial legislation, in a bureaucracy, for accounting, for the collection of taxes, for the constitution of the state monopoly, for imperial justice, for historiography. But also it contains within itself a transcendent and despotic law. Savages possess extraordinary manual virtuosity; they do not lack writing for lack of manual dexterity. Writing is produced when graphics are coupled with the voice to become signs of words spoken.

The graphics now do not, as in a claw mark incised on the back of the Yoruba initiate that invites the hand to gingerly feel it, serve as grooves for the movement of hand and body. The graphics are destined for tablets, stones, books; destined to be indefinitely reproduced on more tablets (the textbook explained in the classroom is copied by students in notebooks, recopied by students in bluebooks at the end of the term, recopied later by graduates for articles to be published on more paper). When the savage eye saw the claw-mark cut into the white bark of the birch tree, it winced; it felt the wound of the tissue and the sap of the tree and jumped to the wound on the flesh and the blood of the Yoruba initiate. Now the eye no longer winces when it sees the mark; it does not see the incision with which the pen or the printer has cut into the white surface of the paper. The eye has lost the ability to see the cut, the incision, the wound; it passes lightly over the page, not seeing, not sensing the tissue of the paper at all, but seeing the words as though they were flat patterns suspended in a neutral emptiness. The eye is no longer active, palpating the pain, jumping to the leopard; it is now passive before the flow of abstract patterns passing across it.

Writing is graphics now coupled with the spoken word, but in this coupling the voice is transformed. The voice in its savage relation with hearing exists in a reciprocal relation: the voice speaks; the other hears and answers. The movement is a zigzag from one to the other, and it is broken by pauses, by silences. The voice that is now written has been linearized. The words no longer exist here, in this place, between these two savages stationed on the earth in front of one another; they now exist in a linear progression that has been deterritorialized. When I read, on paper, the lines, "The citizens of New Spain are hereby taxed five gold pesos each per year," all sense of a spot on the earth where these words were uttered is lost; I am not referred to that place, but rather to the meanings of these signs, which exist transtemporally and transspatially. The meanings are there wherever the text is read or recalled; the voice of the speaker does not echo in them. Writing is a form of graphics, Deleuze and Guattari say, that is aligned with the voice, but also supplants the voice. When I come upon the lines, "When noble metals are roasted, phlogiston is released," it would be pointless for me to

strain to hear the voice that uttered them. It is in reading on down the lines that I will discover that phlogiston was a concept of ancient chemistry and will determine the meaning of "noble metals" from the lines of writing that contrast the expression "noble metals" with that of "base metals."

Now the voice no longer resonates, chants, invokes, calls forth; one hears only the voice of a law that orders one to move on down the line. Writing remains aligned by the voice—now a mute, impersonal, remote voice. A transcendent voice detaches itself from the whole of discourse and detaches the resonances from words. The voice is there only as that which once decreed that this inscription means this concept, that decrees that one must no longer settle on the resonance of any sensuous sound but take it as but a sign that refers to other signs. To hear the message, the meaning, one must subject oneself to the law: the phonetic, taxonomical, syntactical, semantical laws of significant language, which are conventional, laid down by decree, by another law that regulates the meaning of language because it regulates the whole of society. To subject oneself to the law of written language is to subject oneself to the one law of the one language of the empire.

When Siegfried, in the Enchanted Forest, hears the murmurs of the trees, he hears their individual substance and tensions and flexions that are being plucked by the wind and resounding. Through the sound and in them, he encounters the inner substances of the trees themselves. Then he drinks the magic potion brought to him by the bird descended from on high, from the throne of Wotan the law-giver, and, suddenly, he hears what they mean. He no longer hears the trees resounding; he hears a message: the warning that Alberich has bewitched him and is waiting to kill him.

You can wander the high Andes and, by night, hear the murmurs of the people around the fire, hear their Quechua tongue without understanding it, hear the light, subtle, supple tripping of their sounds, hear their intonations and their murmurs, hear it as the very resonance of their substance, their gentle, unassertive, vibrant, sensitive way of vocalizing together like gentle animals, quail foraging a field or muttering in a thicket for the night, vocalizing their togetherness. You can look at their inscriptions and see the letters *Saqsaywaman* and *intihuatana* carved in stone or staining the weathered boards of their homes, see these marks as incisions and stainings in the substance of the stone or wood, forming patterns with the cracks and fissures in the stone, the grain and diverse colors of the wood. But if you were to drink some magic potion, some cocktail of coca tea and whisky, and suddenly understood their language, and abruptly understood that they are speaking about "transporting cocaine into the hands of the Colombian agents," then abruptly you have subjected yourself to the codings of imperial society; you have suddenly related their sounds not to their own throats and

substance but to the international code established by the reigning barbarian empire in Washington and Bonn and Tokyo, where cocaine means the same thing—crime—whenever, wherever it is spelled out; and you cannot detach this meaning from their murmurings around the fire without subjecting yourself to the decrees that fix the international imperial code. And you at the same time insert yourself in the code; you find yourself designated as a tourist, an observer and reporter for the empire, another plunderer bringing back to the imperial metropolis handcrafts and idols, souvenirs and memories, and field reports on the activities of the outlaws. If you want to speak of them murmuring together, without subjecting them and yourself to the law, if you want to speak a discourse of nomads and outlaws, if you want to tell of them speaking to you as outsiders, nomads and outlaws, you must never pronounce this word. But how then will others understand what you say—others who, like yourself, speak imperial English, which they have learned and continue to learn from the imperial media? At best you can speak of them in the imperial code, speak of them as cocaine traffickers and terrorists, in such a way the words begin to lose their consistency, become nonsensical, turn against the imperial grammar itself. You can try to make others conspirators who use the imperial formulas themselves as passwords by which the imperial discourse itself turns into babble and din.

Marx had spoken of the dismemberment of the human body in the social machinery of industrial capitalism. Laborers are coupled with the productive process only as hands that assemble on assembly lines, or as legs and backs that bear burdens, or as arms that stoke furnaces. It is only the hands and eyes of clerks in offices that are paid for. Soldiers are limbs connected to weapons, disconnected from brain and imagination. Foremen are eyes disconnected from heart. The capitalist is the calculating brain disconnected from the capitalist's own taste and caprice. The industrial enterprise is the whole body upon which these part-organs are attached.

Marxism invokes the missing whole organism, that of the species individual, to which the diverse limbs and organs, attached to the body of industry, would, in principle, belong. The revolution Marx envisions would bring about the social ownership of the productive enterprise and the individual ownership of the body-parts coupled onto that enterprise. But, in fact, capitalism itself invokes the private individual, owner of all his parts and members, motivated by self-interest, that is, interest in the consolidation and aggrandizement of the self as an integral whole. For the private ownership of productive enterprises, to which large numbers of limbs and members of others are coupled, invokes the subordination of the body of the productive enterprise to the integral body of the individual.

The private individual is constituted by a privatization of his organs, his productive engines. It is the social machine itself that privatizes the organs, decodes their couplings with their immediate objects, and makes their flows of substance and energies abstract. The first organ to undergo privatization, removal from the social field, was the anus. We have long since ceased to use it to make contact with the earth—joining our excrement with the humus, wiping our asses with leaves, peeing in puddles and streams. We have long since ceased attaching an anus to the full body of the emperor. In the Middle Ages theologians long debated whether Jesus had an anus; his priestly role, mediator between God and man, God-man, seemed to require an integral human body, but an anus seemed fundamentally contradictory to his role as transcendent word that inscribes the social coding on earth. Society decodes the flow of excrement, decrees that it cannot be spoken of, that meaning should not be sought in it. It becomes a pure residue, an abstract flow without significance, without coding. The first zone of privacy, of individuation, that is constituted in the core of the symbiotic world of the infant is his anus. One has to cover up one's anus, stop playing with it, stop playing with excrement, stop leaving traces of it in the living room. It is about this private part that the privacy of a whole individual is constituted. The notion of a private individual is that of a source of flows, of substances and fluids and energies, which are of themselves abstract, without social determination, without coding. Freud understood that the phallic phase follows the anal phase and builds on it: the pleasure that the boy feels in the hardening of his penis is felt as a prolongation outside of the pleasure he feels of a full bowel sliding outward. In the Oedipus complex, the boy will substitute for his real penis and this real pleasure the abstract pleasure of being a phallus and make himself into an ego, an ego posited over against others, making demands on others. The individual is identified with the phallus; the core of his status as a private individual lies in the identity of the phallus, which he can hide or reveal according to his own initiative. Deleuze and Guattari emphasize the decoded, deterritorialized nature of this phallic emanation. In primitive societies the boy's first ejaculation and the girl's menarche are highly significant, coded, public events. In our societies the flows of pubescent semen and blood are decoded, deterritorialized, privatized; they are supposed to take place behind locked doors, at night. No one is supposed to see the evidence of wet dreams on the sheets. The privacy of the individual is constituted about these privatized organs and flows.

Marx conceptualized, as alienation, the dismemberment of the body whose productive parts and organs are attached to the full body of industry and invoked the idea of integral man, the man whose body parts would

belong to himself. This notion of integral man, the species individual, has the status of a utopian concept. It would be necessary to show the constitution of this notion in the privatization of the individual about the privatization of his organs beginning with the anus. But then the utopian notion of integral man can no longer maintain the function Marxism allots to it: that of figuring as the benchmark that enables Marxism to criticize the social coding of capitalism, as well as that of barbarism and of savagery. For the notion of the integral man, the privatized body, is a moment of the capitalist coding.

The schizophrenic apocalypse Deleuze and Guattari envision on the horizon of capitalism would not bring together the body parts dispersed across the social field. It would rather free them for ever more diverse couplings with one another.

For the surface productive of the social is being extended, elaborated, transformed not simply by new laws being legislated, by new enterprises being launched for the international exchange of messages, digitally coded information, women, Filipino maids to England or Kuwait, goods, handguns, redeye or silkworm missiles, Korean Scuds to Iran, and Ukrainian plutonium to Japan, and the services of Singapore bankers, Tokyo stockbrokers, and Brussels consultant firms. The social body is being laid bare, laid out, laid, excited, metamorphosed when hands clasp in greeting and in understanding and in commitment and in sensuality and also in parting. When the ear put against the cellular receiver is in contact with a voice from any tribe and any continent. Where automated, robotized, cybernetically programmed industry detaches the hands from any craft, save that of touching buttons that project patterns on computer screens that vanish without leaving a trace. Where the eyes no longer feast on the pain of Iraqi soldiers buried in the sands or the unemployed and homeless in Rio and London and New York, but on pains more fascinating, more ravishing, incomparably more visible—those of *Basic Instinct* and *The Silence of the Lambs*. Where the hands of the medical technician implant the detached, marked, labeled fertilized egg of an upwardly mobile couple in the womb of an unemployed woman. Where eyes watch a CAT scan of a metastasizing cancer or the sonar probe of a pregnancy. Where the car on cruise control races the Los Angeles freeways, the hands free to dial the cellular phone, cut the lines of coke, or cock a handgun. Where the hearts, livers, kidneys of newly executed Chinese prisoners are rushed to clinics in Hong Kong, where ailing financiers and aging media superstars arrive by limousine. When hands holding a video camera connect with hands on batons beating the black legs of a speeding motorist. When hearts, livers, kidneys are being cut

out of young black male corpses and transplanted into anesthetized bodies of CEOs and aging media superstars in exclusive clinics in Hollywood and Las Vegas. Where the cold hearts and annealed nerves of a few youths from despised peoples imprisoned by blockades hijack the most advanced marvels of supersonic jet technology, the most invincible smart weapons. When high school dropouts in Karachi insert viruses on computer disks that shut down the Pentagon. Where hands extend into Alaskan seas for oil-drenched seabirds. Where lips kiss the pain of the AIDS victim, where fingers close the eyes of the one whose agony has at length come to an end.

Notes

1. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Capitalism and Schizophrenia: Anti-Oedipus*, vol. 1, trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983). All page references in the text refer to this volume.

2. What a strange thing writing is! It would seem that its apparition could not fail to determine profound changes in the conditions of existence of humanity, and that these transformations would have had to have been especially intellectual in nature. The possession of writing prodigiously multiplies the aptitude of men to preserve knowledge. We like to conceive of writing as an artificial memory, whose development should be accompanied with a better consciousness of the past, hence a greater capacity to organize the present and the future. After one eliminates all the criteria proposed to distinguish barbarism from civilization, one would like at least to retain this: the people with writing are capable of accumulating ancient acquisitions and progress more and more quickly toward the goal they have assigned themselves, while the peoples without writing, incapable of retaining the past beyond the fringe that individual memory suffices to fix, would remain prisoners of a fluctuating history which would always lack an origin and the durable consciousness of a project.

   And yet nothing of what we know of writing and its role in evolution justifies such a conception. One of the most creative phases of the history of humanity took place during the approach of the neolithic age, responsible for agriculture, the domestication of animals and other arts. To reach it, it was necessary that during millennia little human collectivities observed, experimented and transmitted the fruit of their reflections. This immense enterprise was carried on with a rigor and a continuity attested to by success, while writing was still unknown. If writing appeared between the fourth and third millennia before Christ, we must see in it an already distant (and no doubt indirect) result of the neolithic revolution, but nowise its condition. To what great innovation is it bound? On the plane of technology, we can cite hardly anything but architecture at this period. But the architecture of the Egyptians or the Sumerians was not superior to the works of certain Americans who were ignorant of writing at the time of the arrival of Cortez. Conversely, from the invention of writing up to the birth of modern science, the western world lived some 5000 years during which its knowledge fluctuated more than it was increased. It has often been remarked that between the kind of life of a Greek or Roman citizen and that of a European bourgeois of the 18th century, there was hardly much difference.

In the neolithic period, humanity took giant steps forward without the help of writing; with writing the historical civilizations of the West long stagnated. No doubt the scientific expansion of the 19th and 20th centuries would hardly be conceivable without writing. But this necessary condition is certainly not sufficient to explain it.

If we want to correlate the apparition of writing with certain characteristic traits of civilization, we have to look in another direction. The sole phenomenon that faithfully accompanied writing is the formation of cities and empires, that is, the integration into a political system of a considerable number of individuals and their hierarchization into castes and classes. Such is, in any case, the typical evolution we see from Egypt to China, the moment that writing begins: it appears to favorize the exploitation of men before it favorizes their illumination. This exploitation, which make it possible to assemble thousands of workers to yoke them to extenuating tasks, better accounts for the birth of architecture than does the direct relation envisioned a moment ago. If my hypothesis is correct, we have to admit that the primary function of written communication is to facilitate enslavement" (Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Tristes tropiques* [Pâris: Plon, 1955], pp. 265–66).

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