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Deleuze, Guattari, and the Philosophy of Expression

SURFACING (TOO LATE)¹

Is it possible to talk about expression without talking aesthetics? And is it possible to talk about aesthetics without talking beauty?

By and large, literary and cultural theory since structuralism has observed an embarrassed silence about all three. The terms, as commonly heard, especially the third, swing between two equally unsavory poles: the spontaneous outpourings of romantic individualism and the tyranny of imposed judgements of taste. "Expression" and its fellow travellers are foregone, in favour of "production" (its own unsavory association, this time with functionalism, parried by the addition "of subjectivity").

Something, perhaps, is stirring in the state of theory. Over the last few years, the names Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari have crested in the classrooms and conference halls, making them the latest in a continuing series of great French names to pivot English-speaking academic discourse. After a long incubation beneath Lacan, Derrida, Baudrillard, and Foucault, they have surfaced. But has it sunk in that Deleuze has always unabashedly characterized his thought as a philosophy of expression? "Le monde," he has gone so far as to say, "n'existe pas hors de ses expressions" ("The world ... does not exist outside of its expressions") (1988, 181/1993, 132). Or that in his final publication Guattari summed up his life's work as advancing "a new aesthetic paradigm" (ch. 6; see also Guattari's interview in this volume)? This will take some processing. Expression, aesthetics ... perhaps ... but if we think fast maybe we can at least spare ourselves *beauty*. Velvet paintings are "beautiful." What do they have to do with art or life?

Too late. In the opening salvo of this collection, Melissa McMahon, Steven Shaviro, and Stephen O'Connell sing the "b" word in chorus in a series of interrelated essays. For Shaviro, the concept of beauty is the key to phasing

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Deleuze's thought from the modernist art and literature in dialogue with which it was developed to the "postmodern" world his contemporary continuers inhabit. The way in which this is accomplished is all-important for determining how expression and aesthetics play out: whether they fall back into their familiar vacillation between individual spontaneity and cultural imposition, and what their pragmatic reverberations will be.

From the outset, it is clear that a shift has occurred, creating a sustaining breach for a new thinking of expression. Beauty, most often discussed in terms of a harmony of form reflected in the imagination, is referred by McMahon to something else. The determination of beauty, she argues, is *temporal* before it is reflective. If beauty concerns form in any fundamental way, it is a form of time. In a move bound to frustrate the expectations of many, McMahon relates the beautiful to a flattening out of moments (taking off from the Deleuze of the *Cinema* books). Time is no longer a progression to and from privileged points — beginnings, climaxes, and ends — that give *a priori* order and a depth of personal or historical meaning to the course of things. In a time after destiny and progress, one moment is much like any other. There is no overarching standard by which to prefer any particular course from one moment to the next. All moments are moments without qualities, indifferently divisible and possibly connectable, as if laid out on a single surface of availability, indeterminate until a contingent encounter makes one moment stand out or fall out. When any-moments-whatever collide: the course of things *follows*. It is this open-ended *process* of contingent time-triage that McMahon identifies with beauty. Its medium is banality, understood as a time-form, in turn understood as a mode of availability, or presentation, from which things flow, in open-endedness. Moving and opening, beauty pertains to a process that takes empirical precedence over the existing of formed things and their narratively closable coursings. "Takes empirical precedence over form." Or is it: takes deforming precedence over the empirical? A tectonic shift, ungrounding the ground of aesthetic experience.

A deforming availability that makes things flow: sounds like Capital. Beauty is the concomitant in sensation of Capital as a condition of existence of the body before its things, in an indeterminate time, after destiny and progress.²

As Shaviro goes on to observe, the sublime has gotten much better pomo press than velvet and beauty. Typically, the genesis of the sublime is laid to a sensation of disproportion as before the immensity of nature. Feeling senses something beyond its ken, something so overwhelming it fails, in fact, to feel it, no matter how hard it strives. The sublime is sensation at the point at which it can no longer be felt and is, therefore, only capable of being thought: a concept without a sensation. The sublime experience is feeling transgressing its limit. For

Shaviro, this is a quantitative cop-out from indeterminate time. The sublime of disproportion takes for granted the impotence of the traditional qualitative means of marking time in the face of Capital banality. Yet it reintroduces qualitatively privileged moments — derived, in the absence of any convincing metanarrative, from a quantitative disjunction. These new privileged moments may well be ungrounded and confront the incommensurable rather than imposing a standard of valuation. But for Shaviro, their privileging smacks of nostalgia: sublime moments, as moments of transgression, have truck with transcendence. They are a beginning, climax, and end rolled up in a single sparkling moment. So if the conditions no longer obtain for privileged moments to unravel following an ordered course, at least they can still be thought and desired as disorder: always already after the time of progress *and* before any-time-whatever, forever, and paradoxically lurking in the "here and now." Indeterminate time then appears simply as a flattening out of transcendence. Its indeterminacy is a negativity: the down-time between the privileged moments when transcendence comes out of lurking. The sublime subverts progressive time, while skirting any-time, reduced to a lull.

The regime of the any-moment-whatever, McMahon emphasizes, is the time of *modernity*. Following this reasoning, Shaviro considers the thought of the sublime not as postmodern but as a *late modern* reaction against modern time. For him, the postmodern is neither in reaction against nor transgressive of the modern. Instead, it is a tonic transformation *of* the modern from within. It could be said that is the *affect* of modernity: modern time assumed as an affect(ation), a manner of being. The postmodern is modernity converted from a crisis to a *mannerism* (hence its affinity with the Baroque). Assuming modernity as a manner of being means living in any-time without nostalgia, living the time after destiny and progress, sublime aside. This entails assuming a certain attitude of disinterest (in the immense, in the deep, in hand-wringing over crisis and paradox), the effect of which, ironically, is to *affirm* contingent encounter. In the time-after, everything is available, with nonchalance, as if laid out on a single surface. Everything, it seems, has already happened. So be it. "Access to excess ... even to the point of boredom." Pastiche. Mix and match. So be it. This affirmed indeterminacy is no longer *simply* a flattening out. It is also a power of combination and as such creates the conditions for an art of unlimited encounter productive of a surface *complexity*: a complexity of interference generated by random encounters between ordinary, unprivileged presentations of the already-available. Interference is a process of immanence. It assumes no supplementary dimension of inspiration, judgement, or rupture. From banality to complexity: the superficial emergence of the new. If the sublime was a concept without a feeling, beauty, writes McMahon, is a *feeling without a concept*. What is felt is the emergence of the new. Which cannot have been thought. For if it had been, it will have been predicted, and if it will have been, it will not be new.

2 On Capital as a time-form, see Alliez (1991, 29-60/1996, 1-25), Alliez and Feher, and Massumi 1993.

All of this helps explain why Deleuze calls beauty the fourth dimension of time (1985, 126-28/1989, 95-97). First: present (here and now). Second: past (presents that have passed). Third: future (presents that will have come to pass). Fourth: *too late*. Everything has already happened, including the new. First, second, third already and all over again: availability and emergence.

Beauty, like the sublime, enfolds the dimensions of linear time. But it does so in banality, not in anxiety, and immanently rather than transcendently. It is this immanence that affectively translates as "disinterest" or nonchalance, manners of being easily confused for lack of encounter and subjective estrangement: not a here and now, but a ubiquitous nowhere of whatever. If this is lack, it is only the lack of a supplemental dimension from which to judge or desire: the absolute (superficial) proximity of access to excess. "Disinterest" is the impossibility in encounter of separating the object from the subject — because the course of things follows. In other words, object and subject in their mutual difference and reciprocal trajectories are consequent to the encounter. It is they that are new, already and all over again. They emerge and re-emerge together, from transformation. The everything that has already happened is emergence, registered after its fact in a subject-object relation. Where there was classically and in modernity an external opposition between object and subject, there is now a double distinction internal to the transformation. 1) After-the-fact: subject-object is to emergence as stoppage is to process. 2) In-fact: "objective" and "subjective" are inseparable, as *matter of transformation to manner of transformation* (the two dimensions of Matter with a capital "M": matter-energy). Not the dumb fact of two distinct entities: a double generative distinction internal to a single material process.

The process is expression. The distinction is between the expressing and the expressed. The new expressionism derivable from a rethinking of beauty is not a spontaneist individualism, far from it: it is impersonal *Matter* that does the expressing. What is *expressed* is that which emerges from matter, after a manner, as the "subject" of the process (along with a reciprocal conversion of remnant matter into "objectivity"). Double ontological articulation (Deleuze and Guattari 1980, 54-60/1987, 40-45; Genosko).

This has nothing to do with imposed standards of taste. Beauty is radically tasteless. Even if beauty is immediately experienced as a judgement of value that posits itself as universal, that value, argues Shaviro, is incommunicable precisely by virtue of its felt immediacy, and the "judgement," precursing as it does both its subject and its object, is non-cognitive, a "feeling without a concept": a singular universal, or *felt absolute*. Beauty may be tasteless. But it has *attitude*: the attitude of the absolutely in-process. Immanence.

The conclusion is not that subject and object are dead or abolished. Less apocalyptically, it will be said that their opposition follows the process. It is retrospective. It *results* when a participatory disinterest is replaced by an effect

of distance from the process, viewed as if from a supplementary dimension. Distance occurs when the process, or a part of it, stops (as when a line of encounter exhausts itself). Or it may intervene in the process as a particular form of self-interference where the course of the process is arrested or deflected by a part of itself, which then momentarily detaches from its line of encounter as a supplemental whole. Both of these things, gapping and supplementation, occur periodically, in syncopated rhythm. Judgement fills the distance like an opportunistic infection of arrest. It may be a conforming judgement of taste (classical) or a nonconformist "critical" judgement (modern). Either way, it opportunistically returns, in arresting syncopation. This is entropy (processual exhaustion or stoppage) elevated to the status of a human faculty.

The processual rhythm modulated by judgement is already a modulation, in the plural. Not "a beat." "Beats": "an acoustical phenomenon resulting from the interference of two sound waves of slightly different frequencies ... heard as minute yet clearly audible intensifications of the sound at regular intervals" (Randell 45). "Intensifications of the sound at regular intervals": *a beat*. The particular beat is an amplification contingent upon an encounter between unheard or less clearly heard waves, which are themselves regularly self-repeating lines of encounter. An encounter between lines of encounter. The particularity of the beat emerges from a shared non-specificity of the encountering self-repetitions: their interference (their participatory co-functioning on the same processual plane, their contingent belonging to each other). The beat stands out from that plane of contingent belonging, or multiple singularity, as an added rhythm of self-repetition. A beat is a salience, an over-beats, a derivative stand-out inseparable from the plane from which it derives, as a particular that is expressed over and above the generative multiple-singular expressing it. "With-over" would be better than "over and above," to more accurately reflect the derivative's status as an additive inseparability. Its inseparability is generative. Once a beat has been generated, it may enter into relation with others of its kind. And to the extent that it does, it separates (subtracts itself). Any judgement of contrast or similarity between particular beats occurs on a supplementary plane, of comparison subtracted from its generation, of separation subtracted from its belonging, of the already having happened separated from its under-way. After-the-fact. The derivative plane of judgement *follows* the plane of creative interference of which it is an additive *modulation* (a modulation of modulation; see Evens and Murphie). But it can also lead back to it, its separation from the surface becoming an extension of it. Combine rather than compare two opposing beats and you have the inseparability of interference again and, if the contingent conditions are right, a new generation of surface emergence *in addition* to the irreversible subtraction already accomplished: with-over all over again. Oscillation. Where waves are under way, judgement is in suspense, waiting for something, it does not yet know what, to emerge onto the plane of the

comparison. Where judgement is, processual lines are in arrest. The imperceptible movement between the two planes is itself a rhythm, of inseparability and separation, feedback and irreversibility. The rhythm of existence, beats of life and death. The two planes or dimensions of existence, becoming and having-already-become (or "being" in its undecidable proximity to death) are in continuous belonging: in a mutual immanence enveloping all of the lines that emerge and return, in repeat creation.

In the definition of beats cited above, replace "two sound waves" by "whatever number of lines of encounter," "heard" by "felt," "of the sound" by "of being," "acoustical" by "ontological," and so on. All oppositional differences, including subject and object, and all judgement, and beyond judgement all dialectics, and even all diacritics, appear as secondary operations standing out from a multiply singular process. The process is that of existential amplification or intensification arising from the contingency of interference events. Opposition is a second-degree *event upon event*, a counter-event, a modulatory transformation of transformative modulations always already under way. "Difference," as widely understood in literary and cultural theory today, is a derived dimension of an open-ended processual multiplicity. It is a form of closure, of result, a having-been of becoming. "Difference" is a retro beat. It is the back-beat of repetition in creative expression: "difference" defined as a set of having-beens, judged from a comparative distance to be particular instances of the *same* becoming as *opposed to* other having-beens. The rhetoric of difference — in spite of (or because of) — its suspiciously modern-sounding protestations of radicality, only grasps the retro dimension of the postmodern process: the oppositional repetition of the same. It is late. But not too late: it is late modern (like the return of the sublime accompanying rhetorics of difference).

Like subject and object, the classical and the modern are also not two distinct entities. They are planes or registers of a single process. Mutually immanent beats of collective existence. If, following Shaviro, the most enveloping plane of the process is termed the "postmodern," for lack of a better word, then the overall process cycles back into the classical, where it appears, in contraction, as a local condition. The postmodern is immanent to the classical as the local outbreaks of tastelessness that prevailing judgement needs to "arrest" in the name of good form (balance and harmony: the minimal supplementary movement consistent with entropy). The classical, in its turn, is immanent to the modern as the projection of balance and harmony into an age to end time, a utopian dialectical completion enabled, in the revolutionary mean-time, by the relentless application of critical judgement. The postmodern, once again, is immanent to the modern as its stubbornly open-ended time-form, persistently thwarting the all-too-classical completion of modernism's critical projection.

(Parenthetically, if beauty is a time-form, then an aesthetic is an abiding: a manner of *abiding* time and transformation; a manner of being in continuing becoming.)

If it is still possible, in view of all of this, to assign a period in linear history to the "fourth dimension of time" that is expressed as the postmodern aesthetic, it is so only superficially. The postmodern age is when the immanence of ages to each other comes out as a global condition, in a re-surfacing of process. Its aesthetic is an affectedly flattened manner of abiding immanence, after destiny and progress, the sublime and dialectics aside. An involved aside. For even transcendings of the process, gappings and supplementations, and even incommensurabilities, return to the surface, to immanence. The exhaustions (of which the sublime is a special case) and the arrests repeat. They themselves string out in a line, of counter-encounter. Any supplemental wholes that may have formed feed back to become local conditions or constituent parts of the process. The whole, as a part, is engulfed, enveloped by an expanding surface composed of multiple interfering lines. The harmony of the whole returns to the surface from which it arose. As does anti-harmony: as when the sublime inexorably subsides into banality by dint of repetition (everything, including sublimity, having already happened, not once, but innumerable times, to the point of boredom). Form, its epiphany and its subversion, return, nonchalantly, to process.

The processual "surface" is all engulfing. It is active in and of itself. It is complex. In other words, it is a *topological* surface: of deformation and involution; of the availability of every thing, of every form, even the ages of humanity (and the reactions against them), to continuous transformation. Access to twisted excess.

Excess: although supplemental wholes feed back, following the manner of the overall process, there is an asymmetry to this involution. All of the ages may be immanent to each other, but only the overall process of the "postmodern" is also immanence *in and of itself*. The postmodern is the processual limit. That is, an inside limit: an "excess" of "access" is not a transgression, but a self-bordering taken to the extreme where it folds infinitely in on itself, so infinitely that it folds out at the same time. The processual limit is the internal envelope: a self-inning-out. Emergence in immanent return, of each and every formed thing to and from itself. This limit as applied to each thing that emerges is what Guattari calls a "nucleus of expression" (1992/1995 and in this volume). Applied to everything in its return, it is what Raymond Ruyer calls a "pure form" (infinite self-recursion, or "self-survey"; see Bains). It is a "pure" form because as a return *from* form it is unexpressable *as* form. Pure form is the unexpressed of process. Process in itself. Where matter and manner meld. Absolute processuality, returning to before and thus, in addition, coming after the distinction between

expressing and expressed. "Subjectivity" without a subject and, for that matter, in that manner, without an object.

Before and therefore after: if the postmodern is an always already *too late* (a pastness perpetually in the present as opposed to a present that has passed), its immanent limit is downright *untimely* (a future-past: pastness superposed with an abiding futurity which, as such, will never come to pass). Not a time-form but the "pure form of time," empty of any present, of whatever age: never actually presenting itself, on the side of a subject, in an object relation. Virtual: an empirically emptying recurring *in addition to* the actual emergence of the full to form (Bourassa; Murphie). In addition to: a supplementation. But one involving no primordial whole, dividing into no fundamental parts, wholeness folding into and out of fragmentation, in composition of a surface of transformative continuity, one-sided, asymmetrical, ontological twisting. A one with no whole: matter and manner as a boundless field of deformational transformation. Matter-matter.³

3 There are relatively simple one-sided topological figures that give an intuitive sense of the surface of becoming evoked here. The best known one-sided figure is the Moebius strip (suggestively used by Grosz, following Lacan, to express the relation of "mind" to "body"; 36, 160, 209-10). The folding of the two-dimensional surface by which a Moebius strip is generated makes it inter-dimensional (as opposed to fractionally dimensional, or fractal). If you follow the edge with your finger, you find that even though it visually appears to have two edges, it in fact only has one: yet it is obviously not a line. It cuts across the three dimensions of space but is not itself a volume, having neither an inside nor an outside. It has two surfaces if you take a region of the twist separately. But if you run your finger along the length of the twist, your hand returns to the place it left from, processually proving that the strip is one-sided as well as single-edged. The Moebius strip has characteristics of one-, two-, and three-dimensional figures (line, surface, volume) but is none of these ("there are surfaces that are not topologically equivalent to any subset of three-dimensional space," Callender and Weingard 23). This brings strange results when the strip is combined with full-dimensional forms. For example, if instead of placing your finger on the strip you projected the form of your left hand onto a patch of the surface and moved around again, when you got back to your starting point you would have a right hand. Presented with a Moebius, you can only get a sense of what kind of figure you are dealing with by moving along with it — and moving along with it invokes qualitative transformation (left into right). The Moebius strip is a processual figure: a topological figure. It cannot be intuitively understood by sight alone, only by combining sight and touch over time with an act of imagination. Grasped as a processual figure, it is geometrically unbounded even though you can tell at a glance that it is limited ("finite but unbounded," Callender and Weingard 23). Its quasifull dimensional characteristics (edge, surface, volume) are its limits. It is defined by these limits — none of which it "has," or "is," or "occupies." What it has, is, and occupies processually are patches; patches of interdimensionality. Each patch of the twisted strip is a region of the figure's procession or continuity. If you think of the region with a projected geometrical figure, like the hand, passing through it, then the region presents itself as a *qualitative interdimension* of continuous transformation. A patch of becoming. This is like Thompson's serial transformations of form *in intensity*, contracted into a single figure that is not itself a form in the same sense as the forms that may be projected onto it (see Thompson 268-325). Thompson's transformations

The internal envelope of becoming is the limitlessness of process: a negentropy immanent to entropy. The dialectical wholes which feed back "in the manner of" the overall process are simulations of this limitlessness, enclosed. They are the entropic expression of the negentropic. "Difference" can do nothing more than express this enclosure of expression, unless it is effectively fed back from wholeness and reconnected to the open process in encounter with its own derivation. Difference twisted to witness its own emergent belonging to the multiple-singular under way. This *processual self-reflection* of difference is constitutive of the postmodern as a non-cognitive mode of knowledge. Not a distanced judgement on being but the felt absolute of being many-fold a becoming ("contemplation" as defined by Deleuze (1968, 102-04/1994, 73-77) and by Deleuze and Guattari (1991, 199-200/1994, 211-13)).

DRUSY

Even Kant notes the priority of process over form in aesthetic experience. Beauty, he says, is "*drusich*" (1908, 349/1952, 218). Or more precisely, our interest in beauty is awakened by drusiness. What in the OED is "drusy"? A dusting of miniature crystals appearing on a surface: the sparkle of an appealing roughness that lures the eye to extend the hand. Although Kant does not explicitly comment upon it, this doubly returns us to process: once in the emergence of a surface disparity and again in the relay from sight to touch. Emergence first.

are themselves reminiscent of Geoffroy St. Hilaire's foldings of organic form so dear to Deleuze (1968, 239-40, 278-79/1994, 184-85, 215-16; Deleuze and Guattari 1980, 60-64, 311-13/1987, 45-48, 254-55). One-sided figures are extremely useful as conceptual aids in analyzing continuity of process and transformation, and for illustrating how, from a qualitative point of view, form must be understood in terms of deformation and evolution in terms of involution. They are especially handy because they are visualizable but not in a way that separates the eye and brain from the rest of the body and because unlike standard geometrical figures they do not lend themselves either to dichotomization ("inside-outside," "open-closed," "finite-infinite": "being finite or infinite are not topological properties!" cry Callender and Weingard [21], in spite of their own use of the terms; "unbounded but limited" might be more felicitous than "finite but unbounded") or to a misrecognition of qualitative differentiation as pertaining to extrinsic relations of difference between discrete forms. The Moebius is not the only one-sided figure that is of potential use to philosophy and cultural theory (see Courant and Robbins [259-64] for a non-specialist presentation of the Moebius strip, the crosscap, and the Klein bottle). Ruyer insists that the "pure form" or "absolute surface" of sensation is one-sided (99). Following Ruyer, Deleuze and Guattari also describe their "plane of immanence" as one-sided (1991, 198/1994, 210). Finally, in a footnote added to an early essay after the onset of his topology, Lacan deemed his "Schema R" to have been a Moebius strip all along (1966, 553n/1977, 333); Lacan's later preoccupation with one-sided topological figures is developed in "L'Étourdit" (1973).

Kant emphasizes that the appearance of crystalline forms does not proceed gradually, in good linear causal fashion. It is a gapping or "leap": a qualitative transformation that appears as a sudden discontinuity (1952, 218). Crystallization is an event befalling a fluid due to internal tensions that the fluid had been carrying but had not yet expressed. The separation into solid and fluid states expresses internal tension, or self-interference, in the emergence of form. The expressed form is the past of the tension in the present, the past presented to perception as a disparity: the contrast between amorphous fluid and the rigidity it became on the surface. Not all of the fluid crystallizes. It underlies and fills the gaps between crystals, even though the conditions of its fluidity are no longer present. For example, in the case of ice, the water between ice crystals that have just formed is below freezing temperature. Yet, it remains fluid as if resisting its becoming. The unfrozen freezing water lingers as a memory of itself, stubbornly unexpressed in the fullness of form: an unformed pastness contemporaneous to the portion of itself that has passed into the present form that is its future destiny. The resistant fluid expresses lag: the uncaused, "empty form" of time, contentless differential of future-past, materialized as an anomaly within a disparity. In addition to the water that has crystallized in full form and the unbecoming water that resists the actual passing of the present by presenting the empty form of time, there is a second line of fluid transformation: water that escapes the fluid destiny of freeze time by directly vaporizing. The water-lag lies between two limits: the internalized limit of the ice crystals it bathes (access), and the enveloping limit of the mist (excess).⁴ The co-functioning of these limits circumscribes the multiply singular event of the becoming of water, access to excess.

At this point, it is important to distinguish "internal" in a spatial sense from "immanent," which has only a processual sense, being too deformationally many-dimensioned to be spatial in any ordinary sense of the word. It is the internalized and enveloping limits taken *together* that are the "immanent" limit of water. The immanent limit is the superposition of states of extreme. These are abstractly sensible from every point of the process as *attractors* (by "abstractly sensible" is meant actually operative as tendencies). There is actually a third superposable extreme. It takes the form of a remaining, or processual remainder: the water-lag is fluidity at the limit of its staying power, where its being-fluid runs counter to its actual conditions, which are of becoming-solid. The anomalous in-between of the internal and enveloping limits is in its own impassive way a limit-state (see Deleuze and Guattari 1980, 297-301/1987, 243-46). The three limits never actually coincide to form a single immanent limit. Their coincidence is virtual.

4 In this example as I have developed it, the literal crystals are not crystalline in Deleuze's sense in *Cinema 2*. It is the water which is the "crystal" — liquid crystal (apologies to my laptop display).

In actuality, they unfold from or relay each other. It is this co-functioning of mutual envelopment and unfolding, immanently governed by the differential operation of virtual attractors, that goes by the name of *complexity*.

What qualifies this complex self-transformative event as "aesthetic" for Kant is that it befalls "independently of any guiding ends" (1952, 219). It is not for something outside of itself. It is entirely in and for its own process. What qualifies it as beautiful is this "*autonomy*" (220).⁵ The drusy awakens our interest in beauty by signaling that a process of self-organizing self-differentiation has occurred. It is not the drusiness that is beautiful, but the autonomy that it expresses.

This autonomy is a "subjectless (and objectless) subjectivity," paraphrasing Ruyer and Bains, that is expressed *in* the perception while remaining necessarily unexpressed in and of itself. This is because qualitative transformation is by nature imperceptible, always passing *between* perceptual encounters (entering perception as a leap settling into a disparity). Transformation is only accessible by *induction*. Induction should be taken here in the double sense of being available to cognition only indirectly and of being inducible: being knowable directly only *in the undivided encounter* (in sensation). That means pragmatically, through experimentation integrally repeating the real conditions of the process's emergence. Experimentation draws on all aspects of the investigating body's sensibility, not just eye and cortex. It draws in the entire body, integrating its manner of proceeding into a participatory involvement with matter where, for at least a synopated beat or two, the investigator is in too close a proximity to the process to maintain the distance enabling of cognitive subject-object relations. The definition of the object, in retrospective opposition to the subject, follows the experimentation; it is derived. As Bruno Latour has demonstrated, knowledge-encounter involves a creation of "hybrid objects" occupying a region of real indistinction between human subject and natural or artificial object.

The drusy, in awakening our interest in beauty, points us in the direction of a non-cognitive aesthetics: aesthetics as a kind of *empiricism* involving itself with *real conditions of emergence*, under-with cognitive conditions, or conditions of possibility (Deleuze 1968, 200-01, 298-99, 364/1994, 154, 231-32, 285; O'Connell). Drusiness points to the post-Kantian dimension in Kant, or what Deleuze will call a "superior empiricism" (1968, 186-87/1994, 143-44).⁶ What is "superior" about it is that subject and object integrate into a greater autonomy of participation, a matter-manner meld adding a new line of multiple-singular encounter to the world: that of a *technic*, an artifice *between* of any number of possible subjects and objects, autonomous of any given particular subject or object. This empiricism is "superior" because it is creative of reality. It adds to reality. It is a becoming *of the world* that is reciprocally a *becoming-world* of the

5 On the aesthetic as "self-standing," see O'Connell in this issue.

6 For Deleuze's immanent conversion of Kant's idealism, see 1963/1984.

subject and object ("*devenir tout le monde*," becoming "everything-and-everybody"; Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 342-44, 587-88, 591/1994, 289-80, 470, 473). The aesthetic, understood as an empiricism, is the addition of a dimension of processuality to the object that follows and of a higher degree of reality to the adjoining subject. This applies as much to science as to art, as pragmatics of experimentation. The shared participation of the arts and sciences in aesthetics necessitates a reassessment of what distinguishes them. Given their always-actually-mixed state, at what immanent limit do they return, each to itself, and virtually diverge? What are their never directly expressed "pure forms"? This reassessment is the project of Deleuze and Guattari's final collaboration (1991/1994).

Further down the superior empirical road lie dissipative structures. Kant's thermodynamic reference was prescient. It vaguely prefigured the theory of self-organizing dissipative structures that would develop into contemporary chaos theory (Prigogine and Stengers [1986/1984], Stengers, forthcoming). This development was even more acutely prefigured by Deleuze in his discussions of the "chaosmos" in *Différence et répétition* (*Difference and Repetition*) (1968, 80, 257, 382/1994, 57, 199, 299).⁷ In his later work, Guattari developed his own highly original chaotic philosophy emphasizing the "autopoietic" character of expression as impersonal worlding: self-organizing emergence and syncretized reemergence; auto-transformation in twisted contact with one's own conditions of reality-amplifying participation in the world (1992/1995).⁸

Guattari would doubtless second Pessoa's proposition that the aesthetic experience is "*dynamogenic*" and involves the production of an "absolute continuum of depersonalization" (Pessoa 258): Latour's misleadingly named "hybrid object."⁹ As Barbara McClintock put it, describing her scientific artistry:

The more I worked [with chromosomes], the bigger and bigger [they] got, and when I was really working with them I wasn't outside, I was down there. I was part of the system.... As you look at these things, they become part of you. And you forget yourself. The main thing is that you forget yourself. (Keller 117)¹⁰

7 On Deleuze as a precursor to the theory of dissipative structures, see Prigogine and Stengers, forthcoming.

8 See Lichtenberg-Ettinger for a converging Lacanian approach.

9 Pessoa expressed the various rhythms of depersonalization he experimented with along his own aesthetic continuum as "heteronyms" (simulated actual authors in whose multiple names the singular Pessoa wrote; 213-32). Deleuze and Guattari take up the concept of the heteronym or "conceptual persona" in *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?* (*What Is Philosophy?*) (62/64).

10 In a similar vein, Desmond Morris, ethologist, scientific popularizer, and surrealist painter, has spoken of the role that the awakening of processual interest in the beautiful plays in scientific observation: "To really understand animals and their behaviour, you must have an aesthetic appreciation of an animal's beauty. This endows you with the patience to look at them long enough to see something." He describes the resulting continuum of depersonalization as "empathy" (qtd. in Root-Bernstein 8). Stengers discusses the role of empathy in McClintock's

Guattari would probably also agree with Pessoa that this depersonalization is one with the *imagination* (Pessoa 230). The imagination is the manner of subjectless subjectivity in continuity with matter, at its first efflorescence in expression: at its *precise point of emergence* out of itself, into perception, by way of sensation.¹¹ The beautiful, in this view of aesthetics, is the incipient perception of the vitality of matter, its dynamogenic "strength" or "*force*" (Pessoa 254-55). Beauty is ontogenetic force at its newest and most directly knowable in a worlding integrally experienced in the suddenness of a leap into being, contracted into an in-between of qualitative transformation. Contracted: in intensity. In intensity: and depersonalized. "Disinterested," because at this level there is not yet a subject in which interest in the beautiful can be drusily awakened.

Even in its simplicity and pre-far-from-equilibrium quaintness, Kant's example of drusiness can serve as a model for dynamogenic expression, or auto-poiesis. The freezing of the water was a singular event or qualitative "leap" that was no less multiple for being singular. In the event, water autonomously underwent a self-differentiation into a number of distinct lines of encounter, or processual dimensions. Each dimension (crystal, mist, water-lag) had its own consistency and time-form. Each was also a limit-state whose virtual superposition described the overall process, immanently determining the multiple dimensions of concurrent divergence as belonging to a single process. The internal limit was a becoming-solid-form (which under other conditions might be a sedimentation rather than a crystallization). The enveloping limit was a vaporization, or a becoming-molecular. And the in-between was a limit of staying-power, water too late to be what it nonetheless is, and as such, as much a reserve of becoming-solid, looming like destiny, as a remainder of fluidity. The "ages" of water. Striation, escape, and smoothness. Smoothness: an interval of indecision in a necessary becoming-other, a being in *potential* (understood as a paradoxical staying-power, a power to not-be what actual prevailing conditions make-be, following Agamben 35-36).

Every actual formation has at least these three limits, or limits analogous to these, which in their simultaneous superposition and divergence define its ages. This is a peculiar kind of "definition" because it is open-ended, the ages perpetually returning to and relaying each other in mutual interference. The process from which the actual formations emerge is limited *and* unbounded. What the limits define, in their differential immanence to each other, is an unbounded field of continuous topological — or better *topo-ontological* —

experimental approach to genetics (forthcoming, ch. 7). Aesthetics and "empathy," of course, do not ensure good science (just well-felt science). While McClintock's work in genetics was rewarded with a Nobel Prize, Morris's achievement is far more questionable. For a critique of the Lorenz school of ethology to which Morris belongs, see Genosko in this issue.

11 On the distinction between perception and sensation, see Massumi forthcoming.

transformation. It would be a mistake to align given actual formations in one-to-one correspondence to the internal, enveloping, and in-between limits (for example, the classical, modern, and postmodern, respectively). First, the limits themselves vary from formation to formation. For example, the "internal" limit of the modern is a fluidity, a smoothing and potentialization, rather than a crystallization. This limit, the postmodern, is itself defined by a complex of superposed limits, including an internal limit of its own: potentialization or staying-power taken to such an extreme that nothing ever happens any more (the rhetoric of the "end," of history in particular, is a confused sensing of this limit, which is never actually reached). The situation is far too complex for simple correspondences.

Since the limits are in continual transformation, there is a continually renewed need for experimentation in order to gauge them. This is the *evaluative* aspect of superior empiricism.¹² The continual necessity of evaluating limits constitutes the *ethical* dimension of the aesthetic. Guattari hyphenated his paradigm as the "ethico-aesthetic" (a phrase taken up as the subtitle of the English translation of *Chaosmosis*). Evaluation is ethical rather than simply cognitive, because the inductive investigations of the subject re-involve it in the ontogenesis in which it is interested, yielding a continuum of depersonalization setting the stage for a new emergence. The way in which the interest awakened by the beautiful is pursued has pragmatic consequences for the subsequent unfolding of the process under exploration. Investigation deflects. Ethics is the art of processual deflection of the ages. The ethical is thus inseparable from the political, which then concerns ontology before ideology. This is an ontology that is in turn more concerned with involutions of becoming (immanent participation) than with the evolution or progress of beings (which in any event follow). It is along these lines that Deleuze speaks of "conduites du temps" ("conducts of time") that immanently envelop the subject of knowledge in the same movement as the subject's experimentation develops or unfolds them as an object of ethico-aesthetic knowledge (Alliez 1991, 7/1996, xi).

Another lesson of water is disparity. As the self-organization leaps into being or unfolds, the differential ages of process actualize as different regions of space.¹³ This means that they are never *actually* in topological continuity. The movement of involution is arrested with the emergence of form. Crystal is no longer in contact with mist. They are no longer available to each other. The fluid is in contact with both. But asymmetrically: its conditions determine it to lean toward ice. The actual regions of the process are struck by an ineradicable

disparity of contact and availability. This irreversible disparity is compounded by the fact that one region will actualize the process more fully than another. In the case of freezing water, that region was the laggardly fluid, which remained for a moment in an in-between state mimicking the time-form of processuality, or the virtual (pure future-past). Actualized processuality is potential. Potential is always concentrated in a particular region of actuality. Every self-organizing system envelops an endemic disparity in potential in the difference between its regions. Some regions will no longer be in contact with the actual reserve of potential. These will dissipate, or solidify, or be easily engulfed by a more potentialized region of a different system altogether (*capture*). Capture is a usurping arrest of involution. In capture, a region of expression becomes fodder for another system, which annexes or ingests it into an alien process, where it is reprocessed to serve as a ground or energy source.¹⁴

The appearance of systemic disparities is the emergence of *power*. Every actual formation is a power formation and every ethico-aesthetic evaluation must take this into experimental consideration. It is an illusion to think, for example, that since the postmodern is a time-form of infinite availability that it actually affords equal access (the rhetoric of the "end" of power). It is equal access only virtually, in the purity of its form (which, like every pure form, is perpetually unexpressed: a virtual attractor governing a limit-state). Even in its fullest expression, the postmodern is a globalization of localized or regional disparity. It may seem contradictory to refer to the virtuality of power, if power is an asymmetry characterizing the plane of the expressed or of actual form. But if a disparity endures — repeats itself, reemerges at a regular beat — it is because the actual form of the disparity has become a process. It has fed back. It becomes-virtual, in return. It recurs as the regenerative kernel of a nucleus of expression. It has become a subjectless subjectivity, or *abstract machine* (Angel, Haghighi, Murphie).

The most virulent and enveloping expression of processualized disparity is, of course, the capitalist relation. Capital is a form of power *in and of itself*, even (especially) abstracted from actually existing capitalist formations.¹⁵ Capital is the pure form of ontological disparity in its most global expression. It is the global arrest of the involution it itself accelerates, in a different and complementary twist, as a time-form presenting infinite-in-principle availability. Capital is the power-form of the time-form of the aesthetic that is the postmodern. The superposition of its two limit-states — globalized disparity and access-to-excess, expressed by its power-form and time-form respectively — are the "logic" or processual definition of capital, its immanent limit.¹⁶

14 On capture and regions of becoming, or "milieus," see Deleuze and Guattari (1980, 65-68/1987, 49-51).

15 On the capitalist relation as directly a form of power, see Massumi 1992 (128-41) and 1997.

16 On the limits of capitalism, in relation to "schizophrenia" rather than the "postmodern," see Deleuze and Guattari (1972, 273-74, 294-98/1983, 230-31, 247-50).

12 For an approach to evaluating the immanent limits of State formations, see Dean and Massumi.

13 On the distinction between generative differentiation and the differentiation it generates, see Murphie in this issue.

The politics of experimentally perturbing the abstract machine of capital, in such a way as to skew the imbalance it expresses in capitalist formations toward the limit-state of access and excess, is what Guattari calls *communism* (Guattari and Negri). Communism in its aesthetic dimension is the extraction of processual beauty from capitalism, so that beauty is no longer only capital's concomitant in sensation but also, in involuntary addition to that in another synchronous age, an irreversible escape from its disparities. Virtual communism: the abstract machine of escape from recurrent capitalism. Guattari's (and Negri's) communism differs from traditional Marxisms in construing revolution as an immanent conversion of capitalism rather than an oppositional overturning or dialectical overcoming of it (after the manner of Deleuze's immanent conversion of the thinker he termed his worst "enemy," Kant; Deleuze 1990, 14/1995, 6). Only this approach to communism takes into adequate consideration capital's power of recurrence or its status as an abstract machine that does not coincide with or exhaust itself in any particular capitalist formation or period. Reciprocally, it is the only approach that attempts to give communism a power of recurrence equal to that of capitalism.

Guattari's theory is the reinvention of communism as a processual "age" or top-ontological rhythm of "depersonalized" (worlded) qualitative transformation. The political synonym of "depersonalized" is "collective." Communist collectivism is a becoming-(of the)-world, a differential becoming-(of)-everything-and-everybody, in intense mutual belonging unbounded by the disparities attendant upon the capitalist relation. This is not to say that it is without any limits or that it is an equalization or harmonization. Imbalance, tension, and disparity are endemic to becoming. Without them, world-process would wind down to an entropic end.¹⁷ The ethical issue, then, is less equality than what forms of disparity are induced to return. The recurrent disparity consonant with communism is neither the capitalist relation nor oppositional difference. It is *social differential* actualized in the untimely manner of a lag: socialized potential.

17 Lynn, in an entirely different domain (that of architecture), develops a logic of morphogenesis that is extremely useful for conceptualizing change and is particularly suggestive in its articulation of a philosophy of the emergence of form with information theory: "Contexts [patterns of extrinsic interrelations between already-emerged forms] tend towards entropy. Contexts lack specific organization and the information they provide tends to be general. In this regard contexts might be understood as entropic in their homogeneity and the uniform distribution of differences. Information and difference are being used here almost interchangeably [following Bateson's definition of information as 'a difference that makes a difference': a 'differential' in the vocabulary of this essay], and homogeneity is understood as a sameness of differences ['difference' in the present vocabulary] or a lack of information. Thus, homogeneity and disorganization, or lack of difference ['differential'] is a characteristic of symmetry.... Symmetry, and any exact form for that matter, indicates a lack of order due to a lack of interaction with larger forces and environments ... 'organized context' requires an agent of differentiation." "Communism" is Guattari's term for the collective agent of social differentiation.

The communist movement is the experimental reconversion of already-emerged differences into social differentials operating at a skew to the capital relation or the superposed power-form of the very same differential.¹⁸ Communism is the *repotentialization* of existing differences, recharged with the staying power to not-be what they capitalistically are in order to rebecome *in addition* to remaining (in divergent but mutually accessible regions or planes of actuality).

This is the drusy beauty of Guattari's anomalous understanding of communism: communism as the amplification of disparity in additive differentiation and skew trajectory. The self-organizing of self-diverging differences into co-regenerating planes of collective belonging to the same multiple-singular becoming-(of the)-world. No waiting life-times for capitalism to crumble. No pretending you can just step beyond it by dint of grim critical thinking or easy cynicism, as if everything and everybody in the world were not in some way irreversibly marked by it. The beauty of Guattari's communism is the becoming-perceptible, now and in lag, of dynamogenic potential, actualized as an expanding region of being-increasingly-different-together.¹⁹ The hope would be that at a certain threshold of proliferation the skew social trajectories might swamp and collectively disable the capitalist relation they parasitize, inheriting the boundless body of their host. Becoming unbounded, in this world. Without transgression or transgression. But not without limits (nothing can happen without limits). Rather: through a parasitic reinvention of the limit-state in such a way as to make it sustainable and vitally expansive, collectively liveable. This is perhaps the "becoming" Mani Haghighi appeals to in the name of a postmodern politics of "simulation" in immanent encounter, not with capital but with an altogether different abstract machine, that of Islamic "neo-archaism." Guattari's creative "aging" of communism, at any rate, is the mechanism by which his vital interest in it, and Deleuze's associated reluctance to recant his Marxism (1990, 232/1995, 171), weathered the widely proclaimed "end" of communism after the fall of the Soviet Union (which, of course, was anything but communist by this definition).

It is worth noting that the same political process that is expressed in Guattari's work as "communism" can also express itself in the form of an *anarchism*. This occurs when the focus for immanent conversion is an associated expression of virulently recurrent disparity: the State-form, or the eternal return of institutionalized hierarchy (Dean and Massumi). The State-form is an abstract machine of capture (Deleuze and Guattari 1980, 528-91/1987, 424-73) in intimate differential coupling with, but in no way reducible to, the abstract machine of unequal access-to-excess that is capital. The irreducibility of the

18 On power versus potential in political philosophy, see Negri 1991 and forthcoming.

19 On the "univocity" of the coming to expression of the multiple, see Deleuze (1969, 217-27/1990, 177-80, 1968, 52-61, 388-89/1994, 35-42, 303-04).

power-form of the State to the power-form of capital necessitates an experimental conduct of politics that is additive, in the sense of a pragmatics of mutual supplementation. The mutual supplementation, of course, need not (should not) stop with communism and anarchism. Anywhere there is a recurrent disparity of processual access, there is a need for a politics of expression focusing on its immanent conversion (gender and feminism; racism/ethnocentrism and post-colonial politics; heterosexism and queer theory; to name the most salient). An approach of this kind values the potential belonging-together-in-creative-tension of diverging, self-differentiating political expressions, over the crystallized differences or actual oppositions that inevitably accompany their unfolding. The Guattarian approach is non-judgemental and radically inclusionary, yet steadfastly anti-harmonic. It is this ethico-aesthetic of equal-access self-differential potential that Isabelle Stengers has termed "*cosmopolitics*" (1996-97).

SOFT *COGITO* OF THE IMAGINATION

Beauty, it has been argued, is the presentation in perception and the concomitant in sensation of an encountered worlding, or ontogenetic process. But when we sense beauty, we perceive it to be a property of a formed object. We call *things* beautiful. What is a thing judged beautiful, reevaluated from the point of view of beauty as a process?

It is the impossibility of painting *this*. *That* is what I feel when I see a velvet painting. An alienness and an impossibility.

Can this be?

If it did not exist, I would not feel its impossibility. This beautifully tasteless thing that impinges upon me. So close that it positively hurts my eyes. Yet from so far away, no matter how hard I try, I just cannot fathom how or why it could possibly be. A verified impossibility. Verified by my uncomprehending sensing of it.

This is difference, as actually encountered. Otherness: the being of a sensed impossibility.

Everything differs from us, and it is for this reason that everything exists. (Pessoa 223)

It is not just velvet painting. It is every thing. Every thing, however banal, is and is beautiful, insofar as it is a bearer of otherness (*that*) and impinges (*this*).

If there was an aesthetic *cogito*, this-that would be it. But it is a *cogito* that is a *sentio*: I feel. Although it is "I" who feel, the existence the feeling verifies is not "mine." It is immediately the world's. *I feel, therefore everything is*. Everything that is felt is: that. Differs. Which is why I also am, in this feeling.

The world and I exist, in difference, in the encounter. In the feeling. Being is in sensation.²⁰

If being is in sensation, the sensation is not in the "I" who feels. The I is in the sensation, with the world. I and the world follow the encounter. "Le donné n'est plus donné à un sujet, le sujet se constitue dans le donné" ("The given is [not] given to a subject; it is the subject that is constituted in the given") (Deleuze 1953, 92/1991, 87; translation modified).

The "topo-ontological" surface referred to earlier is an abstract surface of encounter, or impingement. Impression. Sensation. The softness of being. Otherwise known as the *imagination*: the vague perception of the world and I emerging together in sensation, differentially unfolding from a contraction in it. The surface of sensation is "abstract" because if things and I emerge from it, in itself it cannot be any thing, any more than it can be in me. It is all and only in the encounter. Which in itself is in nothing. For it is the in-which, contraction (the actual immanence of process).

The impingement is given. Cognition follows. It is tweaked into being by the encounter. *This* thing! This beautifully impossibly tasteless thing. This pain in the eye. Where did it come from? How can it be? What do I do now? Laugh? Critique? Buy iridescent paint?

No imagination without innervation. (Benjamin 75)

The beauty of the thing hits like a force launching a line of thought. Beauty impells thought. It compels thought. It is thought, contracted into the encounter, prior to its differentiation from sensation. All aesthetics is *aesthetics of force* (Deleuze 1981, 39-43; Bogue; Smith 42-43; O'Connell; Dale; Bourassa).

To think is to have a pain in the eye. (Pessoa)

What the pain translates into sensation is distance. The thing, in its absolute impinging proximity to me, envelops an imponderable distance. It's here. It came from somewhere. But I don't know where or how. The sense of "impossibility"

20 The classic empiricist presentation of this approach is William James's *Essays in Radical Empiricism*: "There is no *general* stuff of which appearance is made. It is made of *that*, or just what appears (26-27) ... what I call 'pure experience' [is] only virtually or potentially either object or subject as yet. For the time being, it is plain, unqualified actuality, a simple *that* (23) ... experience as a whole is self-containing and leans on nothing (193) ... object and subject *fuse* in the fact of 'presentation' or sense-perception (197) ... knower and object exist as so many ultimate *that*s or facts of being" (196). As the last phrase suggests, James's "that" (or "this-that"; to signal a differential, or incipient difference) is Francis Bacon's "*fact*," which can in turn be understood in terms of Whitehead's definition of fact as the "undifferentiated terminus of sense-awareness," the inexhaustible unthought from which thought "diversifies" and to which it "demonstratively" returns, as to its "ideal limit" (6-10, 13-15).

is the "I don't know where or how." It is a relative impossibility: a difficulty of access. I do not have access to the distant region of being that this thing brings enveloped in its arrival. The thing arrives as a roughness, an unevenness of being indicative of regions of existence out of contact with mine. It is drusy. A disparity luring the eye to extend the hand. The impossibility of the velvet painting is now converting before my very eyes into a "possible world," a region of being I can reach into. I can extend my hand and touch the fluff, convert its roughness into the softness of a reciprocal caress. I can buy it, in the hope that it will bring the distance it envelops into my home, where it will begin to belong to the region of my being. I could even research the production of velvet painting. Meet the artist. Maybe learn how to do it myself. Get inside the head of the velvetine "other."

Or I can simply walk away and leave the thing in its abject difference. Where it in any case remains. You never get right inside the head of the other. There is always at least a kernel of residual impossibility. The impossible recedes like a horizon, never sets like a sun. But as it recedes, other regions of the world appear.

The beautiful is an invitation to experiment and explore (often declined, its force absorbed by entropy). This invitation is consciously staged in the installations of multi-media artist Mathew Jones (O'Connell). The braille lettering on the walls of the gallery compels the viewer's caress. The roughness of braille, incomprehensible to the sight, lures the touch even of those who cannot read it. The body of the viewer is drawn into the art by the finger-tips. The rest of the body follows the fingers, yielding new sensations as it shuffles after the trail of braille. Movement, shuffled sounds of movement, serially unfolding perspectives, depth. Seeing, touching, hearing, proprioception. Congeries of sensations. *Synaesthesia*.

The pain in the eye envelops congeries of nonvisual sensations. The sensible surface of the aesthetic object's impingement is, in implication, transvisual. Sight is merely the sense of invitation: the first to be hit by distance. The surface of sensation does not just contract thought (how can it be?) into sensation (it is!). It contracts tactility into vision, and movement into tactility, and hearing into movement, and all of them into proprioception. Aesthetic sensation is thoroughly synaesthetic (see Lamarre). As thought unfolds from the sensitive encounter, the senses unfold from each other. The invited exploration is a co-functioning divergence of differentiating lines of further encounter, in the course of which an impossible world actually *expresses itself* in a becoming-possible by degrees.²¹ Language and conscious thought (and its varieties, judgement and critique) are just one (many) of the world's lines of expression.

21 On expression as an unfolding of possible worlds, see Deleuze (1990, 301-20/1969, 350-72) and (1968, 334-335/1994, 260-61).

"Further" encounter. "Distance." "Depth." "The immediately proximate topological surface of sensation comprises distance and depth. Distance and depth are creatures of the surface. They unfold from it, in furtherance of the encounter. They are processual continuations of the surface. They are in the twist of it. Otherness is the presentation of a twist in becoming. An implex, complexly unfoldable into any number of differentiating lines."²²

This is what it is to have a *body*. To sense otherness. To have depth (Dale). To be depth. To feel a twist in becoming, like a force of invitation to further being. To be that ever-renewed invitation. The body is processual depth — a reserve of potential lines of encounter contracted into the surface of sensation. Sensation is not in the body. The depth of the body is on the surface of sensation. Sensation is the outside in-which that is in nothing but itself. When we think of sensation as being "in" the body, what we are apprehending is a "vertical" dimension of implex lines of potential encounter with otherness. We can move "horizontally" along the surface of sensation following lines of encounter leading into regions unknown to us, whose possibility is just beginning to unfold. Or we can "vertically" revisit sensations that have already been. The body is the reserve of the having-been-in-*this*-region-of-becoming of sensitive encounters. The body is *processual memory*. Memory is not an internal faculty of the human. It is a rhythm of recursion to the outside surface, reaccess to the already having-been-felt and -unfolded toward otherness. Memory is a self-referential rhythm of return to the outsideness of sensation: synaesthetic processual self-reflection reaccessing reserves of alterity. It is a rhythm of folding-back-onto-itself of a pattern of exploration linguistically indexed by "I."²³

It is on the level of language that sameness is attributed to this rhythm of recursion. It is the habit of "I" to say "this," the habitual coupling of the first-person pronoun with a deictic in a recurring pattern, that identifies the roving region of reaccess as the *same* body, *my* body. Under-with this *identification* in language, the body remains self-difference. For reaccess is different from access.

22 On distance as a topological feature of the surface, see Deleuze (1969, 202/1990, 173) and Bacon: "to make a Sahara of the appearance," to compose a surface "having the distances of the Sahara" (qtd. in Sylvester 56). On depth as "implex," see Deleuze (1968, 296-99/1994, 229-32).

23 "The individualized self ... is a part of the content of the world experienced. The world experienced ... comes at all times with our body as its centre, centre of vision, centre of action, centre of interest. Where the body is is 'here'; when the body acts is 'now'; what the body touches is 'this'; all other things are 'there' and 'then' and 'that' ... The body is the storm centre.... The word 'I', then, is primarily a noun of position, just like 'this' and 'here.' Activities attached to 'this' position have prerogative emphasis, and, if activities have feelings, must be felt in a particular way. The word 'my' designates the kind of emphasis; or in the present vocabulary, the pattern of exploratory reaccess (James 170-71n).

An impingement folding back on itself is not the same as an impingement arriving. Processual self-reflection is the repetition of the body's difference from "I." And from itself, as it has been. Under the aegis of a repetition of the same: a continuation of self-differentiation. Under-with language, the body is a processual return to self-alterity — a "pure form," a "subjectless subjectivity," an "abstract machine," the virtual kernel of a "nucleus of expression."

Even on the level of language, it is crucial to note that identification is not *with* someone or something else. It is a linguistic expression of *self-reference*. That is why psychoanalytic models of process as transference are false starts (Guattari), as are theories of mimicry or imitation (Genosko, Murphie) — any analysis that locates process in extrinsic resemblance between already existing things. In her contribution to this volume, Bracha Lichtenberg-Ettinger undertakes the difficult task of the immanent conversion of Lacanian theories of transference in encounter with Deleuze and Guattari.

As sensed, bodily depth is potential (the presentation in "I-other" disparity of divergent lines of encounter). In perception, bodily depth is *possibility* (lines of encounter unfolding in synaesthetic exploration doubled by linguistic expression). What is *impressed* as potential is *expressed* as possibility: what infolds unfolds; what implexifies complexifies. Impingement presents these two dimensions: the only-felt of the implex, and the about to be thought-out of the complex.

Artaud's "theatre of cruelty" as analyzed by Catherine Dale is the "vertical" exploration of bodily depth in its only-felt dimension of potential. The conversion Artaud works is of language back into sensation. Words impinge upon him in the manner of things. What their impingement invites are breaths and howls and their gestural doubles, expressing language as it can only be felt, not understood. The expressions go nowhere but back in, in eddies inducing the audience into the performed body, in an expanding and intensifying circle of sensational self-recursion. Artaud's "cruelty" is to collectively express the body as the subjectless subjectivity that it always is, in the depth of its processual vitality: to make it pure form, a "body without organs." This is a cruelty that has nothing to do with sadism. Like the identification it reconverts, it is self-referential. Artaud returns the body to the twist of its own becoming. To the otherness "within" (under-with identification). His theatre presents the deformational dimension of the body's vitality as its immanent limit (see also Deleuze 1981). Alan Bourassa explores the same dimension in his analysis of the immanent outside of language and the limits of the "human."

Artaudian "depth" is an important complement to the thinking of the surface in many popular models of the postmodern. In itself, postmodern pastiche, cut-up, the mix and match of recombinant art and thought only goes so far. Recombination, no matter how perverse, leaves everything much as it was. The recombination is additive, productive of a supplementary surface dimension. The forms from which the combined parts have detached persist in other regions. It

is in the sensation accompanying the pastiche that something happens. The becoming is in the intensity of the sensation — in the interference. If more far-reaching change is to occur, it is in a contagion of interferential *intensity* disseminating across the surface. It is sometimes useful to figure intensity as "depth." It is more accurately a folding of the surface (as in O'Connell) or a rising to the surface of the "ground" (as in McMahon's opening quote from Deleuze).²⁴ Standard spatial metaphors are simply inadequate to grasp the processually twisted figure of the topo-ontological surface. It does not matter much whether you use them, or if you do, which way you go. As Guattari says, in the aesthetic paradigm "everything works." What matters is to what effect you use whatever works for you. That is the "ethico-" of the "aesthetic."

Just as Artaud's cruelty has nothing to do with sadism, so Pasolini's epiphany of self-crucifixion has nothing to do with masochism. Pasolini's art, as analyzed by Michael Hardt, also concerns potential and returns sensation to the body (returns sensation to itself) through a practice of intensification. But Pasolini does not probe the depths of potential, like Artaud. Nor does he, like Matthew Jones's installation experimenter, spin it out horizontally along exploratory lines of possibility already (vaguely) perceived, just beginning to be thought-out.²⁵ Pasolini leaves potential right where it is: on the surface. He intensifies the *anomaly* of potential: its affirmative power to not-be. He gives sensation's dimension of potential staying-power by actualizing bodily recursion not as further encounter, but as *remainder*. It all returns, and remains. Right here, between the vertical and the horizontal (the cross). Between sensation as passion (Artaud) and sensation as thought-perception in action (Jones). Between life and death. Between dead meat and halo. Here, in pain, frozen potential incarnate. Pasolini directly expresses his anomaly by "exposing" his "inactuality" (Agamben 44), his remaining, his flesh-lag. Pain is the fleshly expression of staying-power: the non-resolution of the tension that is flesh-potential. Pasolini's pain, and his lag, is his being the atheist irresistibly compelled to imitate Christ. Christ in return, and irrevocably abandoned. The atheist on the cross: nothing could be more intensely superficial than that. Here is a contagious alternative to depth for the postmodern aesthetic: the intensification of the surface as such. But to operate on this surface, you do not need scissors. You need nails. Pasolini is not the only artist who uses a hammer. "I want a nailing of the body," declares Bacon (qtd. in Sylvester 78).

24 Shavro's *Cinematic Body* and *Doom Patrols* are exemplary studies of the intensity of affect and sensation in postmodern culture.

25 On the necessary dimension of vagueness in perception, see Evens. See also Murphie and Deleuze (1988, 120-21/1093, 90-91) and (1968, 274-76/1994, 213-14), and Smith (39), on the "clear-confused" and "distinct-obscure." The implicated dimension of perception these formulas express is what is termed "sensation" in this essay.

The ocular-centrism of Pessoa's formula for the arrival of thought-in-sensation ("to think is to have a pain in the eye"), and of Shaviro's related formula for the postmodern aesthetic ("beauty lies in the eye"), is only apparent. It is just that it is in vision that distance hits first. In that sense, vision has a certain priority. But it is of a different kind than the widely, and rightly, critiqued dominance of the visual in Western culture. In fact, it is an escape route from ocular-centrism. Here, being-ocular is a starting point of a cascade of transvisual communication and differentiation. The pain in the eye delivers the body to synaesthesia. The pain is an expression of potential, the actual co-presentation of virtual limit-states or attractors. In ordinary exploratory circumstances, the tension of potential resolves itself in an unfolding differentially governed by the superposition of limit-states. That unfolding is a tendential diverging-together of different sensory lines of encounter. Retrospectively, the lines of encounter are perceived by the subject that follows the unfolding to have been in the hit of potential all along.²⁶ The retrospective perception of possibility is the recursive unfolding into thought of sensation. It is as though that sensation enters language, understood as a technic for the collective stockpiling of already-explored possibility. That is: that which will have been felt-possibility (sensation-in-thought) and was on impact only-felt impingement (thought-as-sensation) perceptually unfolds in a chain of action and reaction in-mixing the now actively extended and self-differentiating sensation with socially-induced habits and socially-enforced conventions that gear-shift it onto the plane of language, in its narrow Saussurean sense of a system of arbitrary paradigmatic and syntagmatic phonemic convention stockpiling socially-recognized possibility in signifier-signified couplings.²⁷ Artaud explores the *necessity* of language: of its return to

26 On possibility as retrospective, see Bergson (1938, 99-116/ 1946, 107-25) and Bourassa.

27 In the Saussurean system, potential returns in language as the nonlocalizable excess of signifier over signified that accompanies the local realization of a conventional signifier-signified coupling. This excess is ensconced in the "vertical" dimension of the process (understood very differently than in the present context: as a "synchrony" rather than a temporal disparity, the disparity that is the empty form of time). It constitutes the immanent generative surplus from which the "horizontal" relay to the next linguistic realization is drawn ("diachrony": also different from the "horizontal" lines of encounter at issue here, in that diachrony is not essentially differentiating; the system remains the same across its realizations). An analogous surplus figures in Lévi-Strauss's anthropology as "mana" and its structural equivalents, which constitute the specifically cultural presentation of the staying power of processual remainder (the reserve of potential) in many societies. It is in excess-as-remainder that a reconciling of Deleuze and Guattari's thought and structuralisms of signification might be found ("mana" converts into Deleuze's "dark precursor" or "object = x"; 1979, 315-24; 1969, 137-40/1990, 113-15; 1968, 156-61/1994, 119-23). The Deleuze-Guattarian conversion of structuralism entails the signifier and signified generating an excess by escaping down a "line of flight" away from the "despotism" (self-sameness across its variations) of the signifying regime — rather than the excess regenerating signifier-signified following the chain of conventional linguistic realiza-

sensation, in descent toward the unthought. The road to conscious reflection runs along "horizontal" lines of thought-differentiation away from the immediacy of sensation toward the socially *arbitrary* of language as the system of possibility.

That was a long "that is." The main point is that the eye invites the hand to extend. Being-ocular is the processual starting point of a *becoming-tactile*. Becoming-tactile is the "first" processual step in becoming, after the being-dominant of having seen. Becoming-tactile has a priority in the becoming-other of sensation that is analogous to controversial priority assigned by Deleuze and Guattari to becoming-woman in the becoming-other of Man (understood as the abstract machine of the "major," or the pure form of crystalised human disparity).²⁸ The order of the becoming of Man, according to Deleuze and Guattari, is becoming-woman, followed by becoming-animal, followed by becoming-mineral, followed by becoming-molecular, followed by becoming-imperceptible. The analogous order of the becoming of sensation is becoming-tactile, becoming-aural, becoming-proprioceptive, becoming-synaesthetic, and becoming-imperceptible. This should not be misunderstood to imply that there is any resemblance whatsoever between the corresponding terms of the co-diverging series. The "analogy" is processual, concerning intensities rather than properties of formed things: the corresponding "terms" are comparable *degrees of deviation* or deterritorialization from their respective dominants. The "orders" of becoming are nothing more than expressions of the relative accessibility of a certain transformative intensity or potential, given the powers of capture exerted by Man and by ocular-centrism respectively. Becoming-woman and becoming-tactile are "first" in the sense that women and touch occupy the existential regions most closely neighboring their respective major state, by the major's own paranoid definition of its perimeters (this is why women and touch are confusedly associated with each other in so many majoritarian cultural expressions, as if they did resemble each other in some way or entertained a priori relations with one another). Women and touch are defined as so intimately neighboring their majors that they almost inevitably overlap with them (hence the need for men to constantly prove to themselves and each other that they are not womanly; and the almost irresistible reflex for sight to extend into touch). The overlap makes the major more available to immanent conversion by the "priority" (most closely dominated) becoming. Becoming-imperceptible figures as limit-

tions. This amounts to an autonomization of signified-signifier coupling as a pure, "postsignifying" form in which the matter of content melds with the manner of expression. It is the melding that takes the lead, as an "abstract machine" of autonomized, depersonalized expression (Deleuze and Guattari 1975, 7-16/1986, 3-8; 1980, 161-69, 232-34/1987, 129-35, 189-91; Haghighi).

28 See the crystal-shaped diagram of "Man" in Deleuze and Guattari (1980, 359/1987, 544; see also 291-94). For a feminist Lacanian appropriation of the concept of becoming-woman, see Lichtenberg-Etinger in this volume.

state of both processual series because it is the immanent limit of life itself. It is in the abstract vitality of becoming-imperceptible — vitality outside any particular, actually-existing vital formation — that all processual lines virtually converge (matter-as-energy; evolution in involution).²⁹ At the mutual immanent limit, there is no "order" (except of superposition).

At the limit, forms of being materially overlap. Forms are fuzzy Matters. That is why animals and becomings-animal are a repeated concern of this volume (O'Connell, Genosko, Bourassa, Murphie). Alan Bourassa touches on animality in his inventive investigation of the limits of the human, in the course of which Deleuze and Guattari encounter other thinkers of the "outside" not-beyond: Agamben, Blanchot, Foucault, and Levinas. Gary Genosko discusses nonhuman expression at length, following the tracks of Deleuze and Guattari's most prominent ethological interlocutors, the fabled bower-bird and mysterious cosmic lobster. His informative investigations convincingly illustrate why Deleuze and Guattari refuse to draw a strict line of demarcation between instinct and expression, artist and animal.³⁰ The hand, as they say, is but a deterritorialized paw (Deleuze and Guattari 1980, 211/1987, 172). Genosko (and Angel in a different context) establish the all important connection between territory and expression (only broached in passing in this essay, in the treatment of the emergence of differentiated "regions" of being).

INTRODUCTION

The "priority" of becoming-tactile is attested to in this collection by the frequency with which analyses of touch and figures of hands recur (O'Connell, Abou-Rihan, Bains, Angel, Lichtenberg-Ettinger, Lamarre, Murphie, Massumi).

Fadi Abou-Rihan's essay hinges most integrally on hands. He critiques Deleuze's penchant for imaging the process of philosophy as an erotic approach from behind, a kind of "assfuck" begetting a "monstrous offspring" (Deleuze 1995, 6). Monstrous or no, for Abou-Rihan the image is still too organismic, too tied to whole organisms, to hierarchies between identified wholes, to notions of reproduction. Not autonomized enough. He proposes to take Deleuze's proudly perverse image of homoerotic "becoming-woman" to the next degree of deterritorialization, switching lines of becoming from the organic-form series (Man, woman, animal...) to the partial-object series (eye, hand...). He suggests an

alternative image of theory, chosen for its role in contemporary queer practices whose conduct is as immediately political as it is erotic. From the visibility of full form to tactility engulfed in the darkness of the anus: fisting. In fist-fucking, the gender, sexual orientation, and identity of the participants do not figure in the same way as in heterosexual or gay anal sex. Hands and anuses are indifferent to gender, and the practice of fisting cuts across orientations. The aim, however, is not to deny gender or sexual orientation. It is to supplement it with a co-functioning escape from it, in a way that reproblematises it, forces it to be addressed anew. Is a lesbian still a lesbian if she fists with men? The question of gender and sexual orientation returns with a new twist, on an ethical and political level accompanying the ethics and politics of fisting as an autonomous process. The politics of fisting as such is anti-hierarchical. "Top" and "bottom" lose their sense, especially when two hands clasp inside the anus, which in turn clasps them, blurring the boundary between activity and passivity, as well as undoing the very duality of sex by making part-object coupling a tripling (two hands plus sphincter). The line of becoming eddies (eye, hand ... hand-hand), closing in on itself to form a self-clasping plateau of erotic intensity, clasped again by a tightly active environment leaving no room for identity. The self-clasping, plateauing of the part objects registers the autonomy of the process as it follows its own erotic count, unsubsidiarized to "the organization of the organs" (Artaud). As autonomous, the three-way coupling couples with other "couplings" and non-reproductive multiplicities of connection: it forces thought, begs to be integrated into questionings of gender and orientation, as they figure in larger-group politics. (Autonomy, as always, is an autonomy of connection.) Abou-Rihan's deterritorialization of Deleuze's erotic image of philosophy is designed to renew the connection of theory to other spheres of activity. This is not a harking back to the old problem of the relation of "theory" to "practice." What Abou-Rihan does instead is to make the theory of theory immediately a practice, through its direct image-connection with a complex outside. Queer theory is the "innervating" (Benjamin) maintenance of this immediate connectibility of intellectual production to its own ever-shifting, active environment.

Lichtenberg-Ettinger establishes the necessity for *visual art* of escaping the dominance of the eye. In her theory and artistic practice, the eye moves into the "matrixial" space of *relation*, the generative in-between of subjects and objects. The interval of relation becomes the focus of the gaze, "hollowed" of its content. In the terms suggested in the present essay, this "eroticization" of the eye involves the gaze following tactility into the synaesthetic in-between of vision and proprioception (in its relation to gesture). It is following this displacement and that painting can become the technic of *memory* Lichtenberg-Ettinger wishes to make it. In turn, it is by becoming-memory, in the sense discussed, that visual art can effectively render the pure, hollow form of the body in its own medium

29 On evolution as necessarily involving involution, see Bergson (1941/1911) and Ansell-Pearson 1997, forthcoming.

30 On art as instinct and portraiture as bound up with becomings-animal, see Bacon in Sylvester (18, 32, 97). See also Ansell-Pearson, forthcoming.

(as opposed to embodying full visual form, or content, in the medium of the canvas). Synaesthesia is a process of "hypermnesis." It is "an overall sensation in which *the thing remembers itself*" (Cytowic 24).³¹ It is a memory of the

31 "Pathological" synaesthesia, in the view adopted here, is a becoming-conscious in a limited way (typically, coloured hearing) of a nonconscious condition underlying all cognition. This accords with the conclusions of Grossenbacher, who argues that "normal" perception is an inhibition of the synaesthetic dimension, an inhibition that clinical synaesthetes have "failed" to fully develop (165). In clinical synaesthetes, the synaesthetic expression appears "in addition to, not instead of" the "normal" perception of the object, with which it is strictly simultaneous. This leads Grossenbacher to theorize a "multimodal" nexus through which the separate inputs of the senses are fedforward, and simultaneously fedbackward (163-66; the "recursion" of sensation discussed in this essay). Language and "higher" cognitive functions lie at one extreme of the feedback loop, folding into and out of the sensation (166). For that synaesthetic sensation to be "simultaneous" with the object perception, the speed of its constitutive feed would have to be greater than the smallest perceptible interval (the "infinite speed" of self-recursion of Ruyer's "pure form" and Deleuze and Guattari's "concept": "self-survey," as explained by Bains). Grossenbacher, in a move again converging with the approach here, assimilates this process to the imagination, or what experimental psychologists call "imagery." Imagery, including clinical synaesthetic imagery, he argues, "depends on the same [neural] mechanisms as support perceptual attention" (153). Neurologically, there is no distinction between them. The difference between sensation and perception, and consciousness and nonconsciousness, is not one of kind. The distinction is processual: they are differentiated as regions of a "simultaneous" recursion. They are different "ages" of a single self-coincident and self-differentiating loop. They are distinctions immanent to the absolute speed of the self-recursion. It is worth noting that the "multimodal nexus" must be conceived as lying *inbetween*. Where is the inbetween space of an integral and simultaneous self-co-presence? Saying that the nexus is "inbetween" amounts to saying that it is *nonlocalized*. The "nexus" is the processual loop. Its nonlocalizability expresses its reality as *virtual*. This is the pure form of thought-sensation as a virtual "kernel" of a "nexus of expression," as referred to earlier. The synaesthetic "concurrent" in clinical synaesthetes (for example, the colours induced by sound) are perceived outside the body at "middle distance" in what Cytowic calls a "peri-personal" space (23), i.e., at the boundary between the personal and the nonpersonal. This is a way of saying that this perceptual "middle" is in the same abstract space of nonlocality as the "inbetween" of the neurological nexus of the sensation in itself (in its material mechanism). It is a region of the same process. On "*mesoperception*" in its relation to synaesthesia (in particular as it involves proprioception, which could be argued to be the sense "closest" to the "multimodal nexus"; see Massumi 1996). In young infants, sensation and perception are not yet differentiated, so there is no "cross-modal" referencing of impingements arriving by separate sensory pathways (Maurer). The world of the neonate is synaesthetic, in an undifferentiated manner, directly (without feedback: the pure form of experience at its purest, at its most infinitely-fast). The multimodal nexus is everything. The separate neurological pathways of vision, touch, hearing, etc., get tangled in the primordial neural soup of the as-yet functionally undifferentiated matter of the emergent brain. Neonate sensation is the actuality of the "condition" of all of the "ages" of perception (and therefore, via proprioception, of all intentional movement and action). Deleuze and Guattari's "*childhood block*" or "becoming-child" (1975, 141-43/1986, 78-79; 1980, 359-61/1987, 293-94) is a resurfacing of the undifferentiated con-

world as it unfolds as relation. Lichtenberg-Ettinger recreates visual art as an autopoietic memory of the world.

Thomas Lamarque also explores the non-representational in-between of vision and gesture in his analysis of Japanese calligraphic poetry. He uses this in-betweenness, explicitly theorized in terms of synaesthesia, to problematize the cultural and geopolitical limit between "East" and "West." Like Haghighi, he argues that cultures and geopolitical formations are best understood as unbounded. Rather than enclosures, they are differential participations: in a single-multiple process of mutual divergence. This does not mean that cultural and geopolitical differences are unreal, or that there are no boundaries. Only that the boundaries and the rivalrous differences they circumscribe are derived: not causes, but processual results or effects; not the expressing, but the expressed. The logic of their emergence and recurrence is missed entirely, unless it is understood that in their dynamogenesis they pertain to *limits* more vitally than boundaries and that all limits are ultimately immanent (as is all causality).

For Maria Angel, the becoming-other-together of Man and sensation runs up against a shared obstacle: the *face*. The face is the rehumanized surface of eye-hand coordination. The becoming-digital of vision and the becoming-machine of the keyboard-fingering human converge on the same abstract surface: the (inter)-face. And there they stop. They are bounced back into an eddy of smarmy humanism by, to take an ubiquitous example, the smiling-computer icon that leers out of every Mac while the machine is whirring away behind the screen, working its inhumanly digital, invisible magic.³² Similarly, the becoming-alien of Man is bounced back off the surface of Mars in the perceived face appearing in NASA photographs. Here, the face is the rehumanized surface of earth-space probe coordination. In every case where exploration seems inexorably to lead to a becoming-other of Man, the face intercepts. This occurs most recurrently and with the most lasting effect with the infant, whose incipient eye-hand coordination, first practised while suckling, is indexed to the caregiver's face in

ditions of perception and movement *alongside and in addition* to the "adult" differentiation of the senses and their slowed-down, secondary, "intermodal" reconnection (for example, the "normal," functional ability to see a texture). "Adult" perception, once again, is a slowing-down or "inhibition" of "neonate" synaesthesia (Maurer 228). The connection Deleuze and Guattari make between involuntary memory, as in Proust, and the resurfacing of the childhood block accords with the assertion that synaesthesia is "hypermnesis." Experimental psychologists have a pronounced tendency to confuse "synaesthetic sensation" with "intermodal" or "cross-modal" perception. Intermodal perception is a product of the *differentiation* of the senses. It is when the souped senses are selectively brought back together after having functionally separated, in tandem with the functional differentiation of regions of maturing brain-matter.

32 Negroponte has emerged as the consummate digital prophet of interfacial smarm (see Massumi 1995).

its perceptual disparity and actual distance from the bottle or breast. The disparity between the eye and the surrounding expanse of smooth skin recapitulate in an abstracting and humanizing manner the disparity between the nipple and the smooth surface of the mammalian breast (or between the protruding shape of the artificial nipple of the bottle and the smoothness of its texture). The hand-eye coordination is enveloped by the mammalian disparity with which it is associated, which is in turn enveloped on the new human sur-face, to which it is indexed by the attractor of *facial expression*. The envelopment in facial expression reacts upon the disparities of departure, which also remain where they are, indexed as oppositional differences at a positioned distance from the abstracting sur-face. The emergence of difference and distance enables person-to-person communication (mediated becoming-together: the space in which language will lodge). This composition of a topo-ontological sur-face enveloping disparities converted into distances and differences, which in turn envelop differentials of sensation, is analyzed by Deleuze and Guattari as the developmental origin in the growth of the individual of the eternally recurrent, collective, abstract machine of personalization, or huManization (1980, 208/1987, 169-70).³³

This sense I had of my mother: up to the time I began to recognize her, it was simply a feeling — "This is good." *No form, no face*, just something bending over me, from which good would come.... Pleasant.... Seeing my mother was like looking at something through the lens of a camera. At first you can't make anything out, just a round cloudy spot ... *then a face appears*, then its features become sharper. My mother picks me up ... *I lie there and it feels like "this."* (Luria, 77-78; italics added)³⁴

"A cloudy spot, then something pleasant, then a face" (78). Then *I, there, this*. Once the infant is hedonically personalized by its facial indexation, its becoming-mammalian, not to mention other becoming-animal, or becoming-machine, or becoming-alien, will automatically tend to loop back through the connection to the abstract sur-face. They will be shortcircuited by the sur-face: "overcoded" by it. ("Just something bending over me," engulfing feeling in the pleasantness of its shadow: "up to the time I began to recognize ...") Any time

33 In her studies of "facedness" (the ability to recognize faces and facial expressions), Maurer argues that the new-born infant perceives the disparity between the "nubbiness" and the "smoothness" of the breast or artificial nipple and the distance between this disparity and the caregiver's face only as variations in "intensity" (236-37). Oppositional difference (between nubbiness and smoothness to the touch; also expressed visually as contrast) and distance are enveloped in synaesthetic intensity. They become perceptible in the course of an additive differentiation of intensity.

34 Luria presents the classic case of a man whose every perception was highly synaesthetic, and who for that reason had total recall. Since his memory was lodged in sensation rather than in language, he could vividly remember the time before he could speak (an impossibility according to the Lacanian scheme of things).

mammalian hand-eye coordination starts to slide back into a becoming-tactile (as it has a reflex to do), and from there into synaesthetic escape, the mammalian will reflect back onto the recognized sur-face of huManization rather than proceed through becoming-animal to an unknown surface and a new becoming. The mirroring face is the form of arrest of becoming-other-than-huMan. In this Deleuzo-Guattarian end-run around Lacan's mirror stage, all the world becomes a mirror of Man reflecting and disseminating the pure form of Majority (which envelops the positioned distances and oppositional difference of gender, race, and age as diacritical sub-forms of itself). In this approach, the face is a mirroring process, not a mirrored form. It is "faciality" that *produces* reflection and recognition, by reconditioning the world of sensation to serve as a mirror. The face as a full form of expression (filled with personalized content) is an optical effect (a visually-dominating derivative) of the becoming-mirror of the world generated by the abstract machine of facial indexation.

The faces that simultaneously recede into and emerge from the abstract surface of Lichtenberg-Ettinger's paintings belong to a very different machine of expression, running counter to faciality as the personalizing form of Majority. Lichtenberg-Ettinger's faces re-surface from lost memory (found photos). But they are effaced as they resurface (by endless blurrings, and repeated degenerative photocopying, and rubbings, and swabbings, and overlays of paint). The lost memory is not presented as a personalized content pertaining to reflection. It remains lost. It is lost *again* in the painting. The effacement of the face completes the depersonalization of lost memory that began when the memory was encountered as a "found" object. What appears on the canvas, then, is neither a mirroring of the world nor a memory of a person. What appears are *traces*. Traces of the process of producing the painting, which may take several years. What appears are the traces of the eye selecting the found images, the brush applying paint to them, the hand rubbing them, the machine photocopying them over and over again, repeatedly, obsessively, month after month. The traces are of the *body over time*: the rhythm of the body turning away from and returning to the canvas, bringing back bits and pieces of its experience with it, over a not insignificant portion of a life. The traces record the processual *in-between* of the aesthetic object and the world. They are of *embodied time*, of a living in the world continually returning to the surface. Rather than a mirroring of the world, or a memory of a person, this return is a *memory of the world*: the pure form of the *body* as rhythm of recursion ("*objet petit a*"). For Lichtenberg-Ettinger, as an Israeli, the Holocaust is ever-present. Yet, it is not reflected in her paintings as a content of personal memory (it happened before her birth). Rather, it is *re-enacted* in the collective (worlded) effacement and forgetting of the personal and particular. That is what actually appears in the painting. The appearing re-enactment is not a reproduction. The world-event of the Holocaust repeats, but differentially: as part of a *creative* process. The collective trauma of the Holocaust is *affirmed* ("neither repressed nor forgotten," as was the personal). It is made to return, but in drift or creative divergence from its anchoring in

history. That history is supplemented by continued embodied becoming. If the paintings are "about" anything, it is that: having a body, continuing, being processually in-between, becoming. Having collectively survived. The "shared memory" of the still-living.³⁵

The richness and resonances of the work brought together in this collection make it impossible to do justice here to each individual contribution. This afterword-and-introduction is not intended to be an exhaustive reckoning of what can or does go on in the volume. It is one way of weaving a rhythm through it. The reader will find many others. There are any number of motifs that run through the essays, like refrains, or different beats to read to. It is perhaps not surprising that rhythm and music are themselves the most frequent refrain, given the pride of place Deleuze and Guattari assign them in their work, not to mention the highly "composed" symphonic nature of their writing (O'Connell, Genosko, Dale, Guattari, Lamarre, and Murphie). Evens, whose essay is entirely dedicated to music, provides an ontology of patterned sound that is exemplary of Deleuze and Guattari's approach to philosophizing.

Evens returns music to its conditions of emergence: noise. Noise, he demonstrates, is not the opposite of patterned sound (a point taken up earlier in this essay with the distinction between *a* beat and beats). Noise is the unperceived "substrate" from which sound-patterning differentiates and against which it stands out. Noise *accompanies* music. At times, noise will feed back into music as a perceptible second-order interference. It is more accurate to say that noise, as a substrate, is not primarily heard as and in itself, than it is to say that it is not heard. One does in fact hear "a positive effect of noise" (Evens). The substrate of noise is vaguely perceived as "the contraction which makes music more than a sequence of unconnected sounds, and which draws together breath into words, phrases, meanings." "Or, perhaps, one only *feels* this effect, as the movement of the music." It is the sub-perceived sensation of noise that "give[s] *force* to music." The movement-effect of the music "is not created by the chords, but produces them as its force." "Chords do not make a progression, but are themselves created by a force which progresses in its headlong push. Noise is the reservoir of force which, in its repeated contractions, forces the flow of music through the musicians, the instruments, the audience.... We hear the implicated sense of the music, its movement." "We do not hear the noise in and of itself. We hear its contraction of chords, breath, words, phrases, meanings. We hear the world. Flowing through the "straits" of the musicians' hands into a thousand thought-sensations of the assembled crowd. *Expression*. In music, we hear the force of expression of *the world*, as it contracts into a single channel and unfolds again into a singular-multiplicity of crowded accompaniments. We hear the

35 For more on her art, see Lichtenberg-Etinger 1995 (includes essays by Lyotard, Bucci-Glucksmann, and Pollack).

background noise of existence. The becoming-expression of the world. The becoming, in expression, of the world.

Le monde ... n'existe pas hors de ses expressions. (Deleuze 1988, 181)³⁶

If expression is the unfolding of forces of existence, then it must be conceived as causative in some way. Noise, Evens says, gives force to the movement *and* is produced by the movement as its force. The causality is recursive. Topological feed back. All that unfolds in the same movement returns. The unfolding of expression and the return of the expressed are *in* the same movement. A movement that envelops the world — always through an absolutely particular local channel. The movement does not envelop the world in something else. In envelops the world in its own self-differentiating expression as movement, in the local-absolute.

The force of expression is the immanent cause of the world. Of all that it becomes in its differentiation. Deleuze and Guattari's "superior empiricism" involves returning the relation between cause and effect to immanence, as the "real" transcendental "condition of emergence" of everything-and-everybody. The immanence is "transcendental" because it does not coincide with the forms it expresses, even though it is not fundamentally separate from them ("transcendental" but not "transcendent").³⁷ Actual form is immanence as it has folded out of itself. Form is the expressed. There is an ontological difference between the expressed and the expression. This means that actual things, forms of existence, can only be understood causally in terms of deformation. The real condition of a thing's emergence does not resemble the thing. The expression does not resemble the expressed (Bourassa, Murphie). As Bergson was fond of saying, in order to explain a thing one must follow the route by which it emerged, but in the opposite direction. Recursion: along the line of retrospective possibility back to the potential. Generative thought does not *occur to* a subject. Both *recur with* the object. Thought-event. Of differentiating repetition. From unfolding to infolding, from emergence to divergent return, from form to topo-ontological deformation. From the joy of having a body, of collectively surviving, to the creative torture of the "body without organs." Cruelty of thought. Affirmation of the world. As it turns. (To bring the discussion back to banality.)

Any approach that does not take into account the ontological difference in expression misses the real movement of the world. If the cause of the thing is located on the same existential level as its effect, nothing can be understood of change. Nothing can be understood of how a given form came to be, and why

36 "The world does not exist outside its expressions" (Deleuze 1993, 132).

37 For more on Deleuze's transcendental empiricism and the difference between the transcendental and the transcendent, see Goodchild 1996a (30-37) and 1996b (12-19), and Martin (29-50).

it will inevitably become other than it is. Nothing is understood but the self-sameness of form, as implying only unchanging laws of extrinsic interaction already incumbent in the form. This is common-place empiricism, which understands the event as a change of state: an "accident" extrinsic to the definition of the thing. An approach of this kind has no way of conceptualizing changes in nature, qualitative transformation, except as an accumulation of *quantitative* changes. The world is reduced to variations in quantity. Rhetorics of difference avoid this quantitative reduction of dynamogenesis. However, they do not go much further than avoiding it. They may recognize the need to think in terms of immanent causality. But they misapprehend the cause as immanent *to form*: as operating on the level of already form things, in the contrast between one form and the others. They locate the generative cause in a form's diacritical "positioning" in relation to other forms. This transposes the form's emergent disparity (its *formation*) into an opposition that can do no more than repeat its difference to the forms it encounters. Expression is then an expression of a self-sameness through reciprocal difference. Movement and encounter are once again treated as extrinsic. Extrinsic to what? The "essence" of the thing? Rhetorics of difference share a secret essentialism with common-place empiricism. Something neither can bring itself to admit. This quasi-empirical collusion with essentialism is why rhetorics of difference have had to assert their anti-essentialism so loudly and so obsessively (though not nearly so convincingly). They commit the cardinal error of thinking that the transcendental condition of a thing's existence can be deduced from its form: that its conditions of emergence and transformation resemble its conditions of being. This is the basis of another secret collusion: with structuralism. Rhetorics of difference continue to rely on structuralism's version of immanent causality as diacritics. Contemporary theories of difference also protest too loudly their "post"-structuralism.

Conditions of emergence and transformation do not resemble conditions of being. In actual fact, becoming deformationally envelops being.³⁸ A gender, a race, an ethnicity, any particular given form of existence, misexpresses itself — misses its own movement — to the extent that it clings to its being. It is only by assenting to the becoming-other from which it emerged, and will inevitably return, that a form of existence attains its autonomy. It is only by assenting to not-be, transformationally, that a formation can effectively coincide with the force of its own expression. Rhetorics and politics of difference fall short of that creative self-cruelty of dynamogenic thought. That is their ineradicable conservatism.

If there is one thing that binds all of the essays in this volume together, it is an awareness of the need for a radicalized or "superior" empiricism, and a will to nudge cultural and literary theory past rhetorics and politics of difference

towards more experimental pragmatics of becoming. It should be borne in mind that it is not enough to think borders or in-betweens of existing subjects and objects to reach the dimension of change. And that combining and recombining already formed wholes or parts, however freely or artistically, or however critically and politically, is not enough to reaccess transformational process. Recombinant art or political practice is just reshuffling the cards that have already been dealt. One must sense and experience limits. Not just map borders. One must come to existential terms with the absolute contingency of what arrives out of nowhere, at the limit-state of being. Not just glibly "perform" clever combinations of what is already on the table. Throw the die of becoming. The one that lands in the sky and stays in the air instead of returning to the ground. Otherwise, you are left redealing the same old hand, and being redealt it in return.

Perhaps it is true, as Fadi Abou-Rihan writes, that when the hand reaches into the proverbial conceptual tool-box, all that it finds is another hand. Perhaps the "queered" hand only finds another fist in the anus. But if that is so, the hand that is found is in the process of drawing the hand that finds it (as in the Escher drawing invoked by Bains). Not a repetition of the same, but a becoming-together of the different as poles of a single process. Not the same? As different as left and right — and as singular as the two together. Ethico-aesthetic experimentation is not overly concerned with the "production of the subject." It is not overwhelmingly concerned with difference (it is immanently concerned with it). Ethico-aesthetic experimentation has to do with pulling the "subjectless subjectivity" of processual autonomy out of the conceptual toolbox. As Guattari never tired of saying, and this essay has just as tirelessly repeated, it is about expression as differential mutual emergence. Autopoiesis. Which, as Lichtenberg-Eitinger points out, is always co-poiesis.

So let us introduce ourselves by making the philosophical gesture of friendship: reach into your anus and take my hand.
Drusy.

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38 On the "fact" of sensation as deformational ("distorted" and "anti-illustrational"), see Bacon in Sylvester (30, 40-41, 59) and Deleuze (1981, 9-10).

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With the previous issue, Dr. Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek has stepped out of his editorial duties with the *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature / Revue Canadienne de Littérature Comparée*. The journal, the Canadian Comparative Literature Association / Association Canadienne de Littérature Comparée, our discipline, and I owe him a great debt for some ten years of indefatigable and vitally important service.

Beginning as a graduate assistant allocated to the journal by the Department of Comparative Literature at the University of Alberta, he became Assistant Editor and finally one of its two Associate Editors. For great stretches of time working on a voluntary basis, acting professionally, promptly and beyond the call of duty, he mastered and participated in all aspects of the journals activities: from the handling of most communications and much of the preparation of camera-ready copy, the greater part of preliminary copy-editing, and many other technical and professional chores, to editorial decisions about individual submissions, determination of assessors, and initiatives for and editing of thematic clusters and topical issues. The implementation of the transition of the journal's production from traditional to electronic means, a step which permitted its continued publication and even expansion, was largely his accomplishment.

Acquiring with time his own profile as an exceptionally productive and widely published scholar, and with this a growing number of academic contacts, the world over, with younger colleagues and representatives of other disciplines or alternative perspectives on literary and cultural studies, he contributed energetically to the enlargement of the ranks of our collaborators and the introduction of innovative approaches to our field.

While we seemed to agree most of the time about essentials concerning the *CRCL/RCLC* policies, and collaborated frequently in other scholarly endeavours small and large, we had also our differences of opinion and occasional disagreements about process and means. Possibly, this added creative tension to our relations and assured additional plurality of attitudes within the editorial team of the journal which is responsible for its daily operations. All friends of *CRCL/RCLC* and the discipline of Comparative Literature have reason to thank Dr. Tötösy and wish him well in his personal and professional life. My own gratitude goes beyond the words of this acknowledgement.

* * *

I would like to take this opportunity to indicate that, as a graduate assistant, Ms. Irene Sywenky has joined the operations of *CRCL/RCLC* since September 1996 and that she is increasingly participating, in addition to other occasional duties, in the electronic type setting and the preparation of the camera ready copy. This