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Cine-aesthetics: A Critique of Judgment after Deleuze and Michaux

Jay Hetrick

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jayhetrick@hotmail.com

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Cine-aesthetics: A Critique of Judgment after Deleuze and Michaux

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Introduction 9

1 What is the cinematic? 15

1.1 Introducing cine-aesthetics: Kant, Eisenstein, Deleuze 17

1.2 Towards a theory of the cinematic without film, Take I: From Deleuze to Agamben 49

1.3 Towards a theory of the cinematic without film, Take II: From Bellour to Michaux 74

1.4 Gesture and *pré-geste* in the art of Henri Michaux 87

2 *Aisthesis* in radical empiricism 115

2.1 Fechner's experimental aesthetics and psychophysics 117

2.2 Bergsonian intuition 131

2.3 Leibnizian *petites perceptions* 150

2.4 Michaux's visionary drawings 163

3 Cinematic *poiesis* and the power of the false 177

3.1 From *poiesis* to *techne* in Heidegger and Deleuze 179

3.2 Cinematic fabulation: Reframing Bergson and Nietzsche 195

3.3 Nomad art: Creating a new cinematic *plan* 215

3.4 Cinematic lines from Worringer to Michaux: The composition of figures 230

Appendix: Translated transcript of Henri Michaux's *Images du monde visionnaire* 248

Bibliography 250

Summary 260

Samenvatting 262

Introduction

This thesis will attempt to extract and reconstruct an aesthetic theory from — or, more correctly, *after* — the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze. We will argue that one of the first principles of such an aesthetics is the formula 'without judgment,' which should be read as a provocative declaration of distantiation from what is perhaps the founding text of European aesthetics: Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Judgment*. Deleuze states that, rather than offering a real *critique* of judgment, this text 'established a fantastic subjective tribunal.'[1] One of the philosophical problems with Kant's system is the ambiguity of the term 'aesthetics' which refers, on the one hand, to the science of *a priori* sensibility and, on the other, to the judgment of beauty and the creation of art through genius. For our purposes here, 'without judgment' points to a theory of aesthetics subtracted from the notion of beauty and, more generally, subtracted from the *power* of judgment that ultimately depends upon a transcendent Law. If we apply this formula to Kant's schema, aesthetics is immediately reduced to the sciences of sensation and creation. That is, it roughly corresponds to the ancient Greek concepts of *aisthesis* and *poiesis*. And if we consider seriously the often neglected second-half of Kant's third *Critique* — on the teleology of nature — as an important aspect for the study of aesthetics, we can add a third concept: *phusis*. *Phusis, aisthesis, poiesis*. This is, more or less, the framework the late Heidegger employs in schematizing his own musings on art; it is also the framework we will adopt here as we construct a post-Deleuzian aesthetics. Each of these concepts will inform, in sequence, one of the three chapters of this thesis.

The term 'cine-aesthetics' refers primarily to two further conditions of the aesthetic theory being drawn-out here. First is the observation that Deleuze's books on the philosophy of cinema actually thematize and put to work the most important concepts of his aesthetics. And they do this, more than any of his other considerations of the various arts — literature, theater, music, painting — in a way that comes the closest to forming a coherent system. So, while we will be analyzing all of Deleuze's writings on art and aesthetics, we will generally present our findings in the language of the cinematic. This points to the second condition of our post-Deleuzian aesthetics. We will argue that any contemporary aesthetics must be thought within the frame of the epistemic regime of art, and of thought more generally, that roughly defines the character of our current historical moment. In line with the original Greek *kinesis*, we will label this regime 'cinematic' since it might be best understood by the ways in which the concept of movement — as well as the related concepts of time and speed — has shifted over the past hundred years. The cinematic, as it will be used here, defines a trajectory of the avant-garde that directly, albeit in varying ways, responds to the problem of movement. In this

[1] Gilles Deleuze, 'To Have Done with Judgment' in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel Smith and Michael Greco (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), p. 126

sense, the cinematic does not necessarily refer to film *per se* but rather to a type of movement — which is indeed related to and, of course, includes the aesthetic qualities of cinema — that spans forms of art-making from late 19th century to the present day. Prominent examples of this trajectory would be the 'moving pictures' of Marey and Muybridge, the paintings of Italian Futurism, the Fluxart of Nam June Paik, and the recent new media art of Knowbotic Research. Despite the fact that, strictly speaking, film is arguably a *passé* cultural artifact, there is no doubt that since the late 19th-century the medium has irrevocably shaped the trajectory of the history of art in an ever-increasing way. The cinematic therefore points to the profound reciprocal effect cinema has had on the formal qualities of modern and contemporary art as well as to the very movement of its so-called dematerialization. That is, the cinematic is both a concept that might be helpful in describing the very nature of modern art *and* a manner in which we can map its historical progression. Ultimately, the cinematic offers a lens through which we can recast the last century of art history in a new light, dispensing with any traces of Romanticism as well as the easy anti-aesthetics of postmodernism. But, looking back from our current 'post-medium condition' — to borrow an important term from Rosalind Krauss — the question should be not simply 'What is the cinematic after film?' but rather 'What is the cinematic without film?'[2] The task of the first chapter will be to address this latter question. There have been properly metaphysical replies to this question that point to cinematic or kinematic conceptions of *phusis*, that is, to conceptions of nature that go beyond the worn-out logics of mechanism and teleology. In this regard, Gilles Deleuze and Bernard Stiegler have claimed, respectively, that the universe is a 'metacinema' and that life should be understood as 'always *already* cinema.'[3] While we touch upon this line of thought — which might be productively and more thoroughly developed by appealing to the ideas of Henri Bergson, Raymond Ruyer, and Francisco Varela — we will focus our attention on constructing a functional definition of the *nature of the cinematic* rather than a metaphysical idea of the cinematic in, or indeed as, nature.

The consonance between cine-aesthetics and synaesthetics is quite deliberate and points to our contention that cinematic art, following Deleuze, not only describes the simple movement of images; it necessarily provokes a movement *in the mind* as well. However, it should be noted from the outset that this cine-aesthetics has little in common with either the type of 'cinesthetic subject' Vivian Sobchack invokes in her book *Carnal Thoughts: Embodiment and the Moving Image* or the more banal uses of synaesthesia in some recent film criticism. Sobchack relies heavily upon Merleau-Ponty in order to develop a phenomenological aesthetics of filmic experience, which she describes as 'an embodied vision in-formed by the knowledge of the other senses.'[4] Instead, we will attempt to ground our own

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[2] On the notion of the 'post-medium condition,' see Rosalind Krauss, *A Voyage on the North Sea: Art in the Age of the Post-Medium Condition* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1999)

[3] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), p. 59. Bernard Stiegler, 'The Discrete Image' in Jacques Derrida and Bernard Stiegler, *Echographies of Television*, trans. Jennifer Bajorek (Cambridge: Polity, 2002), p. 162

[4] See, in particular, chapter three of Vivian Sobchack, *Carnal Thoughts: Embodiment and the Moving Image* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), p. 71

understanding of synaesthesia on a conception of sensation that pulses deeper than the Flesh and presents a violent affront to any configuration of phenomenological intentionality. This conception of sensation points to what Deleuze calls the 'being of the sensible,' which precedes both the subject and the work of art. As we shall see, he employs this concept in order to suture the two meanings of aesthetics as presented in Kant's system: 'the two senses of the aesthetic become one, to the point where the being of the sensible reveals itself in the work of art, while at the same time the work of art appears as experimentation.'[5] Although Deleuze connects *aisthesis* and *poiesis* under the 'onto-aesthetic' banner of the being of the sensible, we will deal these two registers separately.

In chapter two, we will analyze Deleuze's paradoxical-sounding formulation 'transcendental empiricism,' which proposes to be an alternative to Kant's transcendental idealism. A significant part of this transcendental empiricism involves a new conception of *aisthesis* based upon a particular reading of Bergsonian and Leibnizian intuition as well as Gustav Fechner's 'experimental aesthetics.' Although Deleuze doesn't explicate this theory of *aisthesis* in a systematic way, we will attempt to reconstruct it from various points throughout his work. What emerges is a non-Romantic theory of intuition — devoid of any pious overtones of Presence — that may be useful for analyzing cinematic art. In order to go beyond ideas concerning beauty, genius, and the 'faculty' of judgment — none of which are particularly tenable after late-19th century philosophy and aesthetics — we will develop a theory of *aisthesis* after Deleuze's transcendental empiricism. We consider this transcendental empiricism to be a particular manifestation of the minor lineage of 'radical empiricism' from William James forward, a tradition which combines ideas from Hume and Leibniz in a way completely *other* than that of Kant. Fechner's theory of experimental aesthetics 'from below,' which was posited in direct opposition to the speculative aesthetics of Idealism, will provide the basis for this Deleuzian theory of empirical *aisthesis*. Although Fechner inaugurates this trajectory of radical empiricism, he sometimes seems to naively disregard Kant by adopting the Platonic relation of *aisthesis* to pleasure and pain as well as the Wolffian relation of pleasure to beauty. Nonetheless, his work paves the way for other philosophers in this tradition who, to different degrees, take into consideration the Kantian intervention. Fechner's work, considered as a whole, helps us to re-define aesthetics as the radical-empirical science of *aisthesis*. His psychophysics was important for both the development of Bergson's theory of duration as well as James's conversion from positivist psychologist to a radical-empirical metaphysician. Bergson's *empirical* notion of intuition, which is grounded upon a concept of time beyond the normal Kantian coordinates, will be then posed against the Romantic obsession with 'intellectual intuition.' In the process, we will show the common ways in which Fechner and Bergson participate in the project of radical empiricism, despite the latter's critique of psychophysics. Finally, although not an empiricist by any standard, Salomon Maimon's post-Kantian reading of Leibniz will also be employed to this end. Radical, or transcendental, empiricism is ultimately interested in neither psychological sensation, nor

[5] Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 68

experience, including even aesthetic or religious experience. The real objects of this science of *aisthesis* are not judgments of beauty but psychophysical affects which touch the nervous system directly.

While the previous chapter offers a positive alternative to Kantian *aisthesis*, the third one will attempt to conceive of a post-Heideggarian *poiesis*. Although Heidegger was an insightful interpreter of Nietzsche, and indeed initiated a major current in Nietzsche studies, there is one very important way in which he consciously rejects the Nietzschian intervention in philosophy. This is Heidegger's adherence to a notion of truth, even though he radically rearticulates its significance. In this thesis, 'without judgment' means not only an aesthetics subtracted from the concept of beauty, but also from the Kantian Law — the categorical imperative — which, despite all of Kant's efforts to the contrary, compelled him to resurrect the *transcendent* truths or 'ideas' of World, Soul, and God as the postulates of practical reason. *Poiesis* for Heidegger means 'bringing forth.' It is the unconcealing of a world and, as such, is strongly associated with his conception of *Ereignis,* or the event. It is ultimately an event of truth, a line that Alain Badiou continues to develop more than half a century after Heidegger's 'The Origin of the Work of Art,' despite the *real* events actually taking place in the contemporary art world. Against Heidegger's and Badiou's retention of the category of truth for works of art, we will offer a more Nietzschean conception of *poiesis* as the fabulation or construction of the false. For Nietzsche, the whole structure Truth-Law-God has crumbled with the critique of metaphysics, leaving no transcendent Judge to assess the veracity of things. Art can no longer have a claim to truth, just as it can no longer be understood as opening a primarily *visual* world (*Ereignis* literally means 'to place before the eyes'). The creation of art is rather a power of the false that attempts to erase the cliches and habits of the status quo. The power of the false replaces Kant's 'power of judgment' (*Urteilskraft)* and allows for a completely different kind of ethics and politics than Kant's philosophy has allowed for. Despite the efforts of certain Romantics, who argue that pure art is adequate to the movements of nature, our conception of *poiesis* as power of the false shows that this can no longer be the case. At the very most, following Deleuze, *poiesis* might be described as more or less adequate to the movements of a certain 'slice of the 'chaosmos,' which is itself composed of the *false* movements of continuous differentiation.[6] But, ultimately, art can have no claim to truth, however you cut it.

Finally, each chapter will end with a consideration of the cinematic art of Henri Michaux. Although he only produced one film, Michaux often describes his entire *oeuvre* — whether poetry, prose, ink drawings, or *tachiste* paintings — as 'cinematic ... attempts to draw the flow of time.'[7] We will build upon this sentiment and attempt to show that Michaux's experimentation with different media was, in fact, motivated by the much larger aim of developing a cinematic art that adequately dealt with the problem of expressing time, speed, and movement, a problem which continues to define our historical moment according to philosophers like Paul Virilio and Bernard Stiegler. Ultimately, we will

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[6] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, trans. Graham Burchell and Hugh Tomlinson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 204

[7] Henri Michaux, 'To Draw the Flow of Time,' in *Untitled Passages*, ed. Catherine de Zegher (New York: The Drawing Center, 2000), p. 7

argue that Michaux's work displays the qualities of what we are calling here cine-aesthetics. And we will do so with the understanding that his work dramatizes certain of Deleuze's concepts as much as these concepts are themselves dramatizations of aesthetic issues Michaux was attempting to express. As we shall see, this is not a matter of *forcing* a radical immanence in the relation between art and philosophy. There is ample evidence that shows Deleuze was directly inspired by Michaux, whose name appears at crucial moments in Deleuze's philosophy from start to finish. Michaux will therefore be taken as Deleuze's equal in the explication of the ideas being drawn-out here and not simply as another artist who illustrates Deleuze's thought. That is, we will neither use Michaux's art to uncritically *explicate* philosophical concepts, nor will we impose these concepts in order to neatly *explain* the various works. Hopefully, this methodology will prove to be productive in teasing out the complex ways in which art and philosophy inform and problematize each other on the issue of cine-aesthetics. In Deleuze's own words, such an operation would not be 'a synthesis of art and philosophy' but rather an 'athleticism' of thought which installs itself 'within the very difference between them.'[8] At the end of *What is Philosophy?*, he posits three possible relations between art and philosophy. The first is an extrinsic one, which more or less follows the classical configuration of the philosophy *of* art: each discipline remains strictly within its own domain and a hierarchical or transcendent relation is established between them. The second is a kind of intrinsic relation where concepts or sensations are allowed to pass from one domain to the other — since they are no longer related hierarchically — but an absolute distinction between them is maintained. An example of this model would be Alain Badiou's 'inaesthetics.' Finally, in the last enigmatic sentences of this book, Deleuze explains that there is a third, albeit quite rare, relation in which each discipline encounters the other in a way that irrevocably changes its coordinates. This is possible because, at the level of the 'chaos' into which art and philosophy necessarily plunge — at the level of *pure thought*, which includes the production of philosophical concepts, scientific functions, and artistic figures — these distinct domains become 'indiscernible, as if they share the same shadow that extends itself across their different natures and constantly accompanies them.'[9] Throughout the course of this thesis, we will explore what this last relation might entail in practice. Ultimately, we hope to show that the same cinematic circuit — the same disjunctive line of thought — that connects *phusis*, *aisthesis*, and *poiesis* also potentially connects the movements between art and philosophy.

[8] Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?,* p. 67
[9] Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 218

1 What is the cinematic?

In each of the three chapters, the three aspects of the overarching cinematic line — the aspects of *phusis*, *aisthesis*, and *poiesis* — will themselves be refracted, like a prism, through the particular aspect under consideration. So, for example, in this chapter we will be discussing the nature, or *phusis*, of the cinematic without film. We will discover that, for Deleuze, the nature of the cinematic consists primarily of the three modes of perception-image, affection-image, and action-image. When we consider that, at the limit, the perception-image points to the Bergsonian universe of self-perceiving matter-in-movement — to the universe as 'metacinema' — the refractive structure of this chapter should become clear. As we attempt to answer the question 'What is the cinematic?', we discover that the aspects of *phusis*, *aisthesis*, and *poiesis* can in fact be refracted, or differentiated, into the modes of perception-image, affection-image, and action-image. Furthermore, this refraction will occur in a compounded fashion as we move successively from chapter to chapter such that the new modes or elements we discover will alter the prism through which later refractions will take place. The notion of the cinematic 'without film' refers to the fact that we will be considering in this chapter what a theoretical definition of the cinematic would be subtracted, as far as possible, from the problem of technics.

1.1 Introducing cine-aesthetics: Kant, Eisenstein, Deleuze

Deleuze's cinematic thought

> There's something strange about cinema. What strikes me is its unexpected ability to show not only action, but spiritual life as well (including aberrant actions). Spiritual life isn't dream or fantasy – which were always cinema's dead ends – but rather the domain of cold decision, of absolute obstinacy, of the choice of existence. How is it that cinema is so apt at excavating this spiritual life? … Cinema puts movement not only in the image; it also puts movement in the mind. Spiritual life is the movement of the mind [*La vie spirituelle, c'est le mouvement de l'esprit*].[1]

This somewhat enigmatic statement, given by Gilles Deleuze in an interview with *Cahiers du Cinéma* in 1986, sets up the problematic of this thesis. Far from confirming Deleuze's flirtation with the other-worldly elements of a vague mysticism — or worse, proving his alliance with the theophanic philosophies of Meister Eckhart, John Scottus Eriugena, and Ibn Arabi[2] — the power of cinema illustrates some of the most important ideas of Deleuze's fundamentally materialist and (transcendental) empiricist philosophical thought, which attempts to construct a non-Romantic, non-Hegelian, and non-phenomenological *sortie* from Kantianism. This particular quote highlights what we will call the 'cine-aesthetic' element of Deleuze's work that is indeed most clearly explicated in his *Cinema* books. But more expansively and importantly, it points to Deleuze's theory of aesthetics in general, which always involves a series of *kinematic* movements on a line that traces (1) a strange encounter with the universe of movement-images, which (2) fundamentally and irrevocably moves the mind, and subsequently (3) leads to the decisive and obstinate creation of aberrant actions. This circuit of cine-aesthetic movements — the individual moments of which we could name, with a half-nod to Martin Heidegger, *phusis*, *aisthesis,* and *poiesis* — represents a new relation, a non-organic or non-holistic 'broken, zig-zag line,' between the human and its world, which would give an entirely new significance to the term 'relational aesthetics.'[3] In the course of this thesis, these ideas will be explored at length. For now we should begin with a brief, if slightly reductive, summary of the standard view of Deleuze's film-philosophy.

In his work on cinema, Deleuze makes heavy use of Henri Bergson's ideas, particularly those put forth in *Matter and Memory,* a book which begins with the startling claim that matter is composed of images for which perception is an inherent function. For example, the analysis of what Deleuze will call the 'movement-images' that dominate classical — more or less pre-WWII — cinema depends upon this

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[1] Gilles Deleuze, 'The Brain is the Screen' in *Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews 1975-1995,* ed. David Lapoujade, trans. Ames Hodges and Mike Taormina (New York: Semiotexte, 2006), p. 283. Translation modified.

[2] This is the disingenuous and polemical charge of Peter Hallward in his otherwise erudite book, *Out of This World: Deleuze and the Philosophy of Creation* (London: Verso, 2006).

[3] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), p. 187. For a critique of relational aesthetics from the point of view of Deleuze's philosophy, see Éric Alliez, 'Capitalism and Schizophrenia and Consensus: On Relational Aesthetics' in *Verksted* 9 (2008), pp. 47-60

Bergsonian theory of perception. Bergson argues that organisms only perceive things in which they have a biological interest; perception involves a selection of biologically relevant images that are determined by possible action. For example, given the relatively limited biological functions of a tick, it is not necessary for it to have a visual capacity at all. In the case of all less-complex organisms, perception is part of a biologically determined 'sensory-motor schema' in which action is only a necessary response to things perceived, a kind of discharge of perceptual energy. However, alongside this biological determinism, conscious perception for Bergson has as its basis an impersonal, or 'pure,' perception that is a quality of matter-as-image itself. In a move that attempts to avoid the impasses of both strict materialism and idealism, Bergson describes matter as images in order to suggest that they have the immanent potential to be perceived by a mind, which is itself only a special type of image. In a world composed as an aggregate of images, it makes little sense 'to ask whether the universe exists only in our thought, or outside of our thought … this is to put the problem in terms that are insoluble, even if we suppose them to be intelligible.'[4] As Deleuze shows — by elucidating and dramatizing Bergson's theory of perception in and of images — at the apex of the cinema of the movement-image is Vertov's *kino-eye* as an eye in matter, which is itself composed of images. The *kino-eye* expresses an impersonal consciousness, subtracted from the biological restrictions of perception, that undergoes a continuous modulation amongst matter-images. Typically though, the cinema of the movement-image involves characters who behave more or less in accord with Bergson's sensory-motor schema, responding to situations in a way that gives rise to a smooth cause and effect narrative. This type of narrative, championed by the Hollywood of the 20s and 30s and which is depicted filmicly by the logical succession of shots, depicts time in its empirical form. Here time is made transparent since it is represented as the mere progression of events, the common sense notion of the forward *movement* of time in which we experience the present as the culmination of the past and the origin of the future. In this way, according to Deleuze, the cinema of the movement-image subordinates time to the montage of its empirical movement and therefore represents it indirectly.

In modern, or post-War cinema, there is a complete inversion of the time-movement relationship. Deleuze claims that this cinema, in effect, catches up with the history of philosophy, which since Kant has reversed this relationship and has made movement subordinate to time. 'Time *out of joint*, the door off its hinges, signifies the first great Kantian reversal: movement is now subordinated to time.… It is now not succession that defines time, but time that defines the parts of movement as successive inasmuch as they are determined within it.'[5] In modern cinema as in post-Kantian philosophy — so the argument goes — time is no longer merely empirical but transcendental in the Kantian sense: we have the direct presentation of 'the pure order of time.' The time-image makes perceptible relationships of time that are not reducible to the empirical present; it presents the co-existence of different durations, which are now unhinged from the rule of successive movement.

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[4] Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans. N.M. Paul and W.S. Palmer (New York: Zone Books, 1991), p. 25

[5] Gilles Deleuze, 'On Four Poetic Formulas that Might Summarize the Kantian Philosophy' in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel Smith and Michael Greco (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997, pp. 27-28

Deleuze says, 'what is in the present is whatever the image "represents," but not the image itself. The image itself is a bunch of temporal relations from which the present unfolds.... The image renders visible, and creative, temporal relations which cannot be reduced to the present.'[6] Instead of being determined by the logical or linear succession of events, time-off-its-hinges is presented as a force — of which succession is only one relation and the present is but one fragment — that is able to reveal several levels of time, or 'sheets of the past,' which coexist in a non-chronological order. This presentation of 'time as *force*' scrambles the planes of duration precisely because perception no longer evokes an action response but is instead redirected and wells-up within what Bergson and Deleuze call the virtual.[7] With the cinema of the time-image, the character becomes a *seer* insofar as he is able to rediscover 'all the levels, all the degrees of expansion and contraction that coexist in the virtual whole. As if he were capable of all the frenzies and brought about in himself successively everything that, elsewhere, can only be embodied in different species.… Durations that are inferior or superior to him are still internal to him.'[8] In the course of this thesis, we will unpack the philosophical significance of these difficult ideas, but for now we will simply continue with our summary of the direct presentation of time and its consequences for Bergson's sensory-motor schema.

The direct presentation of time short-circuits the sensory-motor apparatus and opens up a disjunctive gap or interstice — Bergson's 'zone of indetermination' — within the subject between what is seen and what is said, and it returns to us a brain that 'has lost its Euclidian coordinates.'[9] This disjunctive gap corresponds to a new method of cinematographic montage which utilizes irrational cutting to link two otherwise unrelated images. One good example of this technique of irrational cutting may be seen in Marguerite Duras' *India Song* for which the 'visual image will never show what the sound image utters.'[10] Thus, the direct presentation of time disrupts linear and properly narrative progression in favor of a disjunctive series of purely visual and sonic images; it also turns the character into a *seer* who no longer knows how to respond to the disconnected and raw visual and sonic situations that utterly confuse and outstrip her motor capacities. These dream-like sensory situations — what Deleuze refers to as *espacequelconques* or any-spaces-whatever — are empty and abandoned spaces in which the character no longer knows how to act

> such that he enters into flight, goes on a trip, comes and goes, vaguely indifferent to what happens to him, undecided as to what must be done. But he has gained in ability to see what he has lost in action or reaction: he SEES so that the viewer's problem becomes 'What is there to see in the image?' (and not now 'What are we going to see in the next image?').[11]

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[6] Deleuze, 'The Brain is the Screen' in *Two Regimes of Madness*, p. 290

[7] Gilles Deleuze, 'Occupy without Counting: Boulez, Proust, and Time' in *Two Regimes of Madness*, p. 298

[8] Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Zone Books, 1991), p. 107

[9] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 278

[10] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 279

[11] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 272. Interestingly, Deleuze suggests that new actors are needed — 'professional non-actors, or better, actor-mediums' — to portray this new situation, actors who are able to see rather than simply reply or follow a dialogue. Perhaps Werner Herzog's technique in *Heart of Glass* of hypnotizing the entire cast each day for the duration of the film would be exemplary in this regard.

Time as force releases both the image and the character from the laws of movement and reveals a visual and sonic situation that challenges us to expand our perception as well as our capacity to think. If the disjunctive interstice inserts an irrational cut or gap both between cinematic images as well as within Bergson's sensory-motor schema, this is because the crack of time makes impossible the smooth, linear progression of a time subordinated to movement and short-circuits simple habitual stimulus-response type behavior. The presentation of the transcendental form of time shocks us out of our habitual ways of acting and thinking. Replacing the linear interval with the disjunctive interstice corresponds to the opening up of a zone of indetermination in the mind and forces it to think outside of its habitual patterns. 'Thinking addresses itself to an outside that has no form. To think is to reach the non-stratified, the interstice.' When the interstice between what is seen and what is said is opened up, 'there is a liberation of forces which come from the outside and exist only in a mixed-up state of agitation, modification and mutation.'[12] The force of this 'outside' is precisely the shock inherent to the direct presentation of time.

If in the cinema of the movement-image the whole is an open totality that depends upon an indirect representation of time, in the time-image, the whole is the outside itself: a virtual crack that opens between images, an unbridgeable gap or interstice that dislocates these images and forces us to think beyond the habitual structure of stimulus-response. The outside, for Deleuze, is the differentiating force of the transcendental presentation of time that both demands and engenders a new type of thinking without image:

> The crack in time constitutes difference in thought; it distributes throughout itself an 'I' fractured by the abstract line [of the outside], a passive self produced by a groundlessness that it contemplates. It is this which engenders thought within thought, for thought thinks only by means of difference, around this point of ungrounding … the theory of thought is like painting: it needs that revolution which took art from representation to abstraction. This is the aim of a theory of thought without image.[13]

Thus when the sensory-motor whole is short-circuited by the crack of time, paralysis grips the 'I' since it is presented with something unbearable in the pure sensory situation, something unthinkable in thought. Between these two confrontations, vision is enhanced and thought becomes dislocated from itself. Now one *sees* better and more fully than one is able to react, that is, think. Antonin Artaud, on whom Deleuze relies for his analysis, says of the power of cinema:

> There is a sort of physical excitement which the rotation of the images communicates directly to the brain. The mind moves beyond the power of representation. This sort of virtual power of the images probes for hitherto unused possibilities in the depths of the mind. Essentially the cinema reveals a whole occult life with which it puts us directly into contact.[14]

For Deleuze, the figure of Artaud occupies the moment of this break in which the whole of the movement-image has been irrevocably fissured. Like Eisenstein, Artaud was interested in bringing cinema together with the innermost depths of the mind. But, for Artaud, the mind is not a unified

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[12] Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, trans. Sean Hand (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), p. 87
[13] Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 276
[14] Antonin Artaud, 'Cinema and Reality' in *Collected Works III*, trans. Victor Corti (London: Calder and Boyars, 1968), p. 66

whole capable of enveloping a singular intentionality. With the direct presentation of time, we have a mind that has been cracked and that testifies to the fact that 'we are not yet thinking;' and we have a *seer* that is paralyzed — like a mummy, zombie, or puppet — unable to act:

> Artaud believes in the cinema as long as he considers that it is essentially suited to reveal this powerlessness to think at the heart of thought. If we consider Artaud's actual scripts, the vampire in *32*, the madman in *La révolte du boucher*, and especially the suicide case in *Dix-huit secondes*, the hero 'has become incapable of achieving his thoughts,' 'he is reduced to only seeing a parade of images within him, an excess of contradictory images,' 'his mind has been stolen' … [The character] is no longer defined by the logical possibility of a thought which would formally deduce his ideas from each other because he has become the mummy, this dismantled, paralyzed, petrified, frozen instance which testifies to 'the impossibility of thinking that is thought.'[15]

But what exactly does it mean to be a *seer*, unable to think or to act in the same habitual ways? What exactly is this 'virtual power of images' that opens up 'hitherto unused possibilities in the depths of the mind' and allows a pure thought without image? Again, we will have to turn to Deleuze's use of Bergson and, in particular, his appropriation of Bergson for the concept of the 'crystal-image,' to answer these questions. The presentation of the transcendental structure of time — which we find in the cinema of the time-image as well as in Bergson's account of the experience of *déjà-vu* — reveals time as the indeterminable doubling of an actual, or empirical, present with the virtual, or transcendental, being of time itself. 'For the time-image to be born … the actual image must enter into relation with its own virtual image as such; from the outset pure description must divide in two, repeat itself take itself up again, fork, contradict itself. A crystal-image which is double-sided, mutual, both actual and virtual, must be constituted.'[16] With the presentation of these crystal-images, we no longer have sensory-motor images that extend into action, but more complex circuits between pure visual and sonic images and the depths of virtual time that — following Bergson's mechanism for attentive recognition — allow thought to well-up within 'deeper and deeper layers of reality and higher levels of memory.'[17] The character becomes a *seer* in the sense that her thoughts are no longer restricted to the stimulus-response type but enter the life of virtual time and *esprit*.

Virtual memory, or the pure past, is the *being* of time beyond phenomenological time. It is fundamentally different from the mere recollection of a former lived present and is thus a transcendental memory that works beyond the empirical or psychological experience of time. It is 'virtual' precisely to the extent that it has no psychological existence. Whereas actual memory is able to recall only those things that have already been seen, imagined, or thought, transcendental memory grasps that which can *only* be recalled. It is concerned not with a memory contingent on the functions of the other faculties, but with the being of a pure past and thus it reveals an ontology of the virtual that, according to Deleuze, must be presupposed by any adequate theory of time. In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze criticizes Kant for tracing the transcendental from the given, empirical mechanisms of psychological consciousness. He shows that in a *properly* transcendental memory 'forgetting is no

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[15] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 166
[16] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 273
[17] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 68

longer a contingent incapacity separating us from memory which is itself contingent: it exists within essential memory as though it were the "nth" power of memory with regard to its own limit or to that which can only be recalled.'[18] Transcendental memory presents itself as that aspect of time, which is normally occluded from consciousness. It enlarges our perception since it goes beyond the merely empirical to encounter times that are irreducible to the actual present. It is the virtual half of the transcendental structure of time — which is an indeterminate doubling of an actual moment with its virtual aspect — that is revealed in both the crystal-image as well as in the experience of *déjà-vu*, according to Bergson:

> Our actual existence, then, whilst it is unrolled in time, duplicates itself all along with a virtual existence, a mirror-image. Every moment of our life presents two aspects, it is actual and virtual, perception on one side and memory on the other. Each moment is split up as and when it is posited. Or rather, it consists in this very splitting, for the present moment, always going forward, fleeting limit between the immediate past which is no more and the immediate future which is not yet, would be a mere abstraction were it not the moving mirror which continually reflects perception as a memory.'[19]

Time, in its transcendental structure, is split by the present into two streams: into a present that passes towards a future and into the pasts that are preserved in virtual memory. Bergson shows that because the present does not simply succeed the past, which would then disappear without a trace, but rather coexists with the totality of the past, we can begin to understand the mechanisms of *déjà-vu*. The 'illusion' occurs because we believe that we are experiencing something we have already lived through. However, as Bergson argues, what really happens in *déjà-vu* is the presentation to consciousness of the transcendental structure of time as actual-and-virtual-doubling, which is normally hidden, or 'forgotten.' The fact that 'there is a recollection of the present, contemporaneous with the present itself, as closely coupled as a role to an actor' reveals itself to consciousness.[20] Deleuze argues that the cinema of the time-image — and specifically in films that exhibit crystal-images such as Herzog's *Heart of Glass* and Tarkovsky's *The Mirror* — presents viewers with the transcendental structure of time in precisely the same manner as Bergson's account of *déjà-vu*.[21] Thus, like *déjà-vu,* the cinema of the time-image 'seems to introduce into the mind certain new ways of feeling and thinking' because it presents to consciousness the non-chronological being of time as virtual memory.[22] It short-circuits the sensory-motor schema and reveals 'the powerful, non-organic Life' of *esprit*, 'the domain of cold decision.'[23] The direct presentation of time simultaneously paralyses the character and enhances vision since it

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[18] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 140

[19] Henri Bergson, 'Memory of the Present and False Recognition' in *Mind-Energy*, trans. H. Wildon Carr (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007), p. 132. The clear distinction presented here between actual/perception on one hand and virtual/memory on the other is misleading. Although not a problem for the current discussion or for Deleuze, who reserves the name 'virtual' for the being of memory, it should be noted that elsewhere Bergson also discusses virtual perception as a perception that is not biologically relevant and therefore does not surface into consciousness. See, for example, the first chapter of *Matter and Memory*.

[20] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 79

[21] For Deleuze's analysis of these films, see his *Cinema 2*, p. 76-77. Earlier in the text, he also shows how other types of cinematic images depict the virtual aspect of time, albeit in a more limited way.

[22] Bergson, 'Memory of the Present and False Recognition' in *Mind-Energy*, p. 121

[23] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 81

enables her to *see* better and more fully than she is able to react or think. It 'puts movement in the mind' precisely since it forces her to take a genuine leap into the recesses of the non-lived strata of time, which gradually assume some measure of psychological existence within the *seer*. It opens up empirical experience to the virtual aspects of *esprit* thus uncovering an entire 'spiritual life.'[24]

One of the main premises of the present thesis is that cinema dramatizes — albeit in a singular manner favored and adored by Deleuze — the idea of a *phenomenology of the encounter* that lies at the very core of his philosophical project and that can be traced from his early work on *Kant's Critical Philosophy* (1963) and *Proust and Signs* (1964) until his last collaboration with Félix Guattari entitled *What is Philosophy?* (1991). The power of cinema lies in its capacity to evoke genuine thought, in its ability to trace a line in which (1) an affective shock of pure visual and sonic images (2) opens up new durations which problematize subjectivity and (3) ultimately force thought to confront itself, revisiting and reframing Heidegger's question, 'What is called thinking?' As we shall see, this is not a phenomenology in the strict sense — a Phenomenology whose central tenant and philosophical ground is the intentional subject — since the thinking subject, or better thinking-subjectivation, is itself *produced* in an encounter.[25] Deleuze's conception of the encounter radicalizes Edmund Husserl's *epoché* in the sense that it doesn't simply bracket the structures of the habitual recognition of subjects and objects, but rather pushes these structures to the limit in a way that fundamentally and irrevocably problematizes them. The cognitive mechanism of this phenomenology of the encounter is systematized in Deleuze's magnum opus *Difference and Repetition*:

> Something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but of a fundamental *encounter*.... It may be grasped in a range of affective tones: wonder, love, hatred, suffering. In whichever tone, its primary characteristic is that it can only be sensed (the *sentiendum* or the being of the sensible [which Deleuze also signifies by the terms *'aisthēteon'* or 'sign']).... Sensibility, forced by the encounter to sense the *sentiendum,* forces memory in its turn to remember the *memorandum*, that which can only be recalled. Finally ... memory, in turn, forces thought to grasp that which can only be thought, the *cogitandum* or *noēteon*, the Essence: not the intelligible ... but the being of the intelligible as though this were both the final power of thought and the unthinkable. The violence of that which forces thought develops from the *sentiendum* to the *cogitandum*. Each faculty is unhinged, but what are the hinges if not the form of a common sense which causes all the faculties to function and converge?[26]

This mechanism that moves from the *sentiendum* to the *memorandum* to the *cogitandum* roughly maps onto the three-point schema described above as the power of cinema. Therefore, in order to fully understand Deleuze's cinematic thought, we need to further unpack this dense statement concerning the phenomenology of the encounter. Deleuze argues that the 'discordant accord' of the faculties of sensibility, memory, and thought in the encounter points to the fact that each is unhinged from common sense and is pushed to its respective 'transcendental' limit beyond the unifying capacity of

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[24] Deleuze, 'The Brain is the Screen' in *Two Regimes of Madness*, p. 283

[25] Perhaps 'pure experience' of the encounter would be a more accurate way to characterize Deleuze's position. We will come back to this notion of 'pure experience,' which comes from the later William James, in chapter 2. For more on the idea of the phenomenology of the encounter in Deleuze, see Levi Bryant, *Difference and Givenness: Deleuze's Transcendental Empiricism and the Ontology of Immanence* (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 2008).

[26] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, pp. 139-141

recognition.[27] It should be clear from this language that this mechanism is drawn from a rather eccentric reading of Kant's theory of the sublime. When Deleuze says that cinema opens us to the 'spiritual life' since it 'puts movement in the mind,' he should not be understood to be evoking some vague mysticism. Rather, he simply means that cinema has the capacity to open us to the possibility of real thought through a phenomenology of the encounter that is in some ways analogous to Kant's characterization of judgments of the sublime. In sublime experience, for Kant, 'the mind feels itself moved in the representation of the sublime in nature, while in the aesthetic judgment on the beautiful in nature it is in calm contemplation. This movement may be compared to a vibration.' Furthermore, Kant further claims, this *'movement of the mind'* in sublime experience evokes 'the *spiritual* feeling of respect for moral ideas.'[28]

Rethinking the Kantian sublime

For Deleuze, the discordant accord between the demands of reason and the powers of the imagination in sublime experience — the unbounded free play exercised in these faculties as each is pushed to its respective limit — is the greatest discovery of Kant's *Critique of Judgment*.[29] Despite the fact that this initial discord, which is marked by a sort of violence to the subject, is resolved by the intervention of a superior morality, it defines a moment in which Kant comes the closest to offering a *truly* transcendental exercise of the faculties. Deleuze argues that this is

> a precise moment within Kantianism, a furtive and explosive moment which is not even continued by Kant, much less by post-Kantianism. He introduces a kind of disequilibrium, a fissure or crack in the pure Self of the 'I think.' It matters little that synthetic identity — and following that, the morality of practical reason — restore the integrity of the self.… For a brief moment we enter into that schizophrenia in principle which characterizes the highest power of thought, and opens Being directly onto difference, despite all the mediations, all the reconciliations, of the concept.[30]

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[27] Given recent developments in neuroscience, it might be difficult to uphold any traditional theory of the faculties today. But Deleuze makes it clear that his schema is not meant to be reductive or definitive and suggests other possible 'faculties which would find their place in a complete doctrine' suggesting quite provocatively: 'the imagination — is there an *imaginandum*, a *phantasteon*, which would also be the limit, that which is impossible to imagine?; language — is there a *loquendum*, that which would be silence at the same time?; ... vitality, the transcendent object of which would include monstrosity; and sociability, the transcendent object of which would include anarchy — and even faculties yet to be discovered.' Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 143. The point is that Deleuze's concern here is ultimately 'not to establish such a doctrine of the faculties' but rather only 'to determine the nature of its requirements,' by which he means the 'properly transcendental' exercise of each capacity of cognition. *Ibid.*, p. 144. Deleuze's seemingly out-of-place inclusion of vitality and sociability in this list of faculties suggests that his view of cognition is consonant with the embodied and enactive theories of Evan Thompson and Alva Noë.

[28] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, trans. Paul Guyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 141, 211. My emphasis.

[29] Deleuze glosses the sublime experience in Kant as follows: 'The sublime brings the various faculties into play in such a manner that they struggle against each other like wrestlers, with one faculty pushing another to its maximum or limit, to which the second faculty reacts by pushing the first toward an inspiration it would not have had on its own. … In the first two *Critiques*, the dominant or fundamental faculty was able to make the other faculties enter into the closest possible harmonics with itself. But now, in an exercise of limits, the various faculties mutually produce the most remote harmonics in each other, so that they form essentially dissonant accords. The emancipation of dissonance, the discordant accord, is the greatest discovery of the *Critique of Judgment*.' Deleuze, 'On Four Poetic Formulas' in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 34

[30] Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 58

We will now attempt to show how Deleuze extends Kant's project from this 'furtive' moment to its proper transcendental limit — without collapsing back onto a presupposed, hierarchized, and transcendent theory of the faculties.

Deleuze's radical re-reading of Kant's project stretches it towards a 'superior' or 'transcendental' empiricism and, as a result, overcomes a fundamental dualism inherent to Kant's account of sensibility. In the 'Transcendental Aesthetic' of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant explains how the conditions of *possible* experience — the *a priori* forms of space and time — determine how 'objective' elements of sensation are presented within intuition. However, the *Critique of Judgment* describes how 'subjective' elements of sensation — the feelings of pleasure and pain — are reflections on *real* experience.[31] In contrast to this problematic split in Kant's theory of sensibility, Deleuze proposes a 'transcendental empiricism' in which we 'must look for the conditions not of possible experience, but of real experience. It is here that we find the lived reality of a sub-representative domain.'[32] This transcendental empiricism is how Deleuze attempts to avoid Kant's subject-object duality. In its place, he offers his own transcendental aesthetic of the 'imperceptible,' for which the conditions of experience are the *conditions of real experience*. We will map the coordinates of this transcendental aesthetic by discussing, first, the ground of experience as the transcendental genesis of the faculties and, then, how this genesis results from a real encounter with what Deleuze calls variously a 'being of the sensible,' a sign, or *aisthēteon*.

One of Deleuze's main criticisms of the first *Critique* is that, because Kant is too preoccupied with maintaining a hierarchy of the faculties, he merely repeats the philosophical *Urdoxa* — or what he more commonly calls the dogmatic 'image of thought' — that has, more or less, survived since the Greeks. Kant *uncritically* falls back onto a model of thinking that simply traces its conditions from the function of recognition. Recognition, from Plato to Kant, is a determining judgment for which the normal and empirical exercise of the faculties is more or less adequate. An object is recognized when each of the faculties apprehend different representations — sensible, imagined, rational, moral — as a supposed self-same object. Recognition presupposes the underlying agreement of the faculties which grounds and unifies the *cogito*. For Kant, this ground is 'common sense,' an *a priori* accord of the faculties under the legislation of a single the faculty, depending upon the task at hand. Deleuze explains that,

> for Kant as for Descartes, it is the identity of the Self in the 'I think' which grounds the harmony of all the faculties and their agreement on the form of a supposed same object. Recognition thus relies upon a subjective principle of collaboration of the faculties for 'everybody' — in other words, a common sense.[33]

But not only does Kant merely repeat the dogmatic image of thought by raising common sense to a proper philosophical concept; he actually creates three 'common senses,' given the interests of the

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[31] For the following, I am indebted to Daniel Smith's excellent article, 'Deleuze's Theory of Sensation' in *Deleuze: A Critical Reader*, ed. Paul Patton (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), pp. 29-56

[32] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 69

[33] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 133

faculties of understanding, reason, and judgment. However, as Deleuze points out, even though Kant needs a common sense to ground the universal communicability of aesthetic judgments, such judgments ultimately occur without a legislating faculty. In judgments of beauty and of the sublime, Kant explains that the imagination is freed from legislation by the understanding and reason, respectively. For Deleuze, this fact points to the possibility of a free and indeterminate accord amongst the faculties. More specifically, it points to an aesthetic 'common sense' — precisely *informed* by this free play rather than given *a priori* — that perhaps underlies the harmonious accord amongst the faculties that Kant simply assumes in his first two *Critiques*. The *Critique of Judgment* thus 'uncovers the *ground* presupposed by the other two critiques: a free agreement of the faculties.'[34] In Deleuze's reading of Kant, aesthetic common sense — which must be the indeterminate ground of all other common senses — is not given *a priori* but is informed by the free movement of the faculties in experiences of the beautiful and the sublime.

In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the relations between faculties are determined by the legislation of the understanding in the production of knowledge. Similarly, in the second *Critique*, they are legislated by reason according to a moral purpose. This already implies the possibility of a free and indeterminate movement of the faculties prior to any such legislation; if the faculties can form variable configurations depending on the distributions by different legislating faculties, they must in the first place be capable of their own free and indeterminate movement. This is what Kant discovers in the third *Critique*. The imagination is freed from its subjection to the understanding and reason, but it does not become a legislator in turn. Even though aesthetic judgment requires a common sense of its own, it no longer involves the function of recognition since the imagination does not distribute the faculties with respect to a self-same object. Instead, explains Deleuze,

> the signal it gives the other faculties is that each must become capable of free play on its own. In two respects, then, the *Critique of Judgment* releases us in a new element, which is something like a fundamental element: 1) a contingent agreement of sensible objects with all our faculties together, instead of a necessary submission to one of the faculties; 2) a free indeterminate harmony of the faculties among themselves, instead of a determinate harmony presided over by one of the faculties.[35]

We get a first glimpse of the unbound movement of the faculties in the 'Analytic of the Beautiful.' For Kant, an encounter with the beautiful is defined by a reflecting judgment that judges *without* a concept. It does not depend upon the kind of cognitive recognition involved in determining judgments in which a presented object is mentally subsumed under a given concept. Furthermore, aesthetic judgments must proceed *without* regard for any sensible content, that is, they must be 'disinterested' in such content. A judgment that proceeds without taking interest in sensible content and without a determining concept points precisely to a *free* imagination resonating with an *indeterminate* understanding. Thus, what we have in judgments of beauty is not the intellectual pleasure of

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[34] Gilles Deleuze, 'The Idea of Genesis in Kant's Aesthetics' in *Desert Islands and Other Texts*, ed. David Lapoujade, trans. Michael Taormina (New York: Semiotexte, 2004), p. 58

[35] Deleuze, 'The Idea of Genesis in Kant's Aesthetics' in *Desert Islands and Other Texts*, p. 59

recognition but rather one produced by nothing other than this free play of the imagination and understanding. This pleasure is universally communicable and characterizes the third common sense, *sensus communis aestheticus*, which points not to an objective accord of the faculties — 'that is, a subjection of objects to a dominant faculty which would simultaneously determine the role of the other faculties in relation to these objects'[36] — but rather to a pure, subjective, and spontaneous accord in which the imagination and understanding are both free to resonate as themselves. For Deleuze, since this free play defines an indeterminate agreement of the faculties prior to any legislation, it is the condition of every other distribution of the faculties. This is the 'furtive and explosive moment' in which Deleuze discovers in Kant the indeterminate ground of the 'Soul,' as the condition of both real experience and of every other common sense:

> The entire analytic of the beautiful has a precise objective: by analyzing the aesthetic judgment of the spectator, Kant uncovers the free agreement of the imagination and the understanding as a ground of the soul, a ground which the other two *Critiques* presuppose. This ground of the soul shows up in the area of a common sense that is more profound than any other.[37]

For Deleuze, this 'ground of the soul' must not be simply presupposed *a priori* but instead must be the object of a 'properly transcendental genesis.'[38] If in the 'Analytic of the Beautiful' Kant discovers the first instance of a free and indeterminate play of the faculties, it is not until the second book of the *Critique of Judgment* that this unbound movement is shown to be informed by a sublime encounter. In perhaps his most creative interpretation of the third *Critique*, Deleuze reads Kant's requirement to 'cultivate our moral ideas' — an imperative that becomes one of the conditions of sublime experience — precisely as this genesis.[39] For Deleuze, this genesis happens through an apprenticeship with 'signs,' which evoke encounters of a properly transcendental sort that have nothing to do with recognition or common sense.[40]

As we have already mentioned, Deleuze thinks Kant is too concerned with preserving a hierarchy of the faculties and presupposing the dogmatic image of thought to theorize a properly transcendental exercise of the faculties. Up to and including the 'Analytic of the Beautiful,' Kant has been content to create as many common senses as needed to account for the various interests of

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[36] Deleuze, 'The Idea of Genesis in Kant's Aesthetics' in *Desert Islands and Other Texts*, p. 49

[37] Deleuze, 'The Idea of Genesis in Kant's Aesthetics' in *Desert Islands and Other Texts*, p. 61

[38] Gilles Deleuze, *Kant's Critical Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), pp. 49-50

[39] Deleuze explains: 'The analytic of the sublime gives us a result that the analytic of the beautiful could not even conceive: in the case of the sublime, the agreement of the concerned faculties is the object of a genuine genesis. This explains why Kant recognizes that the sense of the sublime, contrary to the sense of the beautiful, is inseparable from a cultured viewpoint … not that the sublime involves some empirical and conventional culture; but the faculties which the sublime puts in play point to a genesis of their agreement within immediate discord. This is a transcendental genesis, and not an empirical culture.' Deleuze, 'The Idea of Genesis in Kant's Aesthetics' in *Desert Islands and Other Texts*, p. 63

[40] The concept of the sign is developed in Deleuze's book on Proust. 'To be sensitive to signs, to consider the world as an object to be deciphered, is doubtless a gift. But this gift risks remaining buried in us is we do not make the necessary encounters, and these encounters would remain ineffective if we failed to overcome certain stock notions.… We miss our finest encounters, we avoid the imperatives that emanate from them: to the exploration of encounters we have preferred the facility of recognitions.' Gilles Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, trans. Richard Howard (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), p. 27

thought. However, in the 'Analytic of the Sublime,' he hints towards a 'disjunctive' theory of the faculties, to a 'discordant accord' between reason and the imagination, which is fundamentally unbound from the functions of both recognition *and* common sense:

> The transcendental operation of the faculties is a properly paradoxical operation, opposed to their exercise under the rule of common sense. In consequence, the harmony between the faculties can appear only in the form of a discordant harmony, since each communicates to the other only the violence which confronts it with its own difference and its divergence from the others. Kant was the first to provide the example of such a discordant harmony, the relation between imagination and thought which occurs in the case of the sublime.[41]

In an encounter with something incredibly large in nature, the imagination struggles and is driven by the demands of reason to apprehend this object as a single image. However, the demands of reason are too great for the imagination, which is then pushed to its functional limit and overwhelmed. This failure of the imagination exhibits the inadequacy of the imagination in the face of the laws of reason, but also the propriety of the imagination's *respect* for these laws. That is, in its attempt to intuit the object, the imagination both obeys the demands of reason and demonstrates reason's ultimate superiority to it. The initial struggle of the imagination — which is experienced as a sort of unbearable disturbance of the mental capacities — is thus overcome by a pleasurable feeling akin to respect. This, of course, is Kant's version of the cognitive mechanism involved in sublime experience.

Although the second stage of sublime experience falls back onto the model of Kant's transcendental subject with reason standing at its glorious helm, for Deleuze the cognitive structure of the sublime offers a glimpse into a disjunctive theory of the faculties in which reason and the imagination are pushed to their individual and properly transcendental limits. Here, neither recognition nor common sense direct the faculties onto a presumed self-same object. Instead we have only the free and unbound movement of the faculties, which are forced to take their own transcendental limit as object. Thus, for example, reason discovers its ideas which, at the limit, can *only* be thought. In turn, the imagination confronts its own limit and discovers the 'unpresentable' within nature. As Deleuze explains, it 'frees itself from the constraints of the understanding and enters into an agreement with reason to discover what the understanding had kept hidden, namely the supersensible destination of imagination, which is also like its transcendental origin.'[42] From an empirical point of view, this 'origin' would simply be the unimaginable. But from a properly transcendental point of view, it is that which can *only* be imagined. In this transcendental exercise of the faculties, each encounters the limit-object immanent to its own domain and not — as in the recognition model — an empirical object that is accessible to all the faculties. Thus we have

> a primeval free imagination that cannot be satisfied with schematizing under the constraints of the understanding; a primeval unlimited understanding that does not yet bend under the speculative weight of its determinate concepts, no more so than it is not already subjected to the ends of practical reason; a primeval reason that has not yet developed a taste for commanding, but which frees itself when it frees up the other faculties.[43]

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[41] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 146
[42] Deleuze, 'The Idea of Genesis in Kant's Aesthetics' in *Desert Islands and Other Texts*, p. 63
[43] Deleuze, 'The Idea of Genesis in Kant's Aesthetics' in *Desert Islands and Other Texts*, p. 69

For Deleuze, this moment in Kant offers the possibility of challenging the dogmatic image of thought in favor of a theory of the 'encounter' that stirs the soul even as it is engendered. Here, not only is each faculty forced to confront its own transcendental limit; this force is violently transmitted, in sequence, from one faculty to the next. For Deleuze, this discovery of the 'Analytic of the Sublime' completely annuls the possibility that there could be a common sense that harmoniously unifies all the faculties *a priori*. 'The imagination-reason accord is not simply assumed: it is genuinely engendered … this is why the common sense which corresponds to the feeling of the sublime is inseparable from a 'culture,' as the movement of its genesis.'[44] With this, Deleuze shows that the transcendental ground of subjectivity — 'the life-giving principle that animates each faculty'[45] — although it is presupposed in Kant's first two *Critiques* as the condition of possibility for the normal functioning of the faculties, is in fact informed by the unbound and transcendental movement of the faculties. Furthermore, this movement is first evoked by 'imperceptible' forces, or signs, that are completely foreign to the subject. In Deleuze's transcendental *empiricism* — as it is inspired from Kant's theory of the sublime — the different distributions of the faculties we find in the first and second *Critiques* are conditioned not by any *a priori* capacity to think, but rather by an encounter between the faculty of sensibility and the imperceptible [*insensible*]:

> What forces us to think is the sign. The sign is the object of an encounter, but it is precisely the contingency of the encounter that guarantees the necessity of what it leads us to think. The act of thinking does not proceed from a simple natural possibility; on the contrary, it is the only true creation. Creation is the genesis of the act of thinking within thought itself. This genesis implicates something that does violence to thought, which wrests it from its natural stupor and its merely abstract possibilities.… Creation, like the genesis of the act of thinking, always starts from signs.[46]

There is a point of similarity between Deleuze's sign and Kant's sublime object: both commit a violence to the subject and stir the soul out of its complacency. However, for Kant, the experience of the sublime happens through the imagination; it is the result of a failed *representation* of a vast object and, as such, the feeling produced is radically subjective even though it is universally communicable. For Deleuze, a sign is neither the form of an object represented in the imagination, nor even a pure sensible being, but rather what he calls the 'being of the sensible,' which is genetically prior to both the subject and the object and which is only apprehended in the transcendental exercise of the faculty of sensibility.[47] While Deleuze labels the object of a simple recognition an *aisthēton*, he calls the

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[44] Deleuze, *Kant's Critical Philosophy*, p. 51

[45] Deleuze, 'The Idea of Genesis in Kant's Aesthetics' in *Desert Islands and Other Texts*, p. 69

[46] Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, pp. 97-98. Or again: 'The violence of that which forces thought develops from the *sentiendum* to the *cogitandum*. Each faculty is unhinged, but what are the hinges if not the form of a common sense which causes all that faculties to function and converge? … Rather than all the faculties converging and contributing to a common project of recognizing an object, we see divergent projects in which, with regard to what concerns it essentially, each faculty is in the presence of that which is its "own." Discord of the faculties, chain of force and fuse along which each confronts its [transcendental] limit, receiving from (or communicating to) the other only a violence which brings it face to face with its own element, as though with its disappearance or its perfection.' Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 141

[47] 'Yet what else is there except the object and the subject? … a world, a spiritual milieu populated by essences … which transcend the states of subjectivity no less than the properties of the object.' Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, p. 38

imperceptible element of an encounter an *aisthēteon*, which carries in Greek the more imperative sense of 'must be perceived.' A pure sensible encounter is not an encounter with a recognizable object but rather an encounter with 'something perceptible' only to the faculty of sensibility in its transcendental exercise. In this sense, the *aisthēteon* remains undetermined and is an element of pure difference in itself. It is imperceptible to empirical perception but may be intuited by a sensibility that has ceased to be representational and has become adequate to real experience. This 'transcendental empiricism' is the way Deleuze avoids tracing the transcendental from the mere conditions of possible experience. From a purely empirical point of view — but also in Kant's system, which Deleuze considers to be simply drawn from this view — the sign is imperceptible, but not because it is too small or large to be physically perceived. Rather, it is imperceptible with respect to the function of recognition, in which sensibility can only grasp that which can also be grasped by the other faculties. The sign is 'an intensity that is both the insensible and that which can only be sensed.'[48] It is accessible *only* to a transcendental sensibility; it is that which can only be sensed by an unbound and free faculty of sensibility that has been pushed to its own limit. The imperceptible sign thus points to a pure aesthetic at the very limits of perception, a transcendental aesthetic beyond the *Urdoxa* of common sense and recognition, for which the conditions of experience are the 'genetic conditions' of *real* experience.

It is by touching this realm of the imperceptible, Deleuze claims, that one becomes a non-mystical *seer* of pure visual or sonic situations, becomes-*voyant* and acquires a second sight. Elsewhere he clarifies this vision through the lens of Spinoza's *Ethics*:

> The third eye enables one to see life beyond all false appearances, passions, and deaths. The ascetic virtues — humility, poverty, chastity — are required for this kind of vision, no longer as virtues that mutilate life, but as powers that penetrate it and become one with it.… This is what Spinoza calls nature: a life no longer lived on the basis of need, in terms of means and ends, but according to production, a productivity, a potency.[49]

In the shock to thought, instead of falling back onto given ideas of morality or from remaining in a state of petrified catatonia — we must find a way of moving beyond the Artaudian moment without returning to Kant — the encounter with signs forces one to see, to think, and to *create*. Furthermore, this new vision cultivated through the 'third eye' has, again, absolutely nothing to do with mysticism. Rather, Deleuze means something quite specific and technical by this term: it refers to the emergence of a synaesthetic, or haptic, vision within the *seer*.[50]

A world after judgment: The cinematic from Eisenstein to Artaud and beyond

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[48] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 320

[49] Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, trans. Robert Hurley (San Francisco: City Lights, 1988), pp. 14, 3

[50] 'I say the *third* eye because it is not in the brain as such. It is in the nervous system, I mean, in the middle of the other two.... We have two eyes for optical vision. But the third? It's a third, haptic eye.' Gilles Deleuze, 'La peinture et la question des concepts: Cours du 19/05/81' online at http://www2.univ-paris8.fr/deleuze/article.php3?id_article=60. Or again, 'This is the formation of a third eye, a haptic eye, a haptic vision of the eye, a new clarity. It is as if the duality of the tactile and the optical were surpassed visually in this haptic function.' Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, trans. Daniel Smith (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), p. 129

In one of the most important chapters of his *Cinema* books — 'Thought and Cinema,' towards the end of the second volume — Deleuze discusses in detail the relation between cinema and the sublime. This discussion connects to his analysis in *The Movement-Image* of three types of montage techniques that exhibit sublime tendencies. In this earlier text, Deleuze claims that Russian Constructivist montage relies upon a 'dialectical' conception of the sublime, while the montage techniques of the French Impressionists and German Expressionists are grounded upon, following Kant's schema, the mathematical and dynamic sublime, respectively. We will not rehearse the entirety of this complex and speculative line of thought, but will rather focus upon Deleuze's use of Constructivism and of Sergei Eisenstein's cinema more specifically. A crucial point to bear in mind here is that Deleuze offers very little in terms of concrete examples of montage techniques *per se* and seems to be much more engaged with maintaining the idea that these techniques are always guided by a preconceived notion of the 'open whole,' that is, of nature and our connection to it. Eisenstein's cinema is remarkable since it both stands in 'for classical cinema, the cinema of the movement-image, in general' and describes most clearly how this cinema conceives of an encounter with the whole that provokes thought.[51]

Deleuze states very clearly that, on a theoretical level, montage is compositional device that manifests a particular 'determination of the whole.'[52] So, for example, most mainstream Hollywood films from D.W. Griffith onward exhibit an 'organic' narrative and temporal structure that follows from certain montage techniques, which are themselves grounded upon a conception of the whole as 'an organization, an organism, a great organic unity.'[53] The dialectical tendency of Eisenstein's understanding of montage in some ways builds upon, in an oppositional way, the work of Griffith, whom Eisenstein praises as a 'master of parallel montage.' Eisenstein claims that Griffith's formal alternations between parallel plots mirrors an uncritical acceptance of the dualistic social demarcation between rich and poor: 'Montage thinking is inseparable from the general content of thinking as a whole. The structure that is reflected in the concept of Griffith montage is the structure of bourgeois society ... our concept of montage had to be born from an entirely different "image" of an understanding of phenomena, which was opened to us by a world-view both monistic and dialectic.'[54] While Griffith's technique relies heavily upon increasing the *tempo* between a 'successive mechanical alternation of cross-cuts' that maintains a dualistic world-view, Eisenstein's 'relentlessly affective' technique of dialectical *rhythm* presupposes 'an organic unity' within which 'the play of inner contradictions' is expressed.[55] As we can see, Eisenstein calls his own method and world-view 'organic,' potentially confusing Deleuze's schema. But Deleuze's position is that both Griffith and Eisenstein adopt an organic approach to montage. The difference is that, whereas the former uncritically conceives of the whole as given, the latter conceives of it as something that must be constructed in a

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[51] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 157
[52] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), p. 29
[53] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 30
[54] Sergei Eisenstein, *Film Form*, trans. Jay Leyda (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1949), pp. 234-235
[55] Eisenstein, *Film Form*, p. 235

dialectical process. Interestingly, Eisenstein relates this dialectical process to organic growth: 'The shot is a montage *cell*. Just as cells in their division form a phenomenon of another order, the organism or embryo, so, on the other side of the dialectical leap from the shot, there is montage.'[56] Yet we should not follow Eisenstein's biological metaphor too closely since this growth should be understood not as the simple division of individual cells, or shots, but through their juxtaposition, that is, as a conflict or collision of opposites that generates a higher synthesis comprising the organic unity of the work. The fundamental difference between Griffith and Eisenstein lies not in the mere idea of an organic whole, but in their particular logics of relations within this whole that, by extension, also determine our relation to it. For Eisenstein, this involves a conception of 'montage as *collision*. A view that from the collision of two given factors *arises* a concept.'[57] It is also a view that ultimately rests upon a particular idea of *phusis*, or nature, that for all its disjunctive leaps 'from quantity to quality' is still 'non-indifferent' to our all-too-human purposes.[58]

The essence of cinema lies not in images, but in the relations amongst images, that is, in the type of *movement* that is put to work in and between them. And, for Eisenstein and Deleuze, the type of movement employed depends upon a conception of the whole. In his *Nonindifferent Nature*, Eisenstein regards the Golden Section as the principle of organic structure and growth that lies behind all natural organisms as well as great works of art:

> The Golden Section is the most perfect mathematical image of the unity of the Whole and its parts ... the image of the principle of evolution in general which is in accord with the actual growth of natural phenomena.... The structure of a work whose proportions are combined according to the Golden Section has extremely exceptional effective influence in art for it creates a sense of maximum organic unity. The finest monuments of Greece and the Renaissance were built in accordance with this principle. The composition of the most interesting paintings are impregnated by it.[59]

Furthermore, he specifically relates this organic growth to *dialectical* movement:

> Obviously, this is the maximally accessible approximation of a mathematical scheme to that condition of organic unity of the Whole and its parts in nature as Hegel defined it in those pages of the 'Encyclopedia' with which Engels operates in *The Dialectic of Nature*.[60]

The Golden Section — the mathematical ratio of which is often illustrated with the logarithmic spiral of a nautilus shell — offers a conception of organic structure and growth in nature that has served as an ideal model for the arts since at least the construction of the Great Pyramid of Giza. Eisenstein is drawn to it as a formal cinematic principle because it allows internal parts to be unequal — and therefore potentially unstable, allowing for moments of tension and collision — while maintaining global relations that are fundamentally harmonious. He goes into detailed analyses showing how his own *Battleship Potemkin* should be seen as such an organic whole, which contains a series of nested parts that adhere to the principle of the Golden Section, from the composition of individual shots, to the

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[56] Eisenstein, *Film Form*, p. 37
[57] Eisenstein, *Film Form*, p. 37
[58] Sergei Eisenstein, *Nonindifferent Nature*, trans. Herbert Marshall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 35
[59] Eisenstein, *Nonindifferent Nature*, pp. 18-19
[60] Eisenstein, *Nonindifferent Nature*, p. 18

rhythm of particular sequences — most notably the Odessa Steps sequence — to the partitioning of the entire film into five unequal parts. He quite confidently claims that *Battleship Potemkin,* 'empirically well known for the "organic unity" of its structure, is completely constructed according to the law of the Golden Section.'[61]

But this is not an organic whole that is given, or presupposed; it must be constructed with each turn of the spiral, as we take a logarithmic or qualitative leap into 'a phenomenon of another order.' For Eisenstein, the whole is an assemblage of potentially colliding parts that — when they are forced to confront each other through the power of dialectical montage — give rise to an affective shock in the viewer. *Pathos* is Eisenstein's term for the subjective experience of this confrontation between shots. Collision 'is the source of both the structure of a complex production as well as of any structure of *pathos* — one might say that a structure of *pathos* is that which compels us, in repeating its course, *to experience the moments of culmination and becoming* of the norms of dialectic *processes*.'[62] The movement of nature, which must be reproduced in great cinematic works, proceeds not by the linear concatenation of otherwise inert parts, as depicted in Griffith's films, but through the 'explosive' unfolding of dynamic internal tensions between them that produces a fundamental change in quality. In art, this also produces a fundamental change in the state of the spectator: *'Pathos* is what forces the viewer to jump out of his seat. It is what forces him to flee from his place. It is what forces him to clap, to cry out. It is what forces his eyes to gleam with ecstasy before tears of ecstasy appear in them. In word, it is everything that forces the viewer to "be beside himself."'[63] This is a conception of the whole informed by a dialectical continuity of organic growth that *includes* sublime moments of radical discontinuity. Deleuze says that Eisenstein replaces Griffith's parallel montage of 'differentiated parts' that condones class divisions with a dialectical montage of 'qualitative leaps,' which constructs an organic whole that promotes collective action:

> It is no longer a case of the formation and progression of the oppositions themselves, following the twists of the spiral, but of the transition from one opposite to the other, or rather into the other, alongs the spans: the leap into the opposite.... And if it includes a subjectivity, it is in the sense that consciousness is also a passage into a new dimension, a raising to the power two. Consciousness is the pathetic, the transition from Nature to man and the quality which is born from the transition which has been accomplished. It is at once the dawn of consciousness and consciousness attained, revolutionary consciousness attained.[64]

Deleuze explicitly categorizes these moments of affective collision as versions of sublime experience, in the sense that they engender affects and concepts within a subject. But it is important to note that, more fundamentally, 'there is a shock of images between themselves ... the shock is the very form of communication of movement in images.'[65] That is, Deleuze sees in Eisenstein a conception of nature, or *phusis,* that grounds his entire film theory in a way reminiscent of Deleuze's own Bergsonian

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[61] Eisenstein, *Nonindifferent Nature*, p. 22
[62] Eisenstein, *Nonindifferent Nature*, p. 35
[63] Eisenstein, *Nonindifferent Nature*, p. 27
[64] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, pp. 35-36
[65] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 157

characterization of 'the universe as cinema in itself, a metacinema.'[66] The shock between images can be understood in the way objects more generally interact in the world, colliding with each other in order to create, communicate, and destroy: a vision of the world as a huge billiard-ball table. The affective shock should be understood as just another, albeit special, instance of collision. In our encounter with the film screen, in Deleuze's reading of Eisenstein, these sublime moments of affective shock are the measure of what counts as good cinema. This cinema does not merely illustrate the happenings of the world but, more importantly, expresses its very processes of movement: dialectical cinema instigates a shock in the viewer that produces a change in affective state.

Cinematic art, for Eisenstein, produces a '*total* provocation of the human brain,' a *'totally physiological sensation*' of pure optical and sonic images that carry an affective charge:

> For the musical overtone (a throb) it is not strictly fitting to say: 'I hear.'
> Nor for the visual overtone: 'I see.'
> For both, a new uniform formula must enter our vocabulary: 'I feel.'[67]

And, as we have seen, 'from this collision of two given factors *arises* a concept.'[68] Therefore, dialectical montage necessarily gives rise to a movement from image to thought or, in Deleuze's phenomenology of the encounter, from sensation (including percepts and affects) to cognition:

> The dialectic of works of art is built upon a most curious 'dual-unity.' The affectiveness of a work of art is built upon the fact that there takes place in it a dual process: an impetuous progressive rise along the lines of the highest explicit steps of consciousness and a simultaneous penetration by means of the structure of the form into the layers of profoundest sensual thinking. The polar separation of these two lines of flow creates that remarkable tension of unity of form and content characteristic of true artworks.[69]

But the concept engendered in this collision, despite the 'remarkable tension' of individually explosive shots, must ultimately reinforce the organic totality of the whole, which itself corresponds to the 'unity' of the work that subsumes these otherwise disjunctive parts. In Deleuze's reading, dialectic montage instigates a shock that 'has an effect on the spirit, it forces it to think, and to think the whole. The whole can only be thought:'

> It does not follow like a logical effect, analytically, but synthetically as the dynamic effect of images 'on the whole cortex.' Thus it relies on montage, although it follows from the image: it is not a sum, but a product, a unity of a higher order. The whole is the organic totality which presents itself by opposing and overcoming its own parts, and which is constructed like the great spiral in accordance with the laws of dialectic. The whole is the concept.... The cinematic image must have a shock effect on thought and force thought to think itself as much as thinking the whole. This is the very definition of the sublime.[70]

Although Eisenstein's dialectic montage doesn't map neatly onto Kant's schema for the experience of the sublime, there are enough similarities to warrant this statement. Most importantly, percepts and

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[66] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 59. We will come back to Deleuze's own conception of the *phusis* of movement-images in the next chapter.
[67] Eisenstein, *Film Form*, pp. 21, 70-71
[68] Eisenstein, *Film Form*, p. 37
[69] Eisenstein, *Film Form*, p. 144-145
[70] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 158

affects provoke thought to think that which can only be thought — the *cogitandum* — which in this case is the idea of the whole.

For Kant, sublime judgments commit a kind of violence — indicated by a discordant 'mental movement' — to the subject and present a nature that is, initially, out of step with the purpose of our faculties. Therefore, one is 'incited to abandon sensibility and to occupy itself with ideas that contain higher purposiveness.'[71] The sublime does not, properly speaking, refer to objects in nature except insofar as they engage our cognitive faculties and suggest to us a purposiveness independent of nature, a subjective purposiveness that is consistent with the highest purposes of reason. This second stage of sublime experience thus collapses back onto the model of Kant's transcendental subject in which reason stands at the hierarchical and teleological apex. This means that judgments of the sublime ultimately depend upon a *transcendent* idea of the world which — despite Kant's dismissal of this type of idea in the *Critique of Pure Reason* as a metaphysical aporia — was resurrected in the second *Critique* and given a practical determination. Although nature is first felt as contrapurposive with respect to our will and our ability to act in the face of enormous power, sublime experience simultaneously causes us to feel within ourselves 'something that elevates the soul.'[72] Kant claims that our fear, and subsequent 'outraged' will, leads the supersensible aspect of our being to disclose its idea of freedom, which entails our complete independence from and superiority to nature. This freedom is by definition that within us which is transcendent to nature and our sensible being. It is the ground for moral action since absolute freedom from the natural law allows us to act rationally in accordance with the moral law. The sublime ultimately exhibits the transcendent aspect of our humanity: our supersensible and rational being, which is capable of demonstrating a 'totality' beyond all natural objects as well as a 'freedom' beyond nature's laws. Therefore, in the face of tremendous power in nature we ultimately recognize in ourselves a supersensible being over which the forces of nature, no matter how mighty, have no dominance. Properly speaking then, the idea of freedom, along with its consequences for moral law, is what we experience as sublime. And freedom, which Kant defines as the ground of morality in the *Critique of Practical Reason* as well as the second part of the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, itself implies the transcendent idea of a supersensible world independent of any sensible condition. While Eisenstein is obviously not so elaborate, Deleuze sees in his own idea of the whole traces of Kant's transcendent idea of the world. And we should note here that nature in Kant's vocabulary is simply the world 'considered as a dynamical whole.'[73] The problem lies in Eisenstein's belief in a conception of the world as an organic whole that must be replicated through cinematic art. 'The organic unity of a work ... arises when the law of the construction of this work corresponds to the laws of *the structure of organic phenomena of Nature.*'[74] Furthermore, dialectical montage is ultimately an 'intellectual cinema' in

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[71] Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, p. 129
[72] Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, p. 145
[73] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, ed. and trans. Paul Guyer and Allen Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 466
[74] Eisenstein, *Nonindifferent Nature*, p. 11

the sense that the pathos of collision is forced towards a higher unity in a concept or, more precisely, in an idea.[75] Similarly to Kant's sublime, there is a dialectical teleology in Eisenstein that pushes thought and art to converge upon a transcendent idea of reason, namely that of the whole of nature. The main difference between Kant and Eisenstein is that, while the former resolves the tension of the initial shock of the sublime with the idea of freedom, and in the transcendental subject more generally, the latter resolves it by collapsing onto an idea of *beautiful* nature that is ultimately purposive to our faculties. Thus, in *Battleship Potemkin*, while the dialectical strife of the Odessa Steps sequence reaches its climax in the development of a mass revolutionary consciousness, this movement is fundamentally grounded upon the harmonious 'visual music' of the Odessa Mist sequence that established the organic connections between human and human, between human and world in the first place. That is, despite Eisenstein's claim that the organic whole must be constructed dialectically, it is also *presupposed* as the ground of all such dialectical movement. As Deleuze says, 'in the sublime there is a sensory-motor unity of nature and man, which means that nature must be first named *the non-indifferent*.'[76]

For Deleuze, 'without judgment' means precisely conceiving this movement from the *sentiendum* to the *cogitandum* without recourse to *any* transcendent law, whether this be the moral law in Kant or the natural law in Eisenstein. 'This is the essential effect of judgment: existence is cut into lots, the affects are distributed into lots, and then related to higher forms.'[77] Ideas of freedom or of the whole cannot be called upon to retroactively compensate for and attempt to placate the initial disjunctive unease of sublime experience. Thought must be pushed to its own limit, which does not reside in the power of judgment. As we have seen, a determining judgment occurs when we theoretically subsume a presented object under a concept. In reflecting judgments of the sublime, no concept is given or created, which accounts for the initial 'discordant accord' of the faculties. However, in order to maintain the consistency of his *Critical* project, Kant needs to move beyond this 'furtive moment' by sublimating it into the idea of freedom in the second stage of sublime experience. We could say that — despite Kant's insistence that, in this regard, 'the theory of the sublime is a mere appendix to aesthetic judging'[78] — in this second stage a higher order of *judgment* takes place: subsuming, or reigning in, the discordant movement of the faculties under a transcendent idea of reason. This is where Deleuze parts with Kant and Eisenstein in favor of Artaud for his description of the time-image, in which thought is pushed to its own limit.

> In spite of a superficial similarity of words, there is an absolute opposition between Artaud's project and a conception such as Eisenstein's. It is indeed a matter, as Artaud puts it, 'of bringing cinema together with the innermost reality of the brain,' but this innermost reality is not the whole, but on the contrary a fissure, a crack.... The sensory-motor break makes man a *seer* who finds himself struck by something intolerable in the world, and confronted by something unthinkable in thought.[79]

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[75] Eisenstein, *Film Form*, p. 30
[76] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 162
[77] Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 129
[78] Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, p. 130
[79] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 169

Neither Kant nor Eisenstein allow the mechanism of the sublime to follow through to its proper transcendental limit, in which all faculties, including cognition, are unhinged from the form of common sense. For Deleuze, the *cogitandum* is *not* simply 'the intelligible ... but the being of the intelligible as though this were both the final power of thought and the unthinkable.'[80] It is 'that which can only be thought,' which is also *not* a pure idea of reason, but rather the unthinkable itself: that which attests to the fact that — following Heidegger and Artaud — we are not yet thinking. Finally, the *cogitandum* is neither what Deleuze calls an immanent 'idea' in *Difference and Repetition* nor what he calls a 'concept' in *What is Philosophy?*, although these come closer to what he has in mind. His immanent ideas signify the entire genetic progression from the *sentiendum* to the *cogitandum*: 'it will be necessary to reserve the name of ideas not for pure *cogitanda* but rather for those instances which go from sensibility to thought and from thought to sensibility, capable of engendering in each case, according to their own order, the limit- or transcendental-object of each faculty.'[81] And the word concept, for Deleuze, is reserved for the creative productions of philosophy, as it is distinguished from other forms of creative thought like science and art. *Cogitanda* are both more specific than ideas and more fundamental than concepts. They are 'Essences,'[82] which are described in Deleuze's book on Proust as

> veritable monads, each defined by the viewpoint to which it expresses the world, each viewpoint itself referring to an ultimate quality at the heart of the monad.... Essence is indeed the final quality at the heart of the subject; but this quality is deeper than the subject, of a different order.... It is not the subject that explains essence, rather it is essence that implicates, envelops, wraps itself in a subject.[83]

We will come back to this difficult but important notion. For now it is sufficient to note that, far from being transcendent ideas of an already constituted subject, *cogitanda* are that which provoke the 'final stage' in the individuation of an intentional subject within an environment. Each of the three main faculties Deleuze names in the phenomenology of the encounter contribute to the quality and extent of the *Umwelt* one inhabits: what type of percepts, affects, and durations are possible as well as how we might make sense of all this as a thinking subject. Essence, which is itself shaped through the transcendental play of sensation and cognition, is the unthinkable since it is the condition of subjectivity in the first place. If, in Eisenstein and the cinema of the movement-image generally, there is a 'relationship with a whole which can only be thought in a higher awareness' that presupposes an organic 'sensory-motor relationship between world and man, nature and thought,' this is no longer possible in modern cinema.[84] In so far as the time-image follows Deleuze's schema of the phenomenology of the encounter — which can be described as a sublime experience pushed to its proper limits without judgment, without the intervention of pure ideas — there is a fundamental

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[80] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 141

[81] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 146. Deleuze's theory of *immanent* ideas departs from those of Plato, Kant, and Hegel. For an excellent exposition see Daniel Smith, 'Deleuze, Kant, and the Theory of Immanent Ideas,' in Constantin Boundas, ed., *Deleuze and Philosophy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), pp. 43-61

[82] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 141

[83] Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, pp. 41-43

[84] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 163

problematization of these relationships. There is no longer any given idea of self or world; both are engendered in the encounter that assumes a completely different conception of nature and the human than that of Eisenstein or Kant. When we cease to depend upon transcendent ideas — which in Kant's critique of metaphysics boil down to the three aporias of World, Soul, and God — to ground or judge thought, we must reconsider these relationships. It is not as though the images themselves have changed from classic to modern cinema. Rather, it is the *relations* between them that have changed because the image of thought, which maintains a view of the whole as the totalization of images and a harmonious accord between the subject and nature, is no longer tenable.

In modernity, the subject becomes a 'spiritual automaton.' The whole is replaced, following Blanchot, with the 'dispersal of the outside' and the relations between them become 'false continuities' or 'irrational cuts.'[85] But it is important not to model the spiritual automaton solely upon Artaud, despite the fact that he is probably the best figure in modernity that attests to 'the impossibility of thinking that is thought.' Characterizing the spiritual automaton merely as 'the mummy, this dismantled, paralyzed, petrified, frozen' subject, fails to account properly for the development of immanent ideas and of the individuation process more generally, both of which depend upon the establishment of (dis) continuous circuits 'from sensibility to thought and from thought to sensibility.'[86] The catatonic figure of Artaud the mummy is not in itself sufficient to move beyond the conceptions of the sublime put forth by Kant and Eisenstein: in all three cases, but in different ways, we get stuck at that 'furtive and explosive moment which is not even continued by Kant, much less by post-Kantianism,' the moment which is, arguably, *the* starting point for Deleuze's entire philosophy.[87] There *is* a shock to thought in the encounter with the Outside that momentarily paralyzes us, but that's not all. Historically, there *is* a crisis of action in the mid-20th century, politically and otherwise, but this simply means that we have to invent new forms of action and creativity. This is the sole meaning of Deleuze's somewhat ambiguous claim that we must restore our *belief*. After the collapse of the old conception of a world in which we harmoniously reside and to which we are organically connected, a world which, in Kant's terminology, is fundamentally 'purposive' for human life, we must believe that new types of connections, relations, and indeed movements are possible. Without judgment, our connection with the world needs to be reconceived. This message is fundamentally Nietzschian. After the 'death of God' — a slogan which simply means *after* the transcendent ideals, which have guided human interactions between themselves and with the world, have been irrevocably put into question — we must reinvent ourselves. Deleuze says that 'Kant did not invent a true critique of judgment; on the contrary, what the book of this title established was a fantastic subjective tribunal. Breaking with the Judeo-Christian tradition, it was Spinoza who carried out the critique, and he had four great disciples to take it up again and push it further: Nietzsche, D.H. Lawrence, Kafka, Artaud.'[88] And if Artaud can only take us half way, we will

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[85] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 180
[86] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 146. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 166
[87] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 58
[88] Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 126

have to look to these others to move beyond the moment of paralysis towards new forms of action and connection. We will come back to Nietzsche in our consideration of cinematic *poiesis*. But the Deleuze's idea of the spiritual automaton already gives us some initial clues.

In his 'Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect,' Spinoza responds to Descartes's notion that animals are automata, creatures that react mechanically to physical stimuli, while humans should be understood as more than mere machines in so far as they have minds. Spinoza claims that, just like bodies, the human mind — or soul [*anima*] — must also act 'according to fixed laws, as a sort of spiritual automaton.'[89] Spinoza thinks that minds cannot be exempt from the laws of cause and effect and that the formation and connections of ideas must follow a necessity comparable to that of physical laws. Deleuze builds upon this conception when he says that the spiritual automaton signifies not simply 'the logical or abstract *possibility* of formally deducing thoughts from each other, but the *circuit* into which they enter ... the shared power of what forces thinking and what thinks under the shock.'[90] He claims that the initial shock of the encounter involuntarily 'arouses the thinker' in us and provokes, in a cause-and-effect manner, the production of subjectivity as the mechanism passes from the *sentiendum* to the *cogitandum*. If we object to this *passive* conception of the subject before the encounter, we should keep in mind that it is not functionally much different from Alain Badiou's idea that 'fidelity,' and the concomitant production of subjectivity, requires that the individual be *seized* — 'internally and imperceptibly *riven*, or punctured' — by an event that absolutely exceeds him. A 'subject of truth' is just the bearer of this fidelity; there are neither subjects nor truths before the *transcendent* event in Badiou's philosophy, only human animals and their opinions.[91] Because the signs of Deleuze's encounter are ontologically immanent — albeit logically prior — to the subject, he is able to call the spiritual automaton the conduit through which imperceptible forces pass in a cause-and-effect manner, creating a *circuit* between the subject and its world. In the movement-image of Eisenstein,

> a circuit which includes simultaneously the author, the film, and the viewer is elaborated. The complete circuit thus includes the sensory shock which raises us from the images to conscious thought, then the thinking in figures which takes us back to the images and gives us an affective shock again. Making the two coexist, joining the highest degree of consciousness to the deepest level of the unconscious: this is the dialectical automaton.[92]

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[89] Baruch Spinoza, 'Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect' in *Complete Works*, ed. Michael Morgan, trans. Samuel Shirley (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2002), p. 24

[90] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 156. My emphasis.

[91] Alain Badiou, *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil*, trans. Peter Hallward (London: Verso, 2002), p. 46. The main difference between Deleuze and Badiou on this point lies in the fact that the event in Badiou 'departs from the laws of being,' departs from the otherwise consistent counting-as-one of infinite multiplicity as an 'ultra-one' or 'trans-being.' Alain Badiou, 'The Event as Trans-Being' in *Theoretical Writings*, trans. Ray Brassier and Alberto Toscano (London: Continuum, 2004), p. 100. That is, the event in Badiou is absolutely *transcendent* to being and can only be explained, quite remarkably, as an act of 'grace.' Alain Badiou, *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism*, trans. Ray Brassier (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), p. 85. Just to drive this point home, Badiou further claims that 'it is not from the world that the event gets its inexhaustible reserve, its silent (or indiscernible) excess, but *from its not being attached to it*, from its being separated, interrupted, or — as Mallarmé would say — "pure."' Alain Badiou, 'Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*,' trans. Thelma Sowley in Constantin Boundas and Dorothea Olkowski, eds., *Gilles Deleuze: The Theatre of Philosophy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 65

[92] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 161

In the time-image, as Deleuze says, the sensory-motor circuit is indeed broken, allowing for movement to initially well up within the mind. But what is largely overlooked in Deleuze's philosophy — often in order to justify the disingenuous, or perhaps naive, charge of political quietism against it — is that this organic circuit is ultimately replaced with 'a broken line, a zig-zag line, which brings together the author, the characters, and the world, and which passes between them.'[93] His claim is that the old forms of action have been entirely exhausted; we must have the belief and persistence — perhaps 'fidelity' is too loaded, and even *judgmental,* a term to be useful here — to invent new ones. His thought is not defeatist or apolitical in the least, but simply realistic in admitting that our conceptions of action are completely outdated. He has in mind (Marxist) political action to be sure, but also (Romantic) ideas of creative genius in art, science, and philosophy. Obviously the cinematic figures of undead zombies and mummies are a bit too crude to convey this important point, and it's a shame most commentators have not fully understood the imperative of Deleuze's position, which is that organic action must be replaced by 'broken gestures' and 'false movements' that reconnect us nonetheless, albeit in inconceivable ways, to ourselves and to 'nature.' This is a good thing because Deleuze thinks that, until now, judgment has largely prevented 'the emergence of any new mode of existence;' *without* judgment, and *without* the transcendent ideas of world and nature, real action and creation can begin.[94] As we shall see over the course of this thesis, the ethico-political imperative of Deleuze's cine-aesthetics is that action must be conceived anew — beyond the *poiesis/praxis* dichotomy — along the lines of both what Giorgio Agamben calls *gerere,* or continuous gestation, and what Paul Virilio calls *picnolepsy*, an inorganic, quasi-epileptic type of movement that results from excessive cinematic speed.[95]

Cine-aesthetics as synaesthetics

In one of his earliest essays, Eisenstein explains that the 'feeling of the whole' is created in dialectical cinema through a filmic 'fourth dimension.'[96] Inspired by Eisenstein's new physics, this dimension is glossed simply as 'spatially inexpressible' or as 'time added to the three dimensions.' But, more precisely, it is the dimension that emerges from that aspect of the dialectical process which produces 'overtonal conflicts, foreseen but unwritten in the score,' between pure visual and sonic images.[97] What is at stake here is not simply the issue of overtones as such, which Eisenstein describes as complex sets of rhythmic or harmonic 'aberrations and distortions' that trigger powerful 'psychophysical vibrations' in the brain of the viewer in a way that proves to be 'one of the most significant means of *affect* by the

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[93] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 187

[94] Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 135

[95] Félix Guattari also directly links cinematic affect with epilepsy. See his 'Ritornellos and Existential Affects' in *The Guattari Reader*, ed. Gary Genosko (London: Blackwell, 1996), pp. 158-171. Furthermore, Bernard Stiegler argues that a *mal-être* — which immediately evokes not only the condition of malaise, but also *grand mal* and *petit mal* epileptic seizures — beyond traditional alienation accompanies the increasingly 'cinematic' acceleration of industrial culture. Bernard Stiegler, *Technics and Time 3: Cinematic Time and the Question of Malaise* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010)

[96] Eisenstein, *Film Form*, pp. 67, 69

[97] Eisenstein, *Film Form*,' p. 69

experimental composers of our century, such as Debussy and Scriabin.'[98] Nor is what at stake simply his suggestion that there could or should be a visual analogue to musical overtones in the composition of the filmic shot. Rather, by evoking the synaesthetic composers Debussy and Scriabin, the crucial issue here is defining 'a contrapuntal method of combining visual *and* aural images' that together engage 'physiological processes of a *higher nervous activity*' that affects a total 'sensation of movement.'[99] That is, the issue is one of defining a theory and method of synaesthetic montage — in which the film is 'edited *visually* according to *sound* associations' — as the basis, or ground, for Eisenstein's intellectual cinema in that it produces a 'creative ecstasy of hearing and feeling the shots.'[100] Although he does not explicitly use the word synaesthesia here, his intention is further revealed with a reference to Kabuki theater, an essentially synaesthetic art according to Eisenstein, who heavily relies upon it for his conception of montage: 'This makes the shot as a montage-piece comparable to the separate scenes within the Kabuki method. The basic indication of the shot can be taken as the final summary of the effect on the cortex of the brain as a whole, irrespective of the sensory paths by which the accumulated stimuli have been brought together.'[101] Eisenstein's famous essay on Kabuki is interesting in that it sets the framework and tone for his conception of montage as well as for his lifelong application of synaesthesia to film theory.

Eisenstein's idea that cinematic art should produce a physiological shock which affects a '*total* provocation of the human brain' comes directly from his reflections on Japanese Kabuki theater. He observed within this theater a type of pure dialectical montage in which each element of 'equal significance' is experienced both individually and from the holistic perspective of the 'monistic ensemble.' He says that 'the Japanese regards each theatrical element, not as an incommensurable unit among the various categories of affect (on the various sense-organs), but as a single unit of *theater*.'[102] Furthermore, in this experience 'the hearing and seeing nerves are transposed, so that we perceive light vibrations as sounds, and tremors of the air as colors: we *hear light* and *see sound* ... in Kabuki! We actually "hear movement" and "see sound."'[103] One of the most striking and significant aspects of this appropriation is that Eisenstein utilizes a non-filmic art form for his theory of synaesthetic montage. Furthermore, he relies not only on Kabuki theater, but on various non-filmic aspects of Japanese art and culture, that is, on the 'cinematographic traits of Japanese culture that lie outside Japanese

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[98] Eisenstein, *Film Form*, p. 66

[99] Eisenstein, *Film Form*,' p. 67

[100] Eisenstein, *Film Form*, pp. 68, 69

[101] Eisenstein, *Film Form*, p. 67. Eisenstein explicitly describes 'the power of synaesthesia' as 'the production from a sense-impression of one kind of an associated mental image to a sense-impression of another kind ... the ability [for example] *to see sounds in terms of color and to hear colors as sounds.'* Sergei Eisenstein, *Film Sense*, trans. Jay Leyda (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1947), p. 149

[102] Eisenstein, *Film Form*, pp. 20-21. Or again, 'These stimuli are heterogeneous as regards their "external natures" but their reflex-physiological essence binds them together in an iron unity.' *Ibid*, p. 67

[103] Eisenstein, *Film Form*, p. 22

cinema.'[104] Writing in 1929, he argues that while montage was until then relatively absent from Japanese film, it flourished almost everywhere else in Japanese culture, from language to drawing to theater. He admittedly develops his notion of montage as a dialectic collision of independent shots upon his understanding of the ideogram in Japanese calligraphy, which he identifies as a montage of several smaller glyphs that combine to produce a sign of affective action:

> dog + mouth = to bark
> mouth + child = to scream
> mouth + bird = to sing
> knife + heart = sorrow
> But this is — montage!
> Yes. It is exactly what we do in cinema, combining shots that are *depictive,* single in meaning, neutral in content — into *intellectual* contexts and series.[105]

In *Nonindifferent Nature*, Eisenstein's last statement on the structure of film, he claims that in addition to the proto-cinematic practice of montage in Japan, the qualities of synaesthetic movement and rhythm are abundantly present in the East Asian arts in general. He says that 'it is quite reasonable ... to look at traditions of the past' to find 'the richest possibilities for audiovisual film. The "music of the eye" flourished fully in the art of the Far East in landscape painting.' Furthermore, he argues that the complex pictorial and sonic features of Chinese calligraphic poetry creates particular rhythms that appeal simultaneously to both ear and eye.[106] Together, techniques from Chinese and Japanese art allowed him to construct a new cinematography that is 'a type of "post-painting" passing into a distinctive type of "pre-music,"' which he believes has been most successfully illustrated in the Odessa Mist sequence of *Battleship Potemkin*.[107]

Deleuze observes that 'Eisenstein was fascinated by Chinese and Japanese landscape painting, because he saw in it a prefiguration of the cinema.'[108] But it is important not to overemphasize this seeming exoticism since Eisenstein readily and consistently drew upon a vast array of non-filmic examples that either inspire or further elaborate his film theory including paintings by El Greco, Piranesi, Sassetta, Watteau, Surikov, and Ghirlandaio as well as various works of Greek architecture, classical music, and Russian novelists. His fundamental view of the place of cinema within the history of the arts is, as we might imagine, a teleological one. He argues that cinema

> *begins from where* the remaining variety of arts 'roll down-hill,' at the cost of destroying and decomposing the very bases of their art, when they try to capture areas that are only completely

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[104] Eisenstein, *Film Form*, p. 28. For thorough discussions of Eisenstein's appropriation of Japanese art and, in particular, its own synaesthetic tendencies, see Steve Odin, 'The Influence of Traditional Japanese Aesthetics on the Film Theory of Sergei Eisenstein' in *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 23.2 (Summer 1989), pp. 69-81 as well as Steve Odin, 'Blossom Scents take up the Ringing: Synaesthesia in Japanese and Western Aesthetics' in *Soundings* 69.3 (Fall 1986), pp. 256-281

[105] Eisenstein, *Film Form*, p. 30

[106] Eisenstein, *Nonindifferent Nature*, p. 221. 'I became interested in the nature of the composition of Chinese landscape much later. Before becoming interested in Eastern art in general, the East attracted me in other ways, partially by the hieroglyphic writing that at certain initial stages helped me form concepts about the principles of montage.' *Ibid*., p. 252. For evidence that Eisenstein was not simply propagating a romantic view of East Asian art, see Ouyang Zhongshi, *Chinese Calligraphy*, trans. Wang Youfen (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), p. 419, which explains how 'artistic synaesthesia' is cultivated and transformed 'into calligraphic beauty' in the creation of traditional Chinese art.

[107] Eisenstein, *Nonindifferent Nature*, p. 220-221

[108] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 188

> accessible to cinematography (Futurism, Surrealism, Joyce, etc.). For only here — in cinema — is the embodiment of all these expectations and tendencies of the other arts possible.[109]

More specifically, cinema as is defined as

> the *highest stage of painting*. And as such, its features force it to come into unavoidable conflict with the original stages of painting: as if again reproducing the form of the Chinese picture scroll on the screen, but this time in the form of the *real movement* of ribbon that really *runs,* divided not into separate frames of sheets but growing out of separate rectangles — the visual depictions of shots forming the actual reality of its course.... In regard to the principle of *continuous flow*, films are the most perfect representation of the art of *moving dynamics*.[110]

It is this notion of the cinematic as 'the art of moving dynamics' that we are concerned with in this thesis, a cinematic art — with or without film — that is simultaneously kinematic and synaesthetic. But rather than evoking an experience of the 'iron unity' of the senses in a total multi-sensory ensemble, which seems to be Eisenstein's response to the Wagnerian *Gesamtkunstwerk*, our conception of cine-aesthetic art will be subtracted from *any* idea of an organic whole. Although Eisenstein's approach to the history of art is useful in overcoming the Kantian hierarchical taxonomy of the arts, we will not follow him in placing cinema at the teleological apex of this history. Instead, we will attempt a more anarchic conception of the cinematic that is not yolked to film form but that should be understood, following Jacques Rancière, as an artistic sensibility which 'predates the cinema as a technical means and distinctive art:'

> *Cinema,* like *painting* and *literature,* is not just the name of an art whose processes can be deduced from the specificity of its material and technical apparatuses. Like painting and literature, cinema is the name of an art whose meaning cuts across the borders between the arts.[111]

But cine-aesthetics will draw upon Eisenstein's conception of an art that can — through 'various cinematic modifications of movement and vibration' — affect multiple levels of cognition, from perception and emotion to higher orders of conceptual thinking.[112] This is made possible by a whole series of nested and interrelated circuits, the first of which is the *empirical* one 'that includes simultaneously the author, the film, and the viewer.' The second one enables the movement of the *faculties* after a sublime encounter, 'the circuit that includes the sensory shock which raises us from the images to conscious thought' and back down 'giving us an affective shock again.'[113] Finally, there is a *psychophysical* circuit that 'communicates vibrations to the cortex, touching the nervous system and cerebral system directly.'[114] All three levels help us fully unravel Deleuze's statement that the cinematic puts 'movement in the mind.' But the last synaesthetic circuit, although it traces the same general line as the second one, is especially important because it finally gives us a model not of simple organic

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[109] Eisenstein, *Nonindifferent Nature*, p. 250

[110] Eisenstein, *Nonindifferent Nature*, p. 248

[111] Jacques Rancière, *Film Fables*, trans. Emiliano Battista (Oxford: Berg, 2006), pp. 6,4. Similarly, but in a much more timid way, Alain Badiou claims that there is nothing essential to cinema since it is 'effectively the organization of impossible movements' between the other six — essentially 'closed' — arts. For him, cinema simply 'operates on the other arts, using them as its starting point, in a movement that subtracts them from themselves.' Alain Badiou, *Handbook of Inaesthetics*, trans. Alberto Toscano (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), pp. 82, 79

[112] Eisenstein, *Film Form*, p. 79

[113] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 161

[114] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 156

movement, but as Eisenstein himself says, of '*arbitrary* relations' that are ultimately broken or false.[115] Furthermore the first circuit, understood as a circuit of the *mind*, helps us to move beyond Deleuze's — and Bergson's — dependance upon the idea of a sensory-motor system, which the philosopher Susan Hurley has cleverly referred to as the 'classical sandwich' model of the mind that places cognition snugly between perception and action.[116] Once we move beyond this antiquated model, towards more enactive theories such as those of Alva Noë that include not only the subject but its surrounding environment as well — which here means precisely the artist, the medium, and the spectator — it is no longer possible to simply claim that the possibility of action could be short-circuited after a shock to thought. Rather, this model itself must be short-circuited in favor of one that allows for new plastic relations to occur between perception and action, for example Noë's 'action in perception' where the act of perceiving is itself considered just that — embodied and en*active* — and where touch, rather than vision, serves as the paradigm or 'basis for experience,' including visual experience.[117] Not only does Noë argue that touch should become the paradigm for understanding sensory experience in general; he further claims that synaesthetic experiences, like 'tactile vision and related forms of sensory substitution, provide strong support for the enactive view.'[118] Similarly, but for different philosophical reasons, Jean-Luc Nancy has developed a theory of sensation in which touch is considered not only one of the five senses but also 'the general extension and particular extraposition of sensing itself.... Touch is nothing other than the touch of sense altogether and of all the senses. *It is their sensuality as such.*'[119] Here, touch should be understood neither as a transcendent governing principle nor as some fundamental ground. It is not, as a thinker like Eisenstein might say, 'a new sense with the capacity of reducing visual and aural perceptions to a "common denominator."'[120] Rather, it provides Nancy with the sensory logic of 'proximate distance,' which is simply the transcendental framework that allows any singular sense to relate to its object or to another singular instance of sense. Both Noë and Nancy are clearly influenced by Merleau-Ponty, who claims that synaesthesia 'reveals a "primary layer" of sense experience which precedes its division among the separate senses.' He refers to this layer as an

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[115] Eisenstein, *Film Sense*, p. 150

[116] Susan Hurley, *Consciousness in Action* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), pp. 401-412

[117] Alva Noë, *Action in Perception* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005), p. 100. Noë's theory builds upon the late Merleau-Ponty, who claims that vision is 'an action by contact — not unlike the action of things upon the blind man's cane.' Maurice Merleau-Ponty, 'Eye and Mind' in *The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader*, ed. Galen Johnson (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 1993), p. 131. Noë directly evokes this image of the blind man's cane in *Action in Perception,* pp. 16-17. It is well known that Merleau-Ponty relies upon a conception of synaesthesia throughout his work. For example, in the *Phenomenology of Perception* he claims that 'synaesthetic perception is the rule, and we are unaware of it only because scientific knowledge shifts the center of gravity experience, so that we unlearn how to see, hear, and generally speaking, feel.' Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception,* trans. Colin Smith (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 266. And in his later aesthetic essays, he still believes that 'the distinctions between touch and sight are unknown in primordial perception.' Maurice Merleau-Ponty, 'Cézanne's Doubt' in *The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader*, p. 65

[118] Noë, *Action in Perception,* p. 27. Deleuze and Noë would never see eye-to-eye since the former is more interested in sensation — which is necessary passive and which precedes the intentional subject — than what Noë calls perception. Nonetheless, enactive theories of mind may be useful in extending and enriching Deleuze's position. They problematize the existence of pure inactive 'mummies' outside of cartoons, psychiatric clinics, and Egyptian tombs. At the very least, they offer a precedent for conceiving entirely new forms of action.

[119] Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Muses*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. 17

[120] Eisenstein, *Film Form*, p. 70

'operative intentionality already at work before any positing or judgment, a "Logos of the aesthetic world," an "art hidden in the depths of the human soul."'[121] Deleuze has also created a synaesthetic concept of the 'haptic' in which, as Brian Massumi has explained, 'vision has taken up a tactile function. It has arrogated to itself the function of touch. This purely visual touch is a *synaesthesia proper to vision*: a touch as only the eyes can touch.'[122] But, as we shall see in later sections, the fundamental paradigm for Deleuze's theory of sensation as a whole is not touch but 'impersonal' affect understood in terms of Spinoza's *affectus* rather than *affectio,* that is, as the initial psychophysical shock that makes sensation possible rather than mere human emotion. Deleuze's haptic vision also confounds the normal relations of distance and proximity but, unlike Noë's and Nancy's theories of sensation, from a staunchly non-phenomenological point of view. There is absolutely no room in Deleuze's philosophy for any idea of intentionality, even an 'operative' one that seemingly precedes judgment but paradoxically depends upon a *logos* of the aesthetic *world* and the human *soul*. Haptic vision is part of Deleuze's larger logic of sensation that traverses the smooth spaces between and within 'inhuman' bodies. Finally, Deleuze's use of synaesthesia in this logic of sensation is one that does not exclude circulations back up to cognition proper since it constitutes a 'sensory thought' of its own.[123]

In a curious little essay written towards the end of his life — reworked from the Preface to his book on Kant — Deleuze conflates the moment in the sublime that induces 'an unregulated exercise of all the faculties' with Arthur Rimbaud's synaesthetic imperative to 'disorganize all the senses.'[124] Along with Baudelaire, Rimbaud of course provided the framework through which clinical synaesthesia — which had just been 'discovered' within the burgeoning field of empirical psychology — entered into the poetic and artistic sensibility at the crossroads of modernism. Without explaining this uneasy juxtaposition, Deleuze begins his gloss on sublime 'movements of the mind' here with a quote from an early, and now quite infamous, letter Rimbaud sent to his friend and fellow poet Paul Demeny: 'To attain the unknown by disorganizing all the senses ... a long, boundless, and systematized disorganization of all the senses.'[125] It is important to bear in mind that this statement is part of Rimbaud's manifesto for becoming a poetic seer. In the previous sentence, which Deleuze does not quote, Rimbaud declares that 'one must be a *seer* [*voyant*], make oneself a *seer*.'[126] This omission is most likely intended to signify a fundamental break between Deleuze's conception of the cinematic seer and Rimbaud's romantic one. The precocious young poet's vision is intimately bound up with ideas concerning the Kantian genius and Swedenborgian mysticism, precisely the ideas Deleuze is trying to distance himself from. Nonetheless, it is safe to say that Rimbaud is an inspiration, along with Kant

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[121] Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception,* pp. 264, 498
[122] Brian Massumi, *Parables of the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), p. 158
[123] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 159
[124] Deleuze, 'On Four Poetic Formulas' in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 35
[125] Deleuze, 'On Four Poetic Formulas' in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 33
[126] Arthur Rimbaud, *Complete Works, Selected Letters*, trans. Wallace Fowlie (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), p. 307

and Eisenstein, for Deleuze's non-Romantic thesis that the cinematic puts *movement in the mind*, which involves not only the movement of the faculties but also the synaesthetic movement of the senses.

Far from being a conduit to some mystical or romantic domain — 'out of this world,' as Peter Hallward would say, invoking Baudelaire's prose poem *N'importe où hors du monde* — Deleuze's cinematic seer should be understood simply as the figure of a distinctly modernist theory of aesthetic experience, albeit one that fundamentally displaces the subject. By challenging the normal context for recognizing objects, what counts as 'art' for Deleuze necessarily reifies and redistributes the connections between a multitude of affects and percepts, 'beings of the sensible' that provoke a shock to thought and force the subject along a process of individuation, into 'the domain of cold decision, of absolute obstinacy, the choice of existence.'[127] For example, Henri Matisse's *Harmony in Red* or David Hockney's recent iPad paintings and multi-channel films of the East Yorkshire landscape confound our assumptions about the colors of objects and their arrangement within perspectival space, producing unfamiliar perceptions and kinaesthetic affections. Deleuze often seems to favor the artist over the spectator but, as we shall see, this process of becoming-seer should be possible on either end of the circuit 'that includes simultaneously the author, the film, and the viewer.'[128] Looking at his East Yorkshire series, there is no doubt that David Hockney — perhaps the greatest living synaesthetic artist — *sees* something more in the landscape than normally meets the eye, but it makes sense that someone viewing these works might also in turn become a seer.[129] And indeed, a farmer on whose land Hockney spent a few seasons painting and filming his recent works has claimed that 'when you see the finished pictures, the colors and what he sees in the vista is just incredible, absolutely incredible.... I also see it differently now. Definitely, definitely.... I find my self looking up more and seeing different colors and at different times of year seeing different things than just a green lane with a few trees at the side of it.'[130]

The neuroscientist Richard Cytowic explains that synaesthesia, from the 'Greek *syn* = union + *aisthesis* = sensation, simply means "joined sensation," such that a voice or music, for example, is not only heard but also seen, tasted, or felt as a physical touch.'[131] But, for our purposes here, we will be highly critical of this 'syn' and, at least in this sense, will follow Jean-Luc Nancy in his musings on synaesthesia, where he claims that the singular-plurality of zones of sensation 'breaks down the living unity of perception.'[132] There is no original unity of the senses that can be touched in synaesthetic experience. Rather, this experience

> dislocates 'common sense' or ordinary synaesthesia, or it causes it to touch itself in an infinity of points or zones. Difference proliferates, not only among the major sensorial registers, but across each of them: color, nuance, paste, brilliance, shadow, surface, mass, perspective, contour, gesture, movement, shock, grain, timbre, rhythm, flavor, odor, dispersion, resonance, trait, duction, diction, articulation, play, cut, length, depth, instant, duration, speed, hardness, thickness, vapor, vibration,

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[127] Deleuze, 'The Brain is the Screen' in *Two Regimes of Madness*, p. 283

[128] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 161

[129] Hockney's synaesthesia has been closely analyzed in Richard Cytowic and David Eagleman, *Wednesday is Indigo Blue: Discovering the Brain of Synaesthesia* (Cambridge: MIT Press 2009), pp. 183-187

[130] *Countryfile* (television program). London: BBC One, 8 January 2012

[131] Cytowic and Eagleman, *Wednesday is Indigo Blue*, p. 1

[132] Nancy, *The Muses*, p. 21

> cast, emanation, penetration, grazing touch, tension, theme and variation, *et cetera,* that is, multiplied touches *ad infinitum.* All have their Muses, or else all are Muses. Here as elsewhere, force is a difference and a play of forces.[133]

This 'dis-located synaesthesia' is not yet another synthesis, totality, or even ground of sensation, but constitutes a differential 'co-respondence' — to reframe Baudelaire's formula — between a multitude of forces that traverse the normal boundaries of discrete sensory functioning. There is a 'rhythm that does not appear,' a 'general play,' or a 'movement of coming and going and a heterogeneity that spaces out sensitive or sensuous plurality.'[134] The logic of this differential *rhythm* is provided by Nancy's notion of the syncope, a term which refers to a transient loss of consciousness in the medical literature as well as to the irregular, interrupted, or otherwise missed beats in jazz music. In a much earlier work, Nancy describes the syncope as a distantiated spacing within the heart of the *cogito* that makes impossible any and all claims to presence. It is that which fundamentally 'cuts up,' 'fissures,' '*simultaneously* attaches and detaches,' consciousness such that it 'never allows itself to be grasped as an identity except when it blacks out.'[135] But, surprisingly, rather than evoke this concept of the syncope directly, Nancy quotes a long passage from Deleuze's book on Francis Bacon, where Deleuze puts forth his own 'logic of the senses' in which the domains of sensation are traversed by a '*power* of rhythm ... more profound than vision, hearing, etc. ... a relation between sensation and rhythm, which places in each sensation the levels and domains through which it passes.' Appropriating the logic of the encounter, which denies the recognition of a self-same object by the various faculties, as a model for this logic of the senses — but substituting 'affect' or what he calls here, following Eisenstein, *pathos* for Nancy's 'touch' — Deleuze says that

> each level, each domain of sensation would have a way of referring to the others, independently of the represented object they have in common. Between a color, a taste, a touch, a smell, a noise, a weight, there would be a communication that would constitute the 'pathic' (non-representative) moment of sensation. In Bacon, we hear the noise of the beast's hooves ... we touch the quivering of the bird .. we touch it, we smell it, eat it, weigh it.... The painter would thus make a multisensible Figure appear visually [by expressing] a common exercise of all the organs at once.[136]

While Deleuze doesn't say as much here, we shall see that this power of rhythm consists of the same type of false continuities or broken movements that constitute Nancy's dis-located synaesthesia. For now, we could simply say that it is a 'syncopated' rhythm to the extent that it follows Deleuze's logic of difference in repetition. Likewise, there is a similarity in their claims that this syncopated sensation makes possible the production of what should properly be called *art*, even though Nancy does so by repeating the phenomenological language he continually purports to escape from. While, for Deleuze, the artist necessarily creates a 'mutisensible Figure,' for Nancy, 'each work is in its fashion a synaesthesia

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[133] Nancy, *The Muses*, p. 22

[134] Nancy, *The Muses*, p. 22

[135] Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Discourse of the Syncope: Logodaedalus*, trans. Saul Anton (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), p. 10

[136] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 37. Deleuze refers to this interpretation of the different domains of the senses a 'more "phenomenological"' one, that is, one closer to the surface of subjectivity. But what he calls here the 'power of rhythm' ultimately points to something deeper than Flesh, to the impersonal aspect of sensation which is 'the opposite of the sensual.' *Ibid.*, p. 40

and the opening of a world.'[137] But Nancy's musings are useful since they articulate how this conception of sensation goes beyond Hegel's formula, which more or less holds that the empirical taxonomy of the individual arts reflects the natural heterogeneity of the distinct sense organs. We could say, with Deleuze and Nancy, that the singular-plurality of syncopated sensation makes possible a continuous re-distribution of the classical taxonomy of mediums such that we are left with a properly synaesthetic and cinematic understanding of art. This is the theoretical ground of *cine-aesthetics*.

Finally, Nancy helps us to redeem, once and for all, Deleuze's conception of cinematic philosophy — which again states that 'cinema puts movement not only in the image, but also in the mind. Spiritual life is the movement of the mind [*esprit*]'[138] — from any reading that might cite this statement as evidence of a supposed mysticism. At the beginning of Nancy's book on the singular-plurality of the senses and of the arts, he writes that 'The Muses' provoke

> the '*movements of the spirit* [*esprit*]' (*Mens* is from the same root.) The Muse animates, stirs up, excites, arouses. She keeps watch less over the form than over the force. Or more precisely: she keeps watch forcefully over the form. But this force springs up in the plural. It is given, from the start, in multiple forms.[139]

[137] Nancy, *The Muses*, p. 31
[138] Deleuze, 'The Brain is the Screen' in *Two Regimes of Madness*, p. 283
[139] Nancy, *The Muses*, p. 1. My emphasis.

1.2 Towards a theory of the cinematic without film, Take I: From Deleuze to Agamben

In the past decade, there has been a remarkable flourishing of scholarly works published with the word 'cinematic' in the title. A quick amazon.com search reveals the enormous scope of this phenomenon, the individual names of which range from the straightforward, to the confusing, to the down-right bizarre. Here is a brief sampling, although there are many more books — not to mention articles and blog discussions — that could have been added to this list:

> Cinematic Art, Cinematic Footprint, Cinematic Urbanism, Cinematic Theater, The Cinematic, Cinematic Folds, Cinematic Tourist, Cinematic Tango, Cinematic Jane Austin, Feminine Cinematics, Cinematic Struggle, Cinematic Political Thought, Cinematic Prophylaxis, Cinematic Storytelling, Cinematic Philosopher, Cinematic Imagination, Cinematic Affect, Cinematic Motion, Cinematic Emotion, Cinematic Society, Cinematic Production, Cinematic Time, Cinematic Culture, Cinematic World, Cinematic Composition, Cinematic Encounters, Cinematic Body, Cinematic Artist, Cinematic Landscapes, Cinematic Fictions, Cinematic Creativity, Cinematic Clients, Cinematic City, Cinematic Sociology, Cinematic Experience, Cinematic Thinking, Cinematic Howling, Cinematic Mythmaking, Cinematic Modernism, Cinematic Illuminations[1]

But, in the end, what's so illuminating about this long drawn-out list? Perhaps the compulsive naming is somehow connected to the so-called 'death of cinema,' which has been announced and theorized in varying ways by the likes of David Rodowick, Laura Mulvey, Mary Ann Doane as well as Jeffrey Shaw

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[1] Berys Gaut, *A Philosophy of Cinematic Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Nadia Bozak, *The Cinematic Footprint* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2011); Nezar AlSayyad, *Cinematic Urbanism* (London: Routledge, 2006); Babak Ebrahimian, *The Cinematic Theater* (Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2004); David Campany, *The Cinematic* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2007); Firoza Elavia, *Cinematic Folds* (Toronto: Pleasure Dome, 2008); Rodanthi Tzanelli, *The Cinematic Tourist* (London: Routledge, 2007); Tamara Falicov, *The Cinematic Tango* (London: Wallflower Press, 2007); David Monaghan, *The Cinematic Jane Austen* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2009); Caroline Bainbridge, *A Feminine Cinematics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2009); Leslie Halpern, *Dreams on Film: The Cinematic Struggle Between Art and Science* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2003); Michael Shapiro, *Cinematic Political Thought* (New York: NYU Press, 1999); Kirsten Ostherr, *Cinematic Prophylaxis* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005); Jennifer Van Sijll, *Cinematic Storytelling* (Studio City: Michael Wiese, 2005); Irving Singer, *Ingmar Bergman, Cinematic Philosopher* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2009); Jyotika Virdi, *The Cinematic Imagination* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2003); Steven Shaviro, *Post Cinematic Affect* (London: Zero Books, 2010); Steven Katz, *Cinematic Motion* (Studio City: Michael Wiese, 2004); Julian Han, *Cinematic Emotion in Horror Films and Thrillers* (London: Routledge, 2010); Norman Denzin, *The Cinematic Society* (London: Sage, 1995); Jonathan Beller, *The Cinematic Mode of Production* (Hanover: Dartmouth College Press, 2006); Bernard Stiegler, *Technics and Time 3: Cinematic Time and the Question of Malaise* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010); Miriam Ross, *South American Cinematic Culture* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2010); Chris Lukinbeal, *The Geography of Cinema: A Cinematic World*, (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2008); Gustavo Mercado, *The Filmmaker's Eye: Learning (and Breaking) the Rules of Cinematic Composition*, (London: Focal Press, 2010); Harry Kuoshu, *Celluloid China: Cinematic Encounters with Culture and Society* (Carbondale: Illinois University Press, 2002); Steven Shaviro, *Cinematic Body*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993); Kim Knowles, *A Cinematic Artist*, (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2009); Linda Ehrlich, *Cinematic Landscapes* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000); David Seed, *Cinematic Fictions* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009); Dean Simonton, *Great Flicks: Scientific Studies of Cinematic Creativity and Aesthetics*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Jerrold Brandell, *Celluloid Couches, Cinematic Clients* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2004); David Clarke, *The Cinematic City* (London: Routledge, 1997); Jean-Anne Sutherland, *Cinematic Sociology* (Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press, 2009); Jennifer Barker, *The Tactile Eye: Touch and the Cinematic Experience* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2009); James Phillips, *Cinematic Thinking* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008); Hoi Cheu, *Cinematic Howling* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2008); Irving Singer, *Cinematic Mythmaking* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2010); Susan McCabe, *Cinematic Modernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Laurie Finke, *Cinematic Illuminations* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009)

and Peter Weibel.[2] Without falling into psychoanalytic reductionism, one might argue that — precisely because the term remains under-conceptualized — this cinematic compulsion is *symptomatic* of the supposed loss of indexicality. It is motivated by an act of nostalgic mourning in search of the essence of cinema, in the case of Rodowick, or even a borderline fetishistic cinephilia, in the case of Doane. But, as we look closer at the content of some of these books, this is only half of the story. The 'cinematic' is indeed used most often as an adjective describing filmic qualities but, secondarily, it also refers to expanded cinema, especially in the guise of digital media. However, in the latter, the tone is generally an over-celebratory embrace of new media that is perhaps too eager to cut all ties with its technological predecessors. In order to avoid slipping in either direction — that is, into film or digital mania — what is perhaps needed now is a theoretical definition of the cinematic not simply *after* film but without it. In the wake of the death of cinema we need a functional, rather than material or formal, theory of the cinematic that can truly, albeit critically, accommodate the different forms of an expanded concept of cinema. 'Expanded cinema' could mean not merely *new* media but rather all the art forms that have been extensively analyzed, for example, by the French art historian Frank Popper from the 1960s to the present. An expanded idea of the cinematic could therefore become a conceptual umbrella under which we might categorize the various types of art he discusses throughout his entire career, from his early interest in 'kinetic art' — which, for Popper, includes the gestural arts of action and participation — to the electronic and 'virtual art' of today.[3] It should also be noted that Gene Youngblood coined the term 'expanded cinema' with his book of that name in 1970, the first major work to consider how video, television, and computer technologies — along with the various types of conceptual and intermedia art that were thriving at that time — pushed the boundaries of what counts as cinematic. In this now dated and slightly new-agey manifesto, Youngblood builds upon 'Eisenstein's theory of montage-as-collision' in order to provide 'a conception of the nature of the cinema so encompassing and persuasive that it promises to dominate all image-making in the same way as the theory of general relativity dominates all physics today. I call it *synaesthetic cinema*.' He also makes the connection between this synaesthetic cinema and 'kinaesthesia, the experience of sensory perception' on the grounds that the 'fundamental subject of synaesthetic cinema — forces and energies — cannot be photographed.'[4] Although our ambitions here are not so grand, we will reconsider the concept of the cinematic — a word whose overuse in the past decade belies its still vague, and largely uncritical, significance — and to attempt to give it a more theoretically robust, and more formally

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[2] D.N. Rodowick, *The Virtual Life of Film* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007); Laura Mulvey, *Death 24x a Second: Stillness and the Moving Image* (London: Reaktion Books, 2006); Mary Ann Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007); Jeffrey Shaw and Peter Weibel, eds. *Future Cinema: The Cinematic Imaginary After Film* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003)

[3] Frank Popper, *Origins and Development of Kinetic Art* (London: Studio Vista, 1968); Frank Popper, *Art, Action, and Participation* (New York: New York University Press, 1975); Frank Popper, *Art of the Electronic Age* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1993); Frank Popper, *From Technological to Virtual Art* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2007)

[4] Gene Youngblood, *Expanded Cinema* (New York: Dutton, 1970), pp. 85, 76, 97. The term 'expanded cinema' has recently regained currency, now that digital media has confused even further the hierarchized distribution of art forms. See, for example, A.L. Rees, David Curtis, and Steven Ball, eds., *Expanded Cinema: Art, Performance, Film* (London: Tate, 2011)

expansive, meaning. Such a functional definition should be theoretically applicable to not only film, but also to a good portion of the art produced since the late 19th century: from chronophotography to Futurist painting to Fluxus performance to digital media installations. At the end of this chapter, we will begin to test this conception of the cinematic without film against Henri Michaux's black and white line drawings, which have been self-described as 'cinematic' attempts 'to draw the flow of time.'[5] In his broad conception of kinetic art, Frank Popper has explicitly included Michaux's drawings within the subcategory of art that displays kinematic, or 'virtual movement.'[6]

The project of redefining the cinematic without film is, of course, not entirely without precedent. The current curator of the film collection at the Musée national d'art moderne in Paris, Philippe-Alain Michaud, has been pursuing such a project since his publication of a monograph on the German art historian Aby Warburg over ten years ago.[7] In this work, Michaud argues that Warburg's so-called 'Mnemosyne Atlas' — a proto-cinematic series of black boards onto which he attached images of artifacts from quite different times and cultures — implicitly challenged received art historical notions about the development and continuity of art. And in his theoretical writings, Warburg posits an entirely different way in which to ground the analysis of art works. He tried to show that the classical tradition of art history failed to comprehend the real function of art, which is ultimately a kind of talisman for the ritualistic, almost Dionysian, liberation of everything that has been rendered static. The history of art cannot be understood simply as an epistemology of inert objects since art itself is a trace of the human obsession with movement. Michaud's study illustrates that Warburg's whole endeavor was motivated by a desire to put movement back into the image *and* its analysis. That is, movement for Warburg is both envisioned within and between objects as well as prescribed as a key part of the method needed for their analysis.[8] Michaud's book was followed by an important exhibition he curated at the Pompidou in 2006 entitled 'The Movement of Images.' In his Introduction to the catalogue — which begins by evoking the emphasis Benjamin, in his 'Work of Art' essay, places on the function of cinema in changing our perception of art in general — Michaud makes *his* theoretical vision quite clear.

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[5] Henri Michaux, 'To Draw the Flow of Time' in *Untitled Passages*, ed. Catherine de Zegher (New York: Drawing Center, 2000), p. 7

[6] Popper, *Origins and Developments of Kinetic Art*, pp. 78-80. Likewise, in an 'ambitiously revisionist' aim to reassess the kinetic themes 'which were central to much 20th century art practice,' British curator Guy Brett relies quite heavily upon the work of Michaux to widen the discourse of kinematic art to include not only works that move physically in space — for example the mobile sculptures of Alexander Calder — but also those which elicit movements within the mind and body of the spectator. Guy Brett, 'The Century of Kinesthesia' in *Force Fields: Phases of the Kinetic* (London: Hayward Gallery, 2000), pp. 9-68. To further corroborate that this type of art should in fact be labeled kinetic, the neuroscientist Semir Zeki has shown that certain pieces of op art that give the *illusion* of movement — even though they are static, two-dimensional paintings — stimulate the V5 region of the visual cortex, which specializes in the perception of motion. Semir Zeki, *Inner Vision: An Exploration of Art and the Brain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 162-163

[7] Philippe-Alain Michaud, *Aby Warburg and the Image in Motion*, trans. Sophie Hawkes (New York: Zone Books, 2004)

[8] In his Forward to the book, Georges Didi-Huberman makes the point that, in this sense, Michaud's reading is clearly inspired by Deleuze's notion of movement-images. Georges Didi-Huberman 'Knowledge: Movement (The Man Who Spoke to Butterflies)' in Michaud, *Aby Warburg and the Image in Motion*, pp. 7-19. For a more explicit and extended analysis of the relation between Deleuze's conception of cinematic movement-images and the history of art in general, see John Rajchman, 'Deleuze's Time, or How the Cinematic Changes our Idea of Art' in *Art and the Moving Image*, ed. Tanya Leighton (London: Tate, 2008), pp. 307-327

Clearly inspired by Warburg, albeit making the connection to cinema more explicit by evoking the work of Eisenstein and others, he performs the final Dionysian operation on movement-images, opening a pandora's box: 'The cinema appears less as a material device combining movement and photographic impression than as a symptom of a new type of questioning formulated around figures: less as a spectacle than as an activity of thought.'[9] The remarkable thing about this essay is that, while the argument is grounded in the historical *necessity* of redefining cinema beyond 'the limited viewpoint of film history' — given the rise of digital media and the dematerialization of the contemporary art object — Michaud's conception of the cinematic approaches metaphysical proportions:

> Over and above the material elements of film — the strip, the camera, the projector, and the screen — cinema is gathered within the general parameters of space and time. Consequently, *all* art which triggers an interaction of space-time effects can be regarded as cinema, even beyond the film's material presence.... When the cinema ceases to be defined by its technical devices, at the ultimate point of its deconstruction, there comes into being a phenomenon of 'generic alteration' (which Aristotle called *metabasis eis allo genos*). Reduced to its essential components, the cinema makes its way into the world of metamorphoses, and we see everywhere the resurgence of its properties, disjointed from each other, and reordered in accordance with another type of equilibrium: in the interplay of light on sculptures and reliefs, in architectural rhythms, in the sequential repetition and surface scansion of paintings, even in the rolls of lace which [in Rilke's novel] Malte Laurids Brigge remembers having unwound with his mother, and from whose textural properties he sees reemerging the cinematic image.... Beyond the restricted spectrum of its history, the cinema appears as a way of rethinking images no longer on the basis of concepts of uniqueness and immobility, in accordance with the model set by Winckelmann which, throughout the 20th century, went on conditioning the ways works were exhibited, but on the basis of notions of mobility and multiplicity. That is to say, beyond a Parmenidean ontology for which the history of classical art was the guarantee, and instead on the basis of the Heraclitean hypothesis of a metaphysics of flow.[10]

Before drawing out, in different directions, the theoretical and formal ramifications of such a conception of the cinematic, we should first clarify what we mean by the terms cinema and film by looking at the etymologies of these terms. For our purposes here, 'film' refers primarily to the physical medium of photographic film stock; film in the sense of 'moving pictures' occurs as an after-thought more than ten years after the invention of the cinematograph by the Lumière brothers and five years after the appearance of the word cinema.[11] 'Cinema,' in our usage, will simply refer to the broad common sense notion of the term: 'Cinema films collectively, esp. considered as an art-form.' To this it should be added that filmic cinema was only one incarnation of the cinema, which was followed by video and finally the digital movies we watch in theaters today. Also note that cinema in the original etymological sense is simply a short-hand for cinematograph.[12] Interestingly, 'kinematic' and 'cinematic,' both from the French *cinématique*, originally referred in physics to the study of pure or abstract motion

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[9] Philippe-Alain Michaud, ed., *Le Mouvement des images* (Paris: Centre Pompidou, 2006), p. 22. Michaud notes the similarities between the juxtaposition of images in Aby Warburg's 'Mnemosyne Atlas' — which is 'based on a cinematic mode of thought' — and Eisenstein's analysis of Japanese characters: 'Warburg's sequences of images are used like ideograms in Mnemosyne to produce a new art-historical language that is similar to Eisenstein's visual syntax.' Michaud, *Aby Warburg and the Image in Motion*, pp. 278, 283

[10] Michaud, *Le Mouvement des images*, pp. 27-28

[11] 'film, n.' OED Online, Oxford University Press, 2011. http://www.oed.com/viewdictionaryentry/Entry/70246. Definitions b and c, respectively.

[12] 'cinema, n.' OED Online, Oxford University Press, 2011. http://www.oed.com/viewdictionaryentry/Entry/33081. Definitions b and a, respectively

without regard to a cause (1864) and then more generally to the 'geometry of motion' (1883) decades before the cinematic was used as an adjective suggestive of cinema films (1927) and well before the invention of the cinematograph.[13] The French etymologies of these words don't change any of this: the first usage of the term *cinématique* is documented in 1836, *cinématographe* in 1893, and *cinéma* in 1899.[14] The point of this slightly pedantic exercise is that the concept of the cinematic has quite a robust history and can stand on its own without film, which has proven to be but one short-lived instance of the cinematic and even of cinema itself. For our conception of the cinematic here, in addition to relying on certain film theories, we will make use of the fact that the term cinema was first used as a popular abbreviation for the cinematograph, which is literally a device for 'writing movement.' We will also follow Paul Virilio who plays on the ambiguity of the word *cinématique*, which can signify both what we call kinematics, or the physics of pure motion, as well as the English cinematic, an adjective that describes the qualities of cinema.[15]

Any attempt to define the cinematic in terms of the formal qualities of a specific medium — whether celluloid or digitized 1s and 0s — dooms it from the very start, creating a false problem that remains bound within the theoretical frame of modernism. This is where Rodowick fails completely since — although he appropriates Stanley Cavell's concept of 'automatism' to expand our understanding of medium in the direction of what Foucault calls an 'apparatus' — in the end he more or less belies this conceptual maneuvering and, in effect, reduces the significance of the cinematic to the ontology of film stock, simultaneously diminishing the possible scope of the former while fossilizing the latter within its not-so-distant past. While Rodowick intuitively understands the philosophical pitfalls of constructing a medium-specific ontology and in fact explicitly argues against it — 'we need to go beyond a formal definition and try to understand how a medium is not simply a passive material or substance' — large portions of his *The Virtual Life of Film* involve technical discussions on indexicality and the comparative optics of celluloid *versus* digital cinematography. His clear preference for the the former, and indeed his insistence on upholding such a formal dichotomy at all, ultimately muddles what counts as a medium: 'Although the subtitle of [Cavell's *The World Viewed*] is *Refections on an Ontology of Film*, his idea of ontology in no way assumes an essentialism or teleology. It refers, rather, to a mode of existence for art and to our relationships with given art forms. This mode of existence is not static, however. A medium, if it is a living one, is continually in a state of self-transformation.' It is easy to agree with Rodowick that a fundamental problem for artists has always been to 'remake the meaning of the medium in each artistic act.'[16] The issue here is that his focus on

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[13] 'kinematic, adj. and n.' OED Online, Oxford University Press, 2011. http://www.oed.com/viewdictionaryentry/Entry/103481. 'cinematic, adj. 2.' OED Online, Oxford University Press, 2011. http://www.oed.com/viewdictionaryentry/Entry/33085

[14] 'cinématique, adj.' Trésor de la langue française online, Éditions du CNRS, 1999. http://atilf.atilf.fr/dendien/scripts/tlfiv5/visusel.exe?12;s=1370390910;r=1;nat=;sol=1. 'cinéma, cinématographe, subst. masc.' Trésor de la langue française online, Éditions du CNRS, 1999. http://atilf.atilf.fr/dendien/scripts/tlfiv5/visusel.exe?55;s=1370390910;r=3;nat=;sol=1;

[15] Paul Virilio, *The Vision Machine*, trans. Julie Rose (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), pp. 59-77

[16] Rodowick, *The Virtual Life of Film*, p. 42

merely redefining ontology in pseudo-Deleuzian terms — ontology, rather than 'assuming an essentialism,' should be understood as a 'mode of existence' in continuous transformation — seemingly blinds him from the fact that, however you cut it, silver halide crystals and digital pixels are technically two quite distinct media in the traditional sense of Greenberg or Arnheim. No amount of artistic creativity, or medium automatism, will turn one into the other. His extended discussions concerning the 'loss' of celluloid confuse and weaken the most appealing arguments of the book and ultimately beg the question: to what extent do material or formal elements contribute to his new, expanded understanding of medium? Rodowick conflates the meanings of cinema and film as delineated above creating a rather distracting and unnecessary intellectual problem. In this respect, Mary Ann Doane's *The Emergence of Cinematic Time* is initially more promising since her search for the essence of cinema leads not so much to a medium-specific ontology as it does to the birth of 'cinematic time' within both the *Kunstwollen* and scientific *Weltanschauung* of the late 19th century. However, the concluding chapter on cinephilia — despite her efforts to allow for movement beyond a restrictive conception of the cinema — also reeks of nostalgia for celluloid which has been 'threatened by the accelerating development of new electronic media.'[17] In the end, the term 'cinematic' for Doane still refers to film, particularly as it is distinguished from chronophotography on the one hand and digital media on the other.[18]

In a blog posted on 7 June 2011, media philosopher Sean Cubitt revisits the issue of the death of cinema once again, promising a longer paper that will address the problem more thoroughly from the point of view of new media. His basic claim seems to be in line with what we have just suggested: cinematic theory after film cannot be grounded, unproblematically, upon a material ontology of one particular medium.[19] His book *The Cinema Effect* already looks at film history and theory from the perspective of the digital image, the tone of which is a bit more balanced than the previous works mentioned, as it exhibits neither a nostalgia for film nor an over-excited embrace of new media. Inspired by Deleuze's cinema books, especially in its appropriation of Pierce and Bergson, Cubitt offers a 'material theory of film,' which is nonetheless cloaked in the language of a strict categorical ontology of cinema.[20] Relying on a quite convoluted — or, as he himself says, 'cryptic but inspiring' — use of Peirce's categories of Firstness, Secondness, and Thirdness, Cubitt develops 'the terms *pixel, cut,* and *vector*, both to anchor the discussion in the material of film, and to shape the whole as a retrospective historiography of images in motion from the standpoint of the digital era.'[21] He therefore creates a similar philosophical muddle as does Rodowick. Ultimately, while the book has to be read with caution, the motivation behind it is well-founded and begins to move in the right direction: we need a theoretically robust concept of the cinematic after the death of cinema.

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[17] Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time,* p. 228

[18] Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time*, pp. 214, 229

[19] Sean Cubitt, 'The Afterlife of Cinema' in *Sean Cubitt's Blog: Aphorisms and Scribbled Notes on the History and Philosophy of Media*, 7 June 2011. http://seancubitt.blogspot.com/2011/06/afterlife-of-cinema.html

[20] Sean Cubitt, *The Cinema Effect* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004), p. 39

[21] Cubitt, *The Cinema Effect*, p. 3

The weakest part of Cubitt's argument is precisely this uncritical slippage between a material theory and a categorical ontology, which he in part admits: 'I propose here three elementary aspects of the moving image corresponding to Peirce's categories and derived from the mathematical foundations of digital media.'[22] The premise of this chapter, and what Cubitt seems to be hinting at in his recent blog, is that *any* ontology of cinema based solely on the qualities of a particular medium does not go far enough and in fact creates theoretical problems. We will briefly outline here a possible solution in relation to the schema developed in Cubitt's book, a solution which is also inspired by Deleuze, but with two important changes. First, the use of Peirce will be entirely abandoned, since this is the most philosophically unconvincing and perhaps unnecessary aspect of Deleuze's cinema books. The significance of Peirce for Deleuze is not philosophical as much as it is historical and can be summed up in a single sentence. If we insist that cinema is to be read as a 'text' — an idea that grounded much film theory of the 60s and 70s, especially those aspects influenced by the French critique of the hegemony of the visual — its signs should be understood, for Deleuze, not as linguistic signifiers *à la* Saussure but rather as images *à la* Peirce. Second, any ontological grounding in medium specificity, whether film or new media, will also be rejected. Whereas Cubitt mixes the ontic register of media-specificity with that of a hierarchical categorical ontology in a way which is ultimately unconvincing, we will attempt here a modal theory of the cinematic which depends upon neither the ontic nor the ontological registers. Drawing both on Deleuze's Spinozist logic of expression and his Bergsonism, this would be a cinematic without film and without Being. The first subtraction — without film — saves us from fruitless debates concerning Bergson's famous critique of 'cinematographic mechanism,' which has everything to do with the particularities of film form, as much as it saves us from the rather worn-out 'question concerning technology' from Benjamin to Heidegger to Virilio to Stiegler and now after the so-called death of film. The second subtraction — without Being — is a nod to Deleuze's commitment to a kinematic metaphysics which, as John Mullarkey has astutely noted, should be qualified a 'metaphysics without Being.'[23]

In his essay 'The Brain is the Screen' — the title of which already puts into question the focal point of his interest in film-philosophy — Deleuze remarks that 'it is particularly stupid to talk about the death of cinema, because the cinema is just beginning to explore audiovisual relations, which are relations of time.'[24] This is perhaps a response to a statement he made in the conclusion to *Cinema 2*, published one year before: 'The electronic image, that is, the tele and video image, the digital image coming into being, either had to transform cinema or to replace it, to mark its death.'[25] Far from seeming overly concerned about the threat of new media, he argues that 'the life or afterlife of cinema

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[22] Cubitt, *The Cinema Effect*, p. 7

[23] John Mullarkey, 'The Very Life of Things: Thinking Objects and Reversing Thought in Bergsonian Metaphysics' in Henri Bergson, *An Introduction to Metaphysics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007), p. xxx

[24] Gilles Deleuze, 'The Brain is the Screen' in *Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews 1975-1995,* ed. David Lapoujade, trans. Amy Hodges and Mike Taormina (New York: Semiotext(e), 2006), p. 291

[25] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), p. 265

depends on its internal struggle with informatics.' That is, the afterlife of cinema depends upon an *education of perception* where the image expresses new ways of hearing and seeing that overcome the mass media, which tends to turn art into 'a business, a pornography, a Hitlerism.'[26] What is essential for Deleuze's conception of the life of the cinematic — with or without film — is that it involves audiovisual images that express temporal relations against mere information technologies. In this context, it is interesting to note that the title of Cubitt's recent blog is in fact 'The Afterlife of Cinema.' But this issue of the life and afterlife of cinema is one Cubitt addresses in his book as well. He asks: 'What is documented in the cinematic event? ... "*le vif,*" the living aspect of life ... movement which is brought by the cinematograph from life into the cinema ... [that is, it documents] not the world as object but as movement ... the cinematic event emphasizes that the world is not the object of a cinematic subject, but that both are part of the same process.'[27] For Cubitt, like Bergson and Deleuze before him, the image is matter in perpetual self-movement and this 'movement-image as pixel' is the fundamental element — the being-in-itself or Pierce's Firstness — of his cinematic ontology. However, conflating the movement-image with the pixel — rather than making his theory more elegant — actually renders it unintelligible. This move collapses two (or even three) different registers of Deleuze's film-philosophy in a way that simply doesn't make sense. In an attempt to argue that narrative is not an essential element of cinema — but rather a 'secondary quality arising from the production of time in the differentiation within and between frames'[28] — Cubitt actually equates the frame with the pixel without really backing up this claim theoretically. He simply states: 'Because we look back from an age in which images are encoded mathematically, and because in a digital age the humanities can no longer afford to remain innumerate, the cinematic present, the frames we see on the screen rather than the separating framelines that stay invisible, can be considered as pixels, with the significant difference that these pixels are temporal, not spatial.'[29] It may or may not be fruitful to attempt to unpack what is going on here philosophically. For our purposes here the important thing to notice, once again, is the theoretical muddle which results from combining a categorical ontology with a formalist one. For Cubitt — and this is just the first of the three ontological categories he puts forth — the being-in-itself of the cinematic is more or less a Bergsonian movement-image that is simultaneously frame and pixel. By following more closely Deleuze's ideas about the potential afterlife of cinema, perhaps we can reconstruct his film-philosophy in order to produce a conception of the cinematic without film that avoids these problems.

Rather than merely assert that the ontic register of media-specificity has no place in any theory of cinema — which is obvious given the historical development of cinematic technologies — it is also important to give more rigorous support for this claim. While Deleuze doesn't get in to any lengthy arguments about the being of celluloid, the filmic elements of *frame*, *shot*, and *montage* do play a crucial

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[26] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 266
[27] Cubitt, *The Cinema Effect*, p. 19
[28] Cubitt, *The Cinema Effect,* p. 38
[29] Cubitt, *The Cinema Effect*, p. 33

role in his philosophy of cinema. The chapters covering these elements are curiously placed between his 'first' and 'second' commentaries on Bergsonian metaphysics in *Cinema 1*, potentially confusing these two registers. However, he makes it very clear at the beginning of *Cinema 2* — in his 'Recapitulation of Images and Signs' — that the three elements of film form are in fact absolutely distinct from the Bergsonian metaphysics of cinematic movement. Deleuze clearly says that the components of cinema should be defined by a 'horizontal axis' of specification and a 'vertical axis' of differentiation. While the former refers to the three primary modes of movement-images — perception-images, affection-images, action-images — the latter refers to the structural and material ways in which film slices up, and therefore differentiates, the open whole of duration through frame, shot, and montage.[30] That is, while the elements of the vertical axis answer the question, 'What is film?,' the modes occupying the horizontal axis answer the broader and more theoretical question, 'What is the cinematic?' Cubitt's schema more or less superimposes, or at least confuses, these two axes. Rodowick's position that a medium is 'equally form, concept, or idea' ultimately confronts the same philosophical conundrum.[31] The elements of the vertical axis of differentiation are entirely media specific — as Rodowick would say, they signify 'the meaning of the medium' — and are entirely dependent upon the range of possibilities of the available technology. *Therefore, a theory of the cinematic not merely after, but without, film might begin by simply bracketing Deleuze's vertical axis and by defining, in Rodowick's words, the 'modes of existence' of perception-images, affection-images, and action-images without any formal elements.* This would only be a heuristic operation that enables us to define a particular work as cinematic, regardless of the medium. But obviously, in practice, these two axes are intimately intertwined in the work and often form a point of productive tension within which it ultimately manifests itself. There is no pure realm of the cinematic aside from the multitude of mediated instances through which it is expressed. But, since artistic innovation often takes place at the very site in which the aesthetic/conceptual and technical/material registers mutually inform each other, a proper analysis of a work must interrogate this site rather than uncritically collapse or confuse the two registers. In this regard, we would agree with Jean-Luc Nancy, who claims that 'the arts are technical in a sense that means they may well be indissociable from what one could call, at least provisionally, the "essence of technics" and by virtue of which the couple "art and technics" would form, in our age, the internal rift and the problematic' of philosophical aesthetics.[32] Although it is beyond the scope of this dissertation, a proper analysis of various cinematic *media* might be undertaken through the lens of German media philosophy — including the work of Boris Groys, Lorenz Engell, and Bernhard Siegert — which is heavily invested in articulating the concept of medium. Engell, for example, has proposed a broad functional definition of media that distinguishes it from the logic of mass media on the one hand — since it has

[30] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, pp. 28-29. For simplicity's sake, we will not discuss here the three minor types of images introduced in *Cinema 1* — impulse-image, reflection-image, and relation-image — since they don't add anything substantial to the theoretical understanding of the nature of movement-images.
[31] Rodowick, *The Virtual Life of Film*, p. 42
[32] Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Muses*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. 25

'almost nothing to do with information, or transmission, or communication' — and mere tools on the other — since it registers within itself, or 'knows,' its own processes of production:

> Media are complex assemblies of material objects, and operations, and handlings, mostly technical apparatuses and gestures ... by which the material world which surrounds us is generated in the first place. Media are ontogenetic machines. To put it simply, media are operative things that produce and assemble and reproduce things, including themselves.[33]

Rather than get into the technical dimensions of this discussion, we will suggest in the final chapter that the entire 'ethical' aspect of Deleuze's cine-aesthetics — given both the modes of perception-image, affection-image, and action-image as well as the limits of available media — demands the creation of new *techne*s of frame, shot, and montage. For now, we will simply give a brief account these vertical elements, as well as their potential applications beyond the filmic apparatus, before moving onto defining the cinematic modes of perception, affection, and action.

The frame is defined by Deleuze simply as an immobile carving-out of perception from the whole of duration; it is a closed set that defines the borders of a particular milieu.[34] This idea is inherited from Bergson's account of perception in which a perceived image is merely subtracted — based upon its biological or practical irrelevance to a particular organism and its *Umwelt* — from the wider universe of matter-as-movement-images. Bergson admits that this mechanism of normal perception, or 'habitual recognition,' is similar to that of a photographic apparatus, which frames and freezes in time a snapshot of the continuous flux of matter, 'a photograph which would then be developed in the brain-matter by some unknown chemical and psychical process.'[35] This conception of the frame is therefore not unique to film and is in fact large enough to accommodate any carving-out of the universe through different technologies that expand or alter our perception. Deleuze, despite Bergson's strong reservations, makes it clear that film is able to expand the frame of perception beyond the all-too-human moment of habitual recognition. It is quite significant that some of Deleuze's most extended discussions of perception occur in the two-volume work on cinema, shifting the 'center of indetermination' from the intentional subject to the film apparatus. Although this is indeed revealing of

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[33] Lorenz Engell, 'Ontogenetic Machinery' in *Radical Philosophy* 169 (September/October 2011), p. 10. Incidentally, Engell has also been instrumental in introducing Deleuze to media and film theory in the German-speaking world. See, for example, Lorenz Engell and Oliver Fahle, eds., *Der Film bei Deleuze/Le cinéma selon Deleuze* (Weimar/Paris: Bauhaus Universität/Sorbonne Nouvelle, 1997); Lorenz Engell and Oliver Fahle, 'Gilles Deleuze' in Alexander Rösler and Bernd Stiegler, eds., *Philosophie in der Medientheorie von Adorno bis Zizek* (München: Fink, 2008), pp. 57-70

[34] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), p. 19

[35] Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans. N.M. Paul and W.S. Palmer (New York: Zone Books, 1988), p. 38. For Deleuze, the photograph is the epitome of the type of figurative cliches with which we are constantly 'besieged.' He is therefore quite harsh when discussing them and tends to concur with Francis Bacon's 'radical hostility' towards them: 'Too many people mistake a photograph for a work of art.' He also agrees with Bergson on this point: 'the photograph tends to reduce sensation to a single level' and is thus not able to 'create the kind of deformation that art provides.... In short, even when the photograph ceases to be merely figurative, it remains figurative as a given, as a perceived thing — the opposite of painting.' Ultimately, the goal of art for Deleuze is to 'wrench the visual image away from the nascent cliche' and this is done, in Bacon's case, through the use of manual 'free marks' expressed by the painter's semi-automatic gestures. Bacon's compulsive and almost fetishistic use of photographs in the preparation of his paintings is redeemed only by deforming the cliches they represent with these violent strokes: 'He will use the manual marks to make the visual image of the Figure emerge.' Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, trans. Daniel Smith (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), pp. 71-77

his position *vis-à-vis* phenomenology, it would be important not to simply reterritorialize the 'center of indetermination' on the film apparatus, but rather to allow for a continual re-framing through the invention of new technologies. Bergson's conception of intuition, which will be analyzed in the next chapter, is entirely a matter of expanded perception made possible through the technologies of art, philosophy, madness, and mysticism. To this list, Deleuze adds 'dreams, pathological processes, esoteric experiences, drunkenness, and excess ... measures that are not very respectable, rational, or reasonable.'[36]

The second element of the vertical axis is the shot, or *plan* in French. While Deleuze defines the frame is as the immobile cut which outlines the limits of a perceptual environment, the shot is 'the mobile section of a duration,' which is 'the determination of the movement that is established in the closed system.'[37] Formally, the shot marks 'the difference between the cinematographic image and the photographic image.'[38] But this definition of the shot also bears striking resemblance to what Deleuze calls a plane of immanence, which is precisely a mobile 'section of chaos,' a 'selection of movement' that serves as the ground of creation in any field, not only film and not only art.[39] Here it should be noted that the French *plan* translates not only 'shot' and 'take' in the lexicon of film but also, more generally, the words 'plan' and 'plane.' The shot, like film itself, does seem to have an expansive afterlife. Deleuze even planted the seeds of this potential movement beyond film in *Cinema 1*, where he argues that the 'closest ... conception of the shot' is, in fact, to be found in a description Jean Epstein gave of a *painting* by Fernand Léger. Deleuze says: 'Epstein has most deeply and poetically extracted this nature of the shot as pure movement, comparing it to a cubist or simultaneist painting.'[40] The Epstein quote is interesting in its striking consonance with Deleuze's own descriptions of what he calls 'smooth space' or the 'diagram,' which are precisely the names of the plane of immanence in the domain of art:

> All the surfaces are divided, truncated, decomposed, broken, as one might imagine oneself seeing through the thousand-faceted eyes of an insect. Descriptive geometry whose canvas is the limit-shot. Instead of submitting to perspective, this painter splits it, enters it, tests and unravels it, illusion by illusion. For the perspective of the outside he thus substitutes the perspective of the inside, a multiple perspective, shimmering, sinuous, variable and contractile, like the hair of a hydrometer. It is not the same to the right as it is to the left, nor above as it is below. That is, the fractions of reality which the painter presents do not have the same denominators of distance, of relief or of light.[41]

While the shot is the ground, the determination of a mobile section of chaos that precedes the act of creation proper, the most basic definition of montage in Deleuze's system — before it gets differentiated into the four main types of organic, dialectic, quantitative, and intensive — is simply the

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[36] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 41
[37] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, pp. 22, 18
[38] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 24
[39] Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* pp. 42, 39
[40] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, pp. 23-24
[41] Jean Epstein, *Écrits sur le cinéma, tome 1* (Paris: Seghers, 1974), p. 115

'composition, the assemblage of movement-images' in the 'determination of a whole.'[42] While we have already discussed at length the importance of montage in relation to Eisenstein's early system of film form, we should also point out that montage conceived without such a system would simply become the final *composition* — and is indeed renamed as such in Eisenstein's later writings — of a work into an organized bloc of sensations, that is, of percepts and affects.[43] And on this point, again, Deleuze stresses the importance of separating the vertical and horizontal axes of the cinematic, which he more generally refers to in terms of the 'technical and aesthetic' registers of the construction of art:

> Composition, composition is the sole definition of art. Composition is aesthetic, and what is not composed is not a work of art. However, technical composition, the work of the material that often calls on science (mathematics, physics, chemistry, anatomy), is not to be confused with aesthetic composition, which is the work of sensation. Only the latter fully deserves the name *composition*, and a work of art is never produced by of for the sake of technique. To be sure, technique includes many things that are individualized according to each artist and work.... And the relationship between the two planes, between technical and aesthetic planes of composition, constantly varies historically.[44]

Once we bracket this vertical or technical axis, we are left with a pure cinematic aesthetic that consists of the modes of perception-image, affection-image, and action-image. And after this operation, 'montage' simply becomes the name of 'the assemblage of movement-images, hence the inter-assemblage of perception-images, affection-images, and action-images.'[45] But in order to arrive at our conception of the cinematic without film, we need to perform not only this extraction of the horizontal from the vertical axis, but also a distillation of its three modes down to what Deleuze calls their 'genetic elements.'

The genetic element of the perception-image is the 'gaseous perception' that characterizes the Bergsonian flux of self-moving — that is, kinematic — and self-perceiving — or kinaesthetic — matter.[46] In Bergson's schema, extensive movement and intensive movement are qualitatively different, the former being movement as the translation of bodies in a pre-defined space and the latter being movement as the transformation of relations amongst bodies that alters space itself. Bergsonian

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[42] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, pp. 29-30. Incidentally, in Cubitt's already confused schema, the second ontological category of cinema — which he names the 'cut' — involves a type of organization of individual images that lies somewhere between frame, shot, and montage, but also utilizes other filmic means for arranging and relating different pixels: 'Framing, compositing in layers (in the *mise-en-scène*, in-camera or in post-production), and jumping from tableau to tableau are all acts of singling out and multiplying, of converting the unstable equilibrium of the pixel into places and objects, organizing the on and offscreen, the behind and before into coherent worlds. The innocent but abstracted delight in sensation, in light moving in time, gives way to the analytic pleasures of recognizing objects and their movements in space. This new mode of analytic cinema I will call the cut.' Cubitt, *The Cinema Effect*, p. 43.

[43] Remarkably, in *Nonindifferent Nature*, Eisenstein largely replaces the language of 'montage-collision' with that of 'composition.' This aspect of Eisenstein's later work has, for the most part, been overshadowed by his early writings on montage. 'Composition' becomes one of the names for 'the new cinematography' of the post-War era, which takes its cue from the synaesthetic qualities of traditional Chinese landscape painting *contra* the Japanese forms of art that inspired his earliest essays. Unlike 'naked' dialectical montage, this new cinematography — epitomized, according to Eisenstein, by his own *Ivan the Terrible* — is 'never perceived as a jolt or alternation' and, in fact, 'might even seem to be a return to the bosom of premontage cinematography.' Sergei Eisenstein, *Nonindifferent Nature*, trans. Herbert Marshall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 987), pp. 243, 291-2

[44] Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* pp. 191-192

[45] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 70

[46] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 83

metaphysics prioritizes the latter: movement *per se* over the things that move, which are merely abstractions, or snapshots, of pure movement. In this schema, a concept of the image displaces the traditional dualism of extension and thought to one of matter and memory. The ingenious result of this move is that the structure of the former is not simply mapped upon the latter. Both matter — in its quality of self-perception — and memory — in its aspect of inhuman durations — lie on a single metaphysical continuum from complete contraction to complete expansion. The cinematic expression of gaseous perception is called the *gramme*, which is defined this way in the glossary at the end of *Cinema 1*: 'It is the genetic element of the perception-image, inseparable as such from certain dynamisms (immobilization, vibration, flickering, sweeps, repetition, acceleration, deceleration, etc.). The gaseous state of a molecular perception.'[47] With the *gramme*, perception is extended so far beyond the human that it potentially reaches 'the *clinamen* of Epicurean materialism.'[48] This is the *kino-eye*, the Vertovian vision of an eye in matter that is able to connect any point in the universe to any other and in any temporal order:

> Vertov realizes the materialist program of the first chapter of *Matter and Memory* through the cinema, the in-itself of the image. Vertov's non-human eye, the kino-eye, is not the eye of a fly or of an eagle, the eye of another animal. Neither is it — in an Epsteinian way — the eye of the spirit endowed with a temporal perspective, which might apprehend the spiritual whole. On the contrary, it is the eye of matter ... which knows no other whole than the material universe and its extension.[49]

At the theoretical limit of this schema, therefore, cinematic perception is equated with the vibrations of kinematic *phusis*. Incidentally, classical kinematics has itself been defined, quite surprisingly, as 'the science that describes the apparent motion of particles without reference to its causes, the science of the *cinema* of particles.'[50] This is the context in which we should understand the following, equally surprising, thesis:

> The material universe, the plane of immanence, is the machine assemblage of movement-images. Here Bergson is startlingly ahead of his time: it is the universe as cinema in itself, a metacinema. This implies a view of the cinema itself which is totally different from that which Bergson proposed in his explicit critique.[51]

Of course, subtracting out the vertical axis of film form implies a view of the cinema which itself will dissipate the tension between Deleuze and Bergson on the importance of the cinematic for philosophy. The films Deleuze cites as exhibiting the best *grammes* — which are all North American experimental films from the 1960s — will help in justifying, once again, this subtraction. Of this tradition of filmmaking, Deleuze argues that 'if there is any constant factor in this cinema, it is the construction by various means of gaseous states of perception.' Stan Brakhage's *Mothlight*, for example,

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[47] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 217
[48] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 83
[49] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 81
[50] Jean Eisenstaedt, *The Curious History of Relativity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), p. 16
[51] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 59

'explores a Cézannian world before man, a dawn of ourselves' thus 'attaining a pure perception.'[52] This short film was made without the use of a camera and is instead a 16mm construction of individual photograms — a word Deleuze, in fact, uses synonymously with *gramme* — each of which is arranged with a collage of transparent organic matter, including dead moths, leaves, and flowers. P. Adams Sitney has noted that, when projected, the transparent matter reveals 'a fascinating and sometimes terrifying intricacy of veins and netlike structures, which replaces the sense of depth in the film with an elaborate lateral complexity' creating an almost 'abstract expressionist space.'[53] The invocation here of abstract expressionism, with its 'lateral complexity' and lack of depth-of-field, immediately brings to mind Deleuze's descriptions of diagrammatic smooth space, which we will discuss later. Incidentally, Gene Youngblood also cites Brakhage's films as prime examples of what he calls synaesthetic cinema and argues that such cinema 'reduces depth-of-field to a total field of non-focused multiplicity' by 'replacing montage with collage.'[54]

Deleuze concludes his analysis of the transition of the perception-image from 'normal' subjective vision to Epstein's liquid perception and finally to Vertov's gaseous perception by quoting at length P. Adams Sitney's ecstatic description of the film *Bardo Follies*. Deleuze simply prefaces this quote with the following enigmatic statement: 'Camera-consciousness raises itself to a determination which is *no longer formal or material*, but genetic and differential. We have moved from a real to a genetic definition of perception. George Landow's film, *Bardo Follies*, sums up in this respect the whole process.'[55] We will unpack the philosophical significance of this movement from empirical to transcendental perception in chapter 2. For now, it is simply important to note that, while the apparatus of film helps Deleuze to theorize this movement beyond phenomenological experience, his genetic definition of perception is ultimately *not* determined by the 'formal or material' elements of film. This is illustrated by Brakhage's *Mothlight,* which exhibits the *gramme* — literally 'something written or drawn' — precisely *without* the use of one of the central components of the filmic apparatus: a camera. Furthermore, Landow's *Bardo Follies* achieves the *gramme* by using a technique which implies the destruction of another central component of traditional film: the celluloid frame. The film gets its name from the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* and its content can be read as a political statement against the Vietnam war. Like many of the

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[52] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 84. Brakhage has explicitly spoken of his desire to 'restructure' vision in his films, the guiding frame of reference being the 'untutored' and synaesthetic vision of a child: 'Imagine an eye unruled by man-made laws of perspective, an eye unprejudiced by compositional logic, an eye which does not respond to the name of everything but which must know each object encountered in life through a new adventure of perception. Hoe many colors are there in a field of grass to the crawling baby unaware of "Green"? How many rainbows can light create for the untutored eye? How aware of variations in heat waves can that eye be? Imagine a world alive with incomprehensible objects and shimmering with an endless variety of movement and gradations of color. Imagine a world before the "beginning was the word."' Stan Brakhage, 'Metaphors on Vision' in *The Avant-Garde Film*, ed. P. Adams Sitney (New York: New York University Press, 1978), p. 120

[53] P. Adams Sitney, *Visionary Film* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 174, 170

[54] Youngblood, *Expanded Cinema*, pp. 87-91, 85. Youngblood counts not only works of Brakhage as synaesthetic, but also certain films by Will Hindle, Ronald Nameth, Carolee Schneemann, Andy Warhol, Jordan Belson, and Michael Snow, amongst others. There is a big overlap, therefore, between films that achieve gaseous perception for Deleuze and those that exhibit synaesthetic/kinaesthetic tendencies for Youngblood.

[55] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 85. My emphasis.

Structural films, it was very much a product of the countercultural spirit of North America in the 60s. But Deleuze's interest in this film lies elsewhere. The first ten minutes consists solely of a looped sequence depicting a naval flotilla moving past a waving woman. And for the next half hour after that, we witness the slow but complete splitting and destruction of the frame in favor of a pure perception-image:

> The same loop appears doubled into a set of circles against the black screen. Then there are three circles for an instant. The film image in the circles begins to burn, creating a moldy, wavering, orange-dominated mass. Eventually the entire screen fills with one burning frame which disintegrates in slow motion in an extremely grainy soft focus. Another frame burns, and the whole screen throbs with melting celluloid.[56]

Both films challenge the necessity of the film apparatus for the expression of cinematic perception-images: the first by producing them without the use of a camera and the second by destroying the celluloid medium itself. More significantly, they are prime examples of films that express the *gramme*, the 'genetic element' of the perception-image which, following a Bergsonian logic, is simultaneously the 'genetic element of all possible perception.'[57] We could safely say then that the perception-image pushed to the limit causes the elements of the film apparatus to disappear and melt away. Expressions of the *gramme* therefore open up one possibility for discovering the potentials of the cinematic without film. Another important consequence of the logic of gaseous perception is that it completely short-circuits any hard distinction between movement-images and time-images since the *gramme* 'releases the perception of doing' by substituting 'pure auditory and optical perceptions for motor-sensory perceptions; *to make one see the molecular intervals*, the holes in sounds, in forms ... *to make lines of speed pass through* these holes in the world.'[58]

On this important point of the difference between movement-images and time-images, let's take a moment to get completely clear. We would have to agree with Jacques Rancière who says that the 'movement-image and time-image are by no means two types of images ranged in opposition, but two different points of view on the image.'[59] That is, the difference is not ontological but epistemological. Despite the ambiguity around this issue, Deleuze himself admits as much when he repeats that movement-images exhibit an 'indirect representation' of time, which simply means that they propagate a view of time as subordinated to a spatialized conception of movement. Time-images 'present time directly' which means, as we shall see, under the aspect of Bergsonian durations(s). This direct presentation also discloses the fact that, empirically, there is no organic Whole but rather an open 'chaosmos' traversed by differentials and false continuities. Another clear giveaway of this point is the fact that, in *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, there are in fact no new images as such, which means that the

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[56] Sitney, *Visionary Film,* p. 364

[57] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 83

[58] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 85. As we shall see, pure perception completely subtracted from duration is only a theoretical limit in Bergson's philosophy and, therefore, the difference between matter and memory — or indeed movement(-images) and time(-images) — is only a difference of degree rather than a difference in nature. Deleuze makes this explicit when he claims that a movement-image *always* 'expresses duration.' *Ibid*., p. 11.

[59] Jacques Rancière, *Film Fables*, trans. Emiliano Battista (Oxford: Berg, 2006), pp. 112-113

nature, or *phusis,* of the cinematic can be extracted entirely from *The Movement-Image*. For example, if we look at the glossary of the second volume, the 'time-image' is not presented as a new image with its own distinct definition, but rather as a refraction into seven distinct qualities, or *signs*: chronosign, hyalosign, onirosign, lectosign, noosign, opsign, mnemosign. Again, despite the confusion, Deleuze clearly states the difference between images and signs, as well as the ontological primacy of the former over the latter in the logic of expression of movement-images:

> The movement-image is matter itself, as Bergson showed. It is a matter that is not linguistically formed, although it is semiotically, and constitutes the first dimension of semiotics. In fact, the different kinds of image which are necessarily deduced from the movement-image are the elements that make this matter into a signaletic material. And the signs themselves are the qualities of expression that compose and combine these images, and constantly recreate them, borne or carried along by matter in movement.[60]

The second mode of the movement-image is what Deleuze calls the affection-image, which he initially relates to facial close-ups such as those exhibited by Artaud in Carl Dreyer's *The Passion of Joan of Arc*. In this regard, affection is defined in a Bergsonian manner, as a 'kind of motor tendency on a sensory nerve, that is, a motor effort on an immobilized receptive plate' that occupies the interval between incoming perception and outgoing action.[61] The kinetic energy from a sensory impression is not translated into immediate action, but rather collects and fuels movements within the folds of the brain that finally find their expression in the various contortions of the human face. But Deleuze quickly supplements this definition of affection with a more Spinozist one which, in terms of simple billiard ball physics, 'refers to a state of an affected body and implies the presence of an affecting body,' a state that can be measured by its own subsequent 'power of acting.'[62] In this sense, the face is relegated to a gauge that merely indicates the powers or qualities of 'the inhuman in human beings'[63] that 'are no longer feelings or affections since they go beyond the strength of those who undergo them.'[64] Therefore, a filmic close-up ultimately expresses 'the intensive face as a pure inhuman Power;' it is the face as well as the face's own effacement.[65] This inhuman conception of the close-up can be applied to any object — 'a face-ified object'[66] — whose abstracted qualities or powers are expressed in the image: the 'greenness' of a leaf or its 'shimmering' in the sunlight. In this second sense, the affection-image exhibits precisely what Deleuze, inspired from the Stoic theory of *lekta*, calls 'events' in his *Logic of Sense*. However, there is also a third sense of the affection-image. Just as the genetic element of the perception-image is the *gramme*, the genetic element of the affection-image is the *espace quelconque*

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[60] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 33
[61] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 66
[62] Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, trans. Robert Hurley (San Francisco: City Lights, 1988), pp. 49-50
[63] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), p. 171
[64] Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* p. 164
[65] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 90. Compare this conception of the affection-image to Epstein's idea of magnification in which he compares the affects, or 'intermittent paroxysms,' involved with watching close-ups to the overwhelming states of 'vertigo,' being pricked by 'needles,' as well as 'a sort of need, like tobacco or coffee.' Jean Epstein, 'Magnification' in *French Film Theory and Criticism, Volume 1*, ed. Richard Abel (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), pp. 235-241
[66] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 97

or 'any-space-whatever.'[67] Beyond the face and beyond the shimmering surfaces of individual face-ified objects is 'an unknown, unexplored landscape,' a space populated solely by events.[68] This is space no longer determined by normal Euclidian coordinates but is rather — strongly evoking what Deleuze elsewhere calls a smooth or diagrammatic space — 'a tactile space ... a perfectly singular space which has lost its homogeneity, that is, the principle of its metric relations or the connection of its own parts, so that the linkages can be made in an infinite number of ways. It is a space of virtual conjunction.'[69] The final examples Deleuze gives of affection-images in their most distilled state, as *espacesquelconques,* are films by Michelangelo Antonioni and Marguerite Duras. Antonioni's films — especially those that feature scenes of the desert or deserted spaces like *L'Avventura*, *Eclipse*, *Red Desert*, *Zabriskie Point*, and *The Passenger* — are noted by Deleuze since in them 'the face disappeared at the same time as the character and the action, and the affective instance is that of the any-space-whatever, which Antonioni in turn pushes as far as the void.'[70] Likewise, the barren spaces and dehumanized characters of Duras' *Agatha* are invoked since they illustrate most clearly the genetic element of the affection-image. Furthermore, the film beautifully exhibits a type of disjunction between the optical and the visual as well as a particular logic of time that defines the qualities of the time-image. Of course, Deleuze choses not to engage with the rather obvious psychoanalytic overtones of the film, focusing instead on its affective aesthetic:

> It is as if the camera began from the bottom of a large, empty, unused room in which the two characters are merely their own phantoms, their shadows. At the opposite end, there is an empty beach onto which the windows look. The time that the camera takes to go, with hesitations and retreats, from the end of the room to the windows and then to the beach is the time of the narrative. And the narrative itself, the sound-image, unites a time of after and a time of before, moves from the former to the latter: a time of after humanity, since the narrative reports the history of a primordial couple which is already finished, and a time of before humanity, where no presence disturbed the beach. From the former to the latter, a slow celebration of the affect.[71]

The most distilled element of the affection-image therefore, like the *gramme*, prohibits the mutual exclusion of the time-image from the movement-image. Indeed, while describing *espacesquelconques*, Deleuze realizes that he is moving too far into the theoretical domain of the second volume and cuts the discussion short, promising that 'we will have occasion to return to ... these points.'[72] Indeed, like Antonioni, Duras is discussed at length in the pages of the second volume of Deleuze's film project where, not insignificantly, her cinematic work is compared to that of 'a great painter.'[73]

The *espacequelconque* is not only a connecting link between movement-images and time-images. It is also one of the most important concepts that define the nature of the latter, in which movement between the sensory and motor systems is temporarily short-circuited causing psychic energy — induced by the type of pure sonic and optical percepts expressed in *Agatha* — to collect within the

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[67] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 110
[68] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 172
[69] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 109
[70] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 120
[71] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 122. Translation modified.
[72] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 121
[73] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 259

'brain,' making it difficult to react to a given situation. While affections (Spinoza's *affectio*) are defined as the states of an affected body — the 'range of tones like wonder, love, hatred, suffering,' or even beauty, that accompany the shock of an encounter[74] — affect (Spinoza's *affectus*) refers primarily to the shock of the encounter itself between bodies, the force of which depends upon their 'correlative variation.'[75] That is, affect induces the passage from one state of affection to another, a passage which implies the increase or decrease of a body's capacity to *act*. In this Spinozist sense, affect is therefore the shock fundamentally inherent to the nature of the cinematic, so fundamental that Deleuze gives affection-images the place of Firstness in his Peirceian schema. As we shall see, the concepts of inhuman percepts and affects are closely related to the 'genetic elements' of the perception-image and affection-image. These percepts and affects are ultimately, for Deleuze, the fundamental elements that are depicted in *any* work of art, whatever the genre.

The last mode of the movement-image, and perhaps what distinguishes an art as *cinematic* in the sense being drawn out here, is the action-image. Of the three modes, the action-image is closest to narrative, but while much of Deleuze's analyses seem to focus on plot he does make it clear that narrative itself *presupposes* the particular arrangements of perception- and affection-images and not the reverse. Cubitt, as we have seen, also makes it clear that narrative is only secondary to the Being of the pixel. But, in his convoluted schema, narrative is also a problem of the elements he categorizes under the rubrics of Secondness and Thirdness. Nonetheless, aside from this, there is a sense in which the action-image itself provides the conditions of plot. Following Noël Burch's terminology, Deleuze calls the most basic structures of the action-image the Large Form — which consists of a situation, an action within it, and a subsequent modification of the situation (S-A-S') — and the Small Form — where there is a transition from an equivocal action to a clarified situation, which then gives rise to a new action (A-S-A'). Deleuze gives many examples that typify these two fundamental structures of narrative, but the difference between the two is perhaps most evident in the contrast between the typical narrative logics depicted in crime and detective films. Nevertheless, what is of interest for us here are the 'genetic or embryonic' elements of these two forms, which he labels *encompasser* and *vector*.[76] At the limit, the Small and Large forms are Ideas in the Platonic sense since they 'do not merely designate forms of action, but conceptions, ways of conceiving and seeing' that 'generally precede' and 'determine' the 'script ... mise-en-scene, cutting and montage.'[77] If the genetic elements of the perception-image and the affection-image define the nature of the movement-image and the fundamental shock between two movement-images, respectively, then the distilled action-image is the poetic element of the movement-image, its creative *élan* before narration. The *encompasser* and *vector* determine two possible spaces created in a cinematic work, which Deleuze — in one of his most curious philosophical operations in the *Cinema* books — appropriates from certain principles of

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[74] Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 139
[75] Deleuze, *Spinoza,* p. 49
[76] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 159
[77] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 178

Chinese and Japanese landscape painting, namely the movement of the vital breath and the gestural drawing-out of a brush stroke. Relying upon the work of Henri Maldiney, Deleuze defines the qualities of these proto-filmic spaces as, first of all, the rhythmic contraction and dilation of situations and actions that encompass an ambient whole within which individual elements are organically situated and, secondly, a local zig-zagging line that connects elements step by step, passing from intensive action to intensive action constructing a heterogeneous space in the process.[78] 'In the Japanese cinema itself, each of the two great directors closest to us [Kurosawa and Mizoguchi] has given priority to one of the two action spaces. Kurosawa's work is animated by a breath which fills the duels and battles. This breath is represented by a single stroke ... as Kurosawa's personal signature.'[79] While, according to Maldiney, the element of the vital breath is primary in East Asian aesthetics and in fact determines the movement of a brush stroke, Deleuze is more interested in theoretically defining the type of space each element suggests in itself. In this respect, he seems to prioritize the stroke since the disconnected, heterogeneous, local space it draws is closer to the space of Bergsonian intensive movement than the all-encompassing organic whole of the vital breath. Interestingly, following the logic of East Asian landscape painting, Deleuze describes the spaces of the *vector* and the *encompasser* in manual terms such that we have 'the wrinkle or broken stroke [*trait brisé*]' versus 'the single stroke [*trait unique*]' which traces 'the movement of a great circle or an organic spiral.'[80] The general structure of the Small Form (A-S-A'), of which the *vector* is the genetic sign, itself suggests that it actually 'creates space' or a milieu *ex nihilo* 'instead of presupposing it' as in the Large Form.'[81]

Deleuze argues that the strongest examples of vectors and the broken gestural spaces they draw-out are to be found in Mizoguchi's films, particularly *Sisters of the Gion* and *Ugetsu,* which rely upon extended, slow-paced pans and tracking shots. The camera's movement traces a line that 'connects or joins heterogeneous elements, while maintaining them as heterogeneous.'[82] But not only does vectorial space evoke the meditative movement of a calligrapher's brush stroke. Deleuze also cites Noël Burch's work on Japanese cinema, which compares Mizoguchi's horizontal pans — what Burch calls 'scroll-

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[78] Maldiney relies upon the first two of six principles described by the the 6th century Chinese portraitist Xie He. These principles are quite succinct and notoriously difficult to translate, but they have laid the foundations of Chinese aesthetic theory in many ways. The first principle — simply 'spirit resonance, life-motion' — which Maldiney glosses as 'reflect the vital breath, that is, create movement,' helps inform his conceptions of systole and diastole, which are in turn appropriated by Deleuze in theorizing the relation between the flux of the world and a primary, non-phenomenological, sensation. The second principle — 'structural method, using the brush' — translated by Maldiney as 'seek the skeleton [*ossature*], that is, know how to use the brush,' is used by Deleuze in his various meditations on the line and stroke. Maldiney's concept of rhythm, which Deleuze also utilizes, connects these two principles creating a circuit between the play of forces within the world, sensory experience, and the coming-to-form of a work of art. Here Deleuze simply uses these two principles to define two types of space created by cinematic art. Henri Maldiney, *Regard Parole Espace* (Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 1973), p. 167

[79] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 188

[80] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 187

[81] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 193. On this point, it is interesting to note that Cubitt's category of Thirdness is called the *vector*, which he undoubtedly takes from Deleuze and which he also relates to Paul Klee's 'active line that develops freely' as well as Émil Cohl's animated film *Fantasmagorie* where the line constantly 'draws and redraws itself.' Cubitt, *The Cinema Effect*, pp. 70, 76

[82] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 194

shots, the proto-filmic organization of ... space' — to the experience of unrolling a traditional Japanese painted handscroll, or *emakimono*, thus suggesting that the gestural movement of the camera across the screen itself creates vectorial space.[83] At this point, Deleuze reminds us that 'Eisenstein was also fascinated by Chinese and Japanese landscape painting, because he saw in it a prefiguration of the cinema,' but he was ultimately 'less interested in different spaces than in the *form* of "rolling-pictures," which he compares to a pan shot.'[84] There is a sequence in *Ugetsu* that beautifully illustrates these rolling-pictures or scroll-shots. The camera moves slowly from a palace room where the potter and his lover are casually awaking from bed. With a subtle dissolve, the camera continues to move, as if in one long gesture, through the palace wall into a forest where the two are now bathing in a small pond. The camera gradually tracks left, again in close-up, across the rocks and, while we still hear the lovers giggling and splashing, makes its way to an open clearing in which they are picnicking next to a lake. These three fragmented spaces, each with its own rhythm and dramatic mood, are linked by the meandering vector of the camera, which traces out what Deleuze calls a 'line of the universe.' The spaces — heterogeneous but neither totally disconnected nor unified in an encompassing Whole — are elements on a zig-zagging line of force that 'leaps from one to another ... across the gaps.'[85] This line of the universe is a 'jagged line that unites singular points or remarkable moments at the summit of their intensity' passing from intensive action to intensive action, creating a patchwork space of related but fragmented elements in its wake.[86] Deleuze thus takes Maldiney's rendering of Xie He's second principle quite literally; 'seeking the skeleton' refers both to the gestural stroke of the camera as well as the broken line it constructs in space. And it is in this sense that Mizoguchi is seen as developing 'a metaphysics as much as a technique,' making visible an pre-filmic Idea of cosmic skeleton-space.[87] It is also in this sense that Mizoguchi 'reaches the extreme limit of the action-image' in which lines of the universe 'bring forth a reality that is no longer anything but disoriented, disconnected.'[88] In his work, the action-image begins to collapse since the sensory-motor schema that underlies it is threatened by the emergence of a disconnected space. In these instances, action is defined no longer through the movements of characters, but rather in the broken space that is drawn out for them by the gestural strokes of the camera. Therefore, like the genetic elements of the perception-image and affection-

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[83] Noël Burch, *To The Distant Observer: Form and Meaning in Japanese Cinema* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), pp. 228-229

[84] Deleuze, Cinema 1, pp. 188, 240 n. 12. For Eisenstein's extensive analysis of East Asian scroll painting as proto-cinematic, see his *Nonindifferent Nature*, pp. 216-383

[85] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 168

[86] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 218. Although the line of the universe is formally distinct from the Gothic line Deleuze uses to discuss German Expressionist films, the two can be usefully compared, especially when we remember the Daoist context of the line of the universe, that its gesture traces out movements more or less adequate to the life-force of nature. For the Gothic line, 'a *non-psychological life of the spirit,* which belongs neither to nature nor to our organic individuality' and which marks the 'perhaps illusory opening of a spiritual universe.' Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 54

[87] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 193

[88] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 195

image, the vector (or line or stroke) blurs the hard distinction between movement- and time-images.[89] But are these three terms — vector, line of the universe, and broken stroke — precisely equivalent or do they point to a larger gesture that itself encompasses their slightly overlapping meanings? Giorgio Agamben has written three short essays on the cinematic gesture that may be able to offer some insight into this issue.

Agamben's central claim in these essays is that gesture, rather than the image, is the quintessential cinematic element. While this claim remains rather cryptic and is barely worked out in a satisfactory manner, it is clear that Agamben is trying to build upon Deleuze's notion of the movement-image in a way that finally removes the last traces of the frozen image from it:[90]

> Gilles Deleuze has argued that cinema erases the fallacious psychological distinction between image as psychic reality and movement as physical reality. Cinematic images are neither eternal postures (such as the forms of the classical age) nor immobile sections of movement, but rather mobile sections, images themselves in movement, which Deleuze calls movement-images. It is necessary to extend Deleuze's argument and show how it relates to the status of the image within modernity. This implies, however, that the mythical rigidity of the image has been broken and that here, properly speaking, there are no images but only gestures. Every image, in fact, is animated by an antinomic polarity: on the one hand, images are the reification and obliteration of a gesture (it is the *imago* as death mask or as symbol); on the other hand, they preserve the *dynamis* intact (as in Muybridge's snapshots).... Even the *Mona Lisa*, even *Las Meninas*, can be seen not as immobile and eternal forms, but as fragments of a gesture or as stills of a lost film, solely within which would they regain their true meaning. And that is so because a certain kind of *ligatio*, a paralyzing power whose spell we need to break, is continuously at work in every image; it is as if a silent invocation calling for the liberation of the image into gesture arises from the entire history of art.[91]

This remarkable statement clearly echoes Philippe-Alain Michaud's project of reconfiguring modern art history from the perspective of 'the movement of images.' And indeed Agamben, like Michaud, cites Aby Warburg's 'Mnemosyne Atlas,' along with the work of Muybridge and Marey, to bolster his thesis:

> As Gilles Deleuze has shown, the image in cinema — and not only in cinema, but in modern times generally — is no longer something immobile. It is not an archetype, but nor is it something outside history; rather, it is a cut which itself is mobile, a movement-image, charged as such with a dynamic tension. This dynamic charge can be clearly seen in the photos of Etienne-Jules Marey and

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[89] Jacques Rancière correctly notes that Deleuze sometimes betrays his own pure ontology of cinema by relying too heavily upon the logic of narrative in the development of certain concepts. Most crucially, Deleuze's presentation of Italian Neo-realism as the style that best exhibits the impossibility of action in the regime of the time-image focuses upon the behaviors of characters while conveniently ignoring the various extra-narrative 'counter-movements' of what Rancière calls the 'film fable:' 'the situations of narrative rarefaction Rossellini dramatizes on the screen are not situations indicative of the "impossibility to react," or of the inability to bear intolerable spectacles or coordinate gaze and action. They are experimental situations that Rossellini uses to superimpose onto the normal movement of narrative continuity another movement directed by a fable of *vocation.'* Rancière, *Film Fables*, pp. 13-14

[90] Agamben's attempt to save movement-images from the potential reifying tyranny of the static image is, while understandable in a superficial reading of Deleuze, a bit disingenuous and betrays the enormous amount of philosophical work Deleuze *and* Bergson have performed on this historically problematic concept. We will come back to this important issue in due course. For now, it is worth noting that Merleau-Ponty makes a similar charge against the conception of the image put forth in Bergson's *Matter and Memory* and suggests, provocatively but also instructively, that Heidegger's *Wesen* — which, used in a verbal sense, is central to an understanding of the later Merleau-Ponty — should be put in its place. *Wesen,* he argues, is precisely what 'Bergson rather badly called "images."' Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 1968), p. 174

[91] Giorgio Agamben, 'Notes on Gesture' in *Dass die Körper sprechen, auch das wissen seit langem*, ed. Hemma Schmutz and Tanja Widmann (Köln: Walther König, 2004), pp. 108-109. Translation modified. There are three slightly different versions (and translations) of this essay. This relatively unknown version is, in fact, the most worked-out with six sections as opposed to the four of the other versions, which appear in his books *Infancy and History* and *Means without End.*

> Eadweard Muybridge which are at the origins of cinema, images charged with movement.... One could consider our relation to painting in a similar way: paintings are not immobile images, but stills charged with movement, stills from a film that is missing. They would have to be restored to this film. (You will have recognized the project of Aby Warburg).[92]

Interestingly, however, Agamben begins his essay on the cinematic gesture by evoking the work of Gilles de la Tourette, the French neurologist who 'discovered' Tourette Syndrome at the very moment cinema was in its birth pangs. For Agamben, Muybridge and Tourette together announce the annihilation of gesture in everyday life. Their respective studies, which merely signal a wider epistemic shift, attempt to break up the physiological movement of the body into mechanical and analyzable segments in a way that mirrors the increasing mechanization of late-19th century bourgeois culture. Therefore, cinema and Tourette's Syndrome are read simultaneously as symptoms of 'a society that has lost its gestures' and as possible remedies for this condition, since they try to 'reclaim what has been lost' even as they 'record this loss.'[93] One of Tourette's scientific investigations literally maps the progression of the human gait on a roll of white wallpaper nailed to the floor, producing an image which 'cannot fail to remind' us of Muybridge's serial photography that captures the elements of human and animal locomotion.[94] In this way, Tourette also possessed a vision that was 'already prophetic of the cinema.'[95] This reference to Tourette's Syndrome — with its 'amazing proliferation of tics, spasmodic jerks, and mannerisms' that constitute a 'generalized catastrophe of the sphere of gestures'[96] — connects Agamben's nostalgia for gesture with Paul Virilio's conception of cinematic 'picnolepsy.'[97] Agamben notes that, despite thousands of reported cases of Tourette's Syndrome in the last decades of the 19th century, it more or less ceased to exist as a psychological disorder until it was 'rediscovered' by neurologist Oliver Sacks in 1970. When we remember that this was precisely the moment of the first major crisis in film as documented, for example, by the publication of Gene Youngblood's *Expanded Cinema*, we can grasp the full significance of Agamben's argument. The histories of the filmic apparatus and Tourette's Syndrome were until then linked by 'ataxia, tics, and dystonia' that largely went unnoticed. They had 'become the norm to the extent that everybody had lost control of their gestures and was walking and gesticulating frantically. This is the impression, at any rate, that one has when watching the films that Marey and Lumière began to shoot' in this early years of this intertwined history.[98]

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[92] Giorgio Agamben, 'Difference and Repetition: On Guy Debord's Films' trans. Brian Holmes in *Guy Debord and the Situationist International: Texts and Documents*, ed. Tom McDonough (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002), p. 314

[93] Agamben, 'Notes on Gesture' in *Dass die Körper sprechen, auch das wissen seit langem*, p. 107

[94] Agamben, 'Notes on Gesture' in *Dass die Körper sprechen, auch das wissen seit langem*, p. 106

[95] Agamben, 'Notes on Gesture' in *Dass die Körper sprechen, auch das wissen seit langem*, p. 105

[96] Agamben, 'Notes on Gesture' in *Dass die Körper sprechen, auch das wissen seit langem*, p. 106

[97] It should be noted that Agamben's nostalgia for gesture is not specifically connected to ideas of the body. That is, unlike Virilio, it is not rooted in an anti-technological phenomenology. Rather, it takes its sentiment from the opening line of Debord's *Society of the Spectacle*: 'Everything that was directly lived has receded into a representation.' Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, trans. Ken Knabb (London: Rebel Press, 2005), p. 7

[98] Agamben, 'Notes on Gesture' in *Dass die Körper sprechen, auch das wissen seit langem*, p. 107

But Agamben's analyses of cinema are marked not only by a nostalgia for 'the homeland of gesture;'[99] they are a political or ethical call for a coming cinema for which new images, new scenes are not enough. What is required instead is a deep renegotiation of the relationship between image and gesture. For him, the movement-image as gesture has the power to liberate the cinematic from the last traces of a static image, which in my reading of Agamben, is explicitly linked to film form. Thus, when he suggests a compositional technique for the coming cinema — modeled upon Debord's films — he focuses only on 'two *transcendental* conditions of montage,' which are labeled repetition and stoppage. For this coming cinema, 'there is no need to shot film anymore, just to stop and repeat.'[100] These transcendental conditions of the cinematic remain vague propositions. On one level, repetition simply 'restores the possibility of what was; renders it possible anew,'[101] which refers to the political task of the coming cinema to free the image from its frozen past and release its potential gestural movement for the future. Like Benjamin's concept of the dialectical image, Agamben suggests that this Janus face of gestural movement differentiates cinema from the oppressive present of mass media, which is devoid of such potential and, therefore, of political power. On another level, repetition is a direct reference to a Deleuzian or Bergsonian metaphysics. The title of this second essay on cinema is, in fact, 'Difference and Repetition' and Agamben admits a 'proximity of repetition to memory ... which can transform the real into the virtual and the virtual into the real.'[102] In this light, stoppage — 'the power to interrupt ... which is very important in cinema, but once again, not only in cinema'[103] — can be understood in the way Deleuze describes aesthetic composition in *What is Philosophy?*: stoppage is the creative wresting of a bloc of sensation from the flux of the chaosmos that is simultaneously a political act. 'Deleuze once said of cinema that every act of creation is also an act of resistance. What does it mean to resist? Above all it means de-creating what exists, de-creating the real, being stronger than the fact in front of you. Every act of creation is also an act of thought, and an act of thought is a creative act, because it is defined above all by its capacity to de-create the real.'[104] Agamben's cinematic future, like Deleuze's, needn't have anything to do with film *per se* since it is ultimately concerned with unleashing the kinematic (or gestural) potentials of 'the real' which involves, more than techniques of a specific medium, certain transcendental conditions of the creative act that 'allows the appearance of "imagelessness" ... making visible the fact that there is nothing more to be seen.'[105] Ultimately, the crucial point here is not the creation of yet another *image* but rather issuing a final death-blow to the regime of overly-clichéd images by the hand of cinematic gestures.

Agamben makes this even more explicit in a third essay on the cinematic gesture entitled 'The Six Most Beautiful Minutes in the History of Cinema.' The six minutes concerned constitute a

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[99] Agamben, 'Notes on Gesture' in *Dass die Körper sprechen, auch das wissen seit langem*, p. 109
[100] Agamben, 'Difference and Repetition' in *Guy Debord and the Situationist International*, p. 315. My emphasis.
[101] Agamben, 'Difference and Repetition' in *Guy Debord and the Situationist International*, p. 315
[102] Agamben, 'Difference and Repetition' in *Guy Debord and the Situationist International*, p. 316
[103] Agamben, 'Difference and Repetition' in *Guy Debord and the Situationist International*, p. 317
[104] Agamben, 'Difference and Repetition' in *Guy Debord and the Situationist International*, p. 318
[105] Agamben, 'Difference and Repetition' in *Guy Debord and the Situationist International*, p. 319

sequence from Orson Welles's unfinished *Don Quixote* which, due to copyright issues, was not part of the 1992 edit by Patxi Irigoyen and Jesús Franco. This sequence begins with Don Quixote sitting in a small theater transfixed, like the children around him, to the images on screen. He gets up to stand in front of it and we finally see what grabs his attention so intensely: a horse-drawn cavalry charging violently towards the screen. Apparently frustrated and confused by their lifelike nature, he draws his sword and begins to slash at them as the children erupt in laughter, egging him on. At first, there are just a few slashes in the screen, which bring to mind Lucio Fontana's gestural cut canvases that were being produced around the same time Welles was shooting. But as Agamben explains, 'the knights can still be seen, but the black rupture, made by Don Quixote's sword, is getting wider and inexorably destroys the images. In the end there is nothing left of the screen, one can only see the wooden structure it was attached to.'[106] Quite literally then, this sequence illustrates how cinematic gesture can produce imagelessness. It also illustrates the political task of cinema to come to terms with the potentials and limitations of the filmic apparatus, to slash at itself while at the same time attempting a rescue.[107] In this sequence, the endless self-propagation of images within images is challenged by an intervening Don Quixote, who places himself between two screens and thus puts under erasure the false power of the mass media simulacrum machine. And, ultimately, his heroic gesture replaces the image with an imagelessness that beckons for a *coming cinema*.

In the opening paragraph of 'Difference and Repetition' Agamben suggests that, instead of focusing upon the outdated conception of a finished work, the important question for the coming cinema should be one of action and its potential: 'Rather than inquiring into the work as such, I think we should ask about the relation between what could be done and what actually was done.'[108] This would be a first step in theorizing about an unfinished cinema of gestures — with its broken gaits and spasmodic jerks — that is not accompanied by reified images at all. Here, we can glean another point of intersection between Deleuze and Agamben since there seems to be some conceptual overlap between the genetic element of the action-image — the 'broken stroke' — and Agamben's cinematic gesture. Agamben says that 'because cinema has its center in the gesture and not in the image, it belongs essentially to the realm of ethics and politics (and not simply to that of aesthetics).'[109] We certainly don't need a frozen *image* in order to enter the realm of aesthetics since, as Deleuze shows, it primarily involves pure percepts and affects. But since Agamben chooses to limit his musings on cinema to the third aspect of Deleuze's movement-image, and conceptualize it as cinematic gesture, we also enter the

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[106] Giorgio Agamben, 'The Six Most Beautiful Minutes in the History of Cinema' in *Profanations,* trans. Jeff Fort (New York: Zone Books, 2007), p. 93

[107] It should be noted that Welles began shooting this film in Mexico in protest of Universal Studies, who more or less kicked him out of the studio during the editing of *Touch of Evil,* his last Hollywood film. *Don Quixote* is an independent, albeit unfinished, production shot silently and self-funded by Welles. Agamben would have found 'beautiful' not only the literal and gestural slashing out at the images on screen but also — given Agamben's clear preference for avant-garde cinema over the mass media — Welles's metaphoric slashing out against another layer of the filmic apparatus symbolized by the name Hollywood.

[108] Agamben, 'Difference and Repetition' in *Guy Debord and the Situationist International*, p. 313

[109] Agamben, 'Notes on Gesture' in *Dass die Körper sprechen, auch das wissen seit langem*, p. 109

realm of action, that is, the realm of ethics and politics. In this realm, the concept of gesture gives us another nuanced lens with which to understand the action-image. Agamben indeed inscribes gesture within the sphere of action, but also clearly distinguishes it from both acting (*agere* or *praxis*) and making (*facere* or *poiesis*). 'What characterizes gesture is that in it nothing is being acted or produced, but rather something is being endured and supported (*gerere*).'[110] That is, with gesture, Agamben is advocating a third type of action that attempts to short-circuit the traditional Aristotelian dichotomy between *praxis* and *poiesis*. If the latter is a means in view of an end and the former is an end without means, 'the gesture then breaks with the false alternative between ends and means that paralyzes morality and presents instead means that, *as such*, evade the orbit of mediality without becoming, for this reason, ends.'[111] Cinematic gesture negotiates this dualism between means and ends by creating a mode of expression that is neither mere practice nor production towards an end, but a production without end — and therefore without image — which operates by continuously reinventing its own medium. Nothing is represented and nothing is completed; there is only perpetual gestation. There is a creative suspension of climax reminiscent of Deleuze and Guattari's powerful concept of milieu, which is of course etymologically related to the words media and means: 'a continuous, self-vibrating region of intensities whose development avoids any orientation toward a culmination point or external end.'[112] Furthermore, Agamben claims, this is the only way to make sense of Kant's obscure ethico-aesthetic formula 'purposiveness without purpose,' and to this important point we shall return in the last chapter.

Following this line of thought, we can offer a preliminary definition of the cinematic without film as *any* art that involves the creation of percepts, affects, and broken gestures in a way that continuously 'remediates' — to borrow a term from Jay Bolter and Richard Grusin[113] — the technical elements of frame, shot, and montage.

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[110] Agamben, 'Notes on Gesture' in *Dass die Körper sprechen, auch das wissen seit langem*, p. 110
[111] Agamben, 'Notes on Gesture' in *Dass die Körper sprechen, auch das wissen seit langem*, p. 110
[112] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 22.
[113] Jay Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000)

1.3 Towards a theory of the cinematic without film, Take II: From Bellour to Michaux

In 1985, the French film theorist Raymond Bellour exclaimed in a short essay that 'there are no longer, or should no longer be, any analyses of films. There are just gestures. Free gestures, made possible now because one day a new intellectual practice that had to be called film analysis allowed ... for the *stopping* of films.'[1] The consonance with Agamben's words on cinema is quite remarkable, even though Bellour uses the concepts of gesture and stoppage in a completely different, even opposing, manner for a completely different theoretical purpose. However, this statement is important for other reasons, since it announces a fundamental shift in Bellour's thinking from being committed to a Metzian-style analysis of film in the 1970s to his two volume *L'entre-images* project of the 1990s, which attempts to reframe film theory first from the point of view of photography and video and then from the even broader landscape of painting, literature, and the emergence of digital media.[2] For Bellour, the dream of structural film analysis was already 'in flames' — due to theoretical and technical issues, that is, the failure of structuralism and the increasingly widespread use of video — in the mid 80s, precisely at the moment when Deleuze was publishing his two volume film-philosophy.[3] This coincidence is significant because Deleuze will become important, perhaps even central, to Bellour's newly reformulated engagement with film. While there is no direct reference to Deleuze in this short but transitional text, Bellour's move beyond Metz ultimately comes down to the same theoretical issue underlying Deleuze's philosophy of cinema: film always exceeds and resists being reduced to merely linguistic operations. However, two years later, Bellour began to write essays — which would appear again as central chapters in his first *L'entre-images* volume — directly and heavily influenced by Deleuze's cinema books.[4] One gets the sense that Deleuze's powerful alternative to structural film theory, along with the slow demise of the medium of film in the face of video and new media, together forced Bellour to rethink his whole theoretical landscape from the ground up. Indeed, he does speak about his encounter with Deleuze's cinema books as an 'event' and has spoken about 'the astonishment and the stupefaction which were mine when I first read these books which passed like a meteorite through the sky of

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[1] Raymond Bellour, 'Analysis in Flames' in *Diacritics* 15:1 (Spring 1985), p. 54

[2] Raymond Bellour, *L'analyse du film* (Paris: Albatros, 1979); Raymond Bellour, *L'entre-images*: *photo, cinéma, vidéo* (Paris: La Différence, 1990); Raymond Bellour, *L'entre-images 2: mots, images* (Paris: POL, 1999). 'Analysis in Flames' is reprinted as the first chapter of *L'entre-images,* pp. 19-22

[3] Deleuze's *Cinema 1* and *Cinema 2* were published in 1983 and 1985, respectively. Deleuze's also published a direct critique of structuralism in 1972, a critique which was positively replaced in the *Cinema* books by Peirce's non-linguistic semiotics. Gilles Deleuze, 'How do we recognize Structuralism?' in *Desert Islands and Other Texts*, ed. David Lapoujade, trans. Michael Taormina (New York: Semiotexte, 2004), pp. 170-192.

[4] See especially 'La durée-cristal' and 'L'interruption, l'instant' in *L'entre-images*, pp. 96-99, 109-133. Bellour also cites *Logic of Sense* and *Anti-Oedipus* in his *Analysis of Film* and was therefore already a reader of Deleuze in the 1970s.

cinema theory.'[5] I will briefly discuss Bellour's concept of *L'entre-images* — as well as his newer project on the 'body of cinema' — before moving on to an analysis of certain works of the Belgian poet and artist Henri Michaux. Although Bellour is widely known as a film theorist, Michaux has proven to be his most sustained commitment. From writing one of his earliest books on *Henri Michaux ou une mesure de l'être* (Gallimard 1965), to editing the three-volume *Pléiade* edition of Michaux's works (Gallimard 1998-2004), to publishing his most recent book entitled *Lire Michaux* (Gallimard 2011), Bellour's career as a film theorist has been in some ways haunted and overshadowed by the presence of this 'angel of the bizarre.'[6] In his own way, Michaux opens up both the possibilities for understanding the cinematic without film as well as for conceiving of 'signs' beyond the confines of language. And it is towards Michaux, and more specifically to the concept of *gesture* in Michaux, that we will ultimately turn.

While Bellour's early film theory might be understood as an attempt to answer Bazin's question 'What is Cinema?' his more recent work displaces the very importance of this type of formalist query by analyzing the *relations* between film and other, what I would call, cinematic media. Therefore, in the first volume of *L'entre-images*, he is primarily interested in understanding 'what happened to cinema when it became impossible for it to separate itself from a double pressure: one that seemed to emerge from its own interior [still photography] and the other which modified it through its (direct or indirect) collusion with video.'[7] Indeed, his term *entre-images* itself highlights this broader field of cinematic relations and, in the introduction to the first volume, he defines the spaces between photography, cinema, and video by the 'elective gestures of the consciousness of the image, of both its destiny and its survival.' Furthermore, the metaphorical space of this 'common gesture' is actually the 'between-*times* of the fixed image and the movement image.'[8] Already we recognize Deleuze in the background, but the conceptual inheritance can be made even more direct if we consider a phrase from the preface Deleuze wrote for Serge Daney's 1986 *Ciné-Journal*. Daney was an editor at *Cahiers du cinéma* from 1964 to 1981 and co-founded the magazine *Trafic* in 1991 with his longtime friend Raymond Bellour. So it is without question that Bellour would have read Deleuze's words in this preface describing the 'new relations between images' produced by the situation of post-war cinema.[9] Therefore, while Bellour doesn't offer a history of *entre-images*, he invokes in an impressionistic way the impact different media have had on the formal integrity of film. Furthermore, the theoretical framework he constructs is not entirely original, but rather one that strongly leans upon and extends the work of Gilles Deleuze. Given these two points, he defines his task quite modestly as an attempt 'to formulate an experience [of *entre-images*], to construct it bit by bit, beginning from the moment when it was admitted that we had entered,

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[5] Raymond Bellour, 'Thinking, Recounting: The Cinema of Gilles Deleuze' in *Discourse* 20:3 (Fall 1998), p. 56. This article was originally published in French in 1997 and subsequently reprinted in *L'entre-images 2,* pp. 139-157

[6] This is the title of one of Blanchot's four essays on Michaux. Maurice Blanchot 'The Angel of the Bizarre' in *Faux Pas*, trans. Charlotte Mandell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), pp. 222-226

[7] Bellour, *L'entre-images*, p. 14

[8] Bellour, *L'entre-images*, pp. 12-13

[9] Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), p. 71

through video and everything that it brings, into another time of the image.'[10] That is, his approach is synthetic, or constructivist, rather than analytic. Although his use of terminology differs from Agamben's, the end result is similar: the mass of gestures between and within images makes impossible the project of a structural analysis of film, which depends so much upon the stopping of movement with the freeze-frame. And although Bellour tends to repeat the word 'gesture' quite often, it is significant that his fundamental concept is one that has to be continuously constructed, rather than spontaneously expressed, on an inhuman Deleuzian line *between* images since — to quote the opening sentence of volume two — 'without a doubt, we know less and less what is *the* image, *an* image, what are *the* images.'[11] Bellour realizes that the advent of digital imagery has irrevocably flattened the classical hierarchy of the arts and that we are now in a situation in which a multiplicity of various types of images are able to circulate on the same plane. And while he never expresses a nostalgia for film, he does remain faithful to it as a point of orientation for his investigations, albeit a point that has to be continually qualified as 'Cinema and ...,' 'Cinema, Beyond,' 'Of an Other Cinema.'[12] The difference between his conception of *entre-images* and my own conception of the *cinematic* is that the latter refuses any trace of a privileging of film as well as any discussion of 'stable' images; a cinematic image is never a mere snapshot or freeze-frame, but always itself an *entre-image* or, more precisely, a movement-image. The task of Bellour's *entre-images* project involves 'discerning mixtures between images ... so diverse that words sometimes fail to name them.... All images, including those of painting and the computer,' not to mention those evoked by the 'words' of the second volume's subtitle. And he vaguely describes his method as one that 'draws lines of flight of a universe-in-fusion, bringing together works never before seen in this regard.'[13] This last rather abstract statement gains more traction when compared to Deleuze's own method of cartographic analysis:

> In a multiplicity what counts are not the terms or the elements, but what there is 'between,' the between, a set of relations which are not separable from each other.... A line does not go from one point to another, but passes between the points, ceaselessly bifurcating and diverging, like one of Pollock's lines. To extract the concepts which correspond to a multiplicity is to trace the lines of which it is made up, to determine the nature of these lines, to see how they become entangled.[14]

The longest chapter of the second volume, entitled simply 'The Chamber,' illustrates just how far Bellour is willing to take this mixing of images. Over the course of the essay, the chamber becomes populated by a whole melange of different *entre-images* from the likes of Fritz Lang, Samuel Beckett, Michael Snow, James Turrell, François Truffaut, Maurice Blanchot, Nam June Paik, Lewis Carroll, Chris Marker, Herman Melville, Dan Graham, Marcel Proust, Bill Viola, Emily Bronte, Vito Acconci, Stan Brakhage, Franz Kafka, Marguerite Duras, Virgina Woolf, Alfred Hitchcock, Edgar Allan Poe, and

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[10] Bellour, *L'entre-images*, p. 15

[11] Bellour, *L'entre-images 2*, p. 9

[12] The first two are chapter titles from Bellour, *L'entre-images 2*, pp. 79-102, 103-112. The last is the title of an essay from the same period: Raymond Bellour, 'Of an Other Cinema,' trans. Robert Vallier in *Art and the Moving Image,* ed. Tanya Leighton (London: Tate, 2008), pp. 406-422

[13] Bellour, *L'entre-images*, p. 9

[14] Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues II*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), p. viii

Bruce Nauman, amongst others. Rather than analyze the lines circulating between these various images, which Bellour does with real aplomb, our purpose here is only to extract his theoretical framework.

The essay begins by briefly placing the cinema hall within the lineage of spectacle spaces from the traditional theater to the contemporary living room, where the flat-screen television now functions as a fourth wall. But a more theoretical conception of the chamber quickly emerges:

> Cinema is a chamber because it reconstructs, abstractly and physically, sensory data from the perspective of the body-subject that has surrendered to it. It is dark chamber continually traversed by a singular clarity through which all the world is given, a point of view that varies only in proportion to the fixity of the eye that receives.[15]

This statement implicitly but immediately evokes Deleuze's description of the perception of a monad conceived as 'a dark chamber decorated only with a stretched canvas diversified by folds.'[16] Twenty pages later, Bellour finally admits this connection to Deleuze, to whom the essay is dedicated, when he claims that Deleuze has given us two philosophical conceptions of the chamber.[17] The first appears in his analysis of Beckett's *Film* which, Deleuze argues, successively pushes to the limit and exhausts the three types of cinematic images — action, perception, and affection — to the point that the character 'becomes-imperceptible.' The silent film begins with broken gestural movements of the camera that directly push the character, who is actively trying to escape its gaze, to run along a wall and then up the zigzagging stairs of an apartment building into a small room. Here, the character's 'perceptions become things that in turn perceive him' and, in a paranoid frenzy, he attempts to expel this perception in things by veiling the mirror, covering the furniture, tearing up photographs, and removing the animals.[18] Exhausted, he finally falls asleep in a rocking chair. But when he awakes, the camera is starring straight at him and, with an extreme close-up exhibiting his unbearable shock, he dies. But this affection-image becomes, according to Delezuze, a virtual *espacequelconque* which 'has already begun to move in the mind.'

> He is like a cork floating on a tempestuous ocean: he no longer moves, but is an element that moves.... The chamber has lost its partitions, and releases an atom into the luminous void, an impersonal yet singular atom that no longer has a self by which it might distinguish itself from or merge with others.[19]

The second image of a chamber appears at the conclusion of Deleuze's book on Foucault which in many ways is a prelude to the themes he will work out, through a reading of Leibniz, two years later in *The Fold.* At the limit of Foucauldian cartography, at the very edge of what counts as knowledge

> we immerse ourselves from stratum to stratum, we cross the surfaces, scenes and curves, we follow the fissure, in order to reach an interior of the world ... we look for a central chamber, afraid that there will be no one there and that man's soul will reveal nothing but an immense and terrifying

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[15] Bellour, *L'entre-images 2*, p. 281

[16] Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, trans. Tom Conley (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), p. 4. Yet another chapter title of Bellour's *L'entre-images 2* is 'Folding the image,' pp. 222-226. We will discuss Deleuze's use of Leibnizian perception at length in the next chapter.

[17] Bellour, *L'entre-images 2*, pp. 304-305

[18] Gilles Deleuze, 'The Greatest Irish Film (Beckett's "Film")' in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel Smith and Michael Greco (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), pp. 24-25

[19] Deleuze, 'The Greatest Irish Film' in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 26. Translation modified.

> void ... and reach an outside, an atmospheric element, a 'non-stratified substance' that would be capable of explaining how the forms of knowledge can embrace and intertwine on each stratum, from one edge of the fissure to the other.... This informal outside is a battle, a turbulent, stormy zone where particular points and the relations of forces between these points are tossed about. Strata merely collected and solidified the visual dust and the sonic echo of the battle raging above them. But, up above, the particular features have no form and are neither bodies nor speaking persons.[20]

As Bellour quickly points out, this 'savage line of the outside' that leads to the central chamber is the line that has been continuously drawn and redrawn in the work of Henri Michaux; simply put, it is 'the line of Michaux.'[21] Quite remarkably, in a few pages the cinematic chamber transforms from a physical space that is able to accommodate a variety of *entre-images* to a space that houses the 'cortical foldings ... of the brain' in which these images are pulverized even further to the point at which they become formless and unrecognizable as individual entities.[22] At this point, Bellour also notes that the name 'La chambre' is also the title of a short text Michaux wrote as part of his *Un certain Plume*. In this prose poem — a singular snapshot in the life of Michaux's alter-ego, Monsieur Plume — Bellour explains that 'all events of the world, from the outside to the interior of the chamber, and from this interior-exterior to inside the mental chamber of the immobile body in action, acquire a ghostly quality relating to their speed.'[23]

But what exactly is the relation between *entre-images* and this 'mental chamber of the immobile body in action,' which seems to lie at the theoretical heart of Bellour's analysis? For the answer, we have to fast-forward ten years to Bellour's latest research, published as *Le corps du Cinéma: hypnoses, émotions, animalités*.[24] The book begins with an epigraph quoting Henri Michaux: 'The unfolding alone is important. The rest is but an epiphenomenon.' In our case here, this means disregarding the multitude of *entre-images* Bellour cites in order to fully unfold this image of Michaux, who lies hidden within the dark chambers of all his books. We can see how Bellour's theoretical problem is framed and reframed simply by looking at the titles of two central chapters from *L'entre-images 2* and *Le corps du Cinéma*: his thought moves from 'Folding the Image' to 'Unfolding the Emotions,' respectively.[25] In the Prologue to *Le corps du Cinéma* — albeit using language that directly evokes his previous work, which glosses the cinema as a dark Leibnizian chamber circulating with *entre-images* — Bellour calls cinema 'a particular image mixed with many others in the grand Baroque house of images.'[26] But his focus is now slightly

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[20] Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, trans. Sean Hand (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), p. 121

[21] Bellour, *L'entre-images 2*, p. 305. Curiously, Deleuze himself leans heavily upon Michaux in the last paragraph of his book on *Foucault* when describing this line — 'Michaux's line of "a thousand aberrations" with its growing molecular speed' — which circulates within the central chamber. Deleuze, *Foucault*, pp. 122-123. And even though he follows Deleuze on this line, Bellour also puts forth the obvious question: 'Why does this book of philosophy, on a philosopher ... end on a writer-painter with this image of a central chamber?' Raymond Bellour, 'The Image of Thought: Art or Philosophy, or Beyond?' trans. Alina Opreanu in D.N. Rodowick, *Afterimages of Gilles Deleuze's Film Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), p. 7

[22] Deleuze, *Foucault*, p. 119

[23] Bellour, *L'entre-images 2*, p. 308. Michaux's 'La Chambre' can be found in his *Oeuvres Complètes I*, ed. Raymond Bellour (Paris: Gallimard, 1998), pp. 675-676

[24] Raymond Bellour, *Le corps du Cinéma: hypnoses, émotions, animalités* (Paris: POL, 2009)

[25] Bellour, *L'entre-images 2,* pp. 222-226; Bellour, *Le corps du Cinéma,* pp. 128-149

[26] Bellour, *Le corps du Cinéma,* p. 14

different, since the 'dark chamber' is folded into a new concept of the 'body of cinema.' This lexical transformation allows him to take another step closer to the heart of *entre-images*, that is, to the forces and affects that course between them. Cinema is now understood as a sensitive material, as an inhuman body that is alive to the extent that camera movements along with the acts of framing, cutting, and montage constitute a kind of 'breathing' of the film. Bellour hopes that such an approach might enable him to better understand what exactly takes place in the dark cinema hall and, in particular, in the intimate foldings between the spectator and the images on screen:

> There are two bodies of cinema, constantly twisting and informing each other. The body of films, all films one by one, shot by shot, composed and decomposed. The body of the spectator, affected by the vision of each film, indexed as an immense theater of memory which is then reflected back to all films. The body of cinema is the virtual place of their conjunction.[27]

The virtual point of encounter between the bodies of cinema and spectator is marked by what Bellour calls emotion. It is important to note, however, that this concept of emotion is far from the everyday understanding of the term. Rather, the 'emotion of cinema' is to be understood more in terms of Deleuzian affect, as 'a shock to the body,' mixed together with what psychiatrist and psychoanalyst Daniel Stern calls 'vitality affects.'[28] That is, emotion for Bellour — rather than referring to the categorical affects of anger, joy, or fear — signifies 'both the inner force of affect as a sensible form of the experiencing body and the spiritual or mental awareness that more or less accompanies it. This duality corresponds to the two sides of the fold, "fold on fold," articulated by Deleuze between the two modalities of unconscious and conscious perception.'[29] By evoking the fold yet again, we should immediately understand that the body of cinema really means 'the body-brain' that encompasses the various interstices and foldings between images on the screen and the spectator.[30] That is, from a chamber filled with a multitude of *entre-images*, we now have a film-philosophy that supports a conception of the body-brain of cinema — properly understood as a place of encounter between film and spectator — filled with impersonal and transpersonal affects.

With this movement towards the brain, Bellour can take the final step beyond his Metzian heritage. And again, this move is inspired by Deleuze's film theory. Bellour begins a recent article — which functions as a kind of synopsis of the third chapter, entitled 'Un spectateur pensif,' of the 'Emotions' section of *Le corps du cinéma* — by quoting from two interviews Deleuze gave following the publication of *Cinema 2*. Here is the first:

> On what basis can we assess films?... It's not to psychoanalysis or linguistics but to the biology of the brain that we should look for principles, because it doesn't have the drawback, like the other two disciplines, of applying ready-made concepts. We can consider the brain as a relatively

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[27] Bellour, *Le corps du Cinéma,* p. 16

[28] Bellour, *Le corps du Cinéma,* p. 139. Bellour in fact devotes an entire chapter to Stern's work, where he compares vitality affects with what the neuroscientist Antonio Damasio calls 'background emotions.' The mixing of Deleuze with Stern should not be understood as arbitrary since Félix Guattari relied upon Stern in his last book, *Chaosmosis*. See also Raymond Bellour, 'Going to the Cinema with Félix Guattari and Daniel Stern,' trans. Paul Fileri in *The Guattari Effect*, ed. Éric Alliez and Andrew Goffey (London: Continuum, 2011), pp. 220-234

[29] Bellour, *Le corps du Cinéma,* p. 140. He suggests that his choice of the word emotion over sensation or affect is an 'opaque' one that has to do with debates internal to film theory. *Ibid.*, p. 138

[30] Bellour, *Le corps du Cinéma,* p. 221

> undifferentiated mass and ask what circuits, what kinds of circuit, the movement-image or time-image traces out, or invent, because the circuits aren't there to begin with.... The brain's the hidden side of all circuits. It's up to art to trace through it the new paths open to us today. You might see continuities and false continuities as cinematic synapses — you get different linkages and different circuits.[31]

In the second interview, Deleuze adds two crucial components to this argument: the enigmatic idea that that the 'brain is the screen' and the equally enigmatic reference to Michaux, which we will explore in depth a bit later:

> The brain is the screen. I don't think psychoanalysis or linguistics have much to offer cinema. But the biology of the brain — its molecular biology — that's a different story. Thought is molecular. We are slow beings, constituted by certain molecular speeds. As Michaux says: 'Man is a slow being, made possible only through fantastic speeds.' Cerebral circuits and linkages do not preexist the stimuli, the corpuscles, or particles that trace them. Cinema is not theater: it composes its bodies using particles. The linkages in cinema are often paradoxical and always overflow the simple association of images. Because cinema puts the image in motion, or rather endows the image with self-movement, it never stops tracing and retracing the circuits of the brain.[32]

These remarkable words allow Bellour to further clarify the nature of the 'lines of flight' which, as he has already argued, course within and between *entre-images*. They consist of a multitude of linkages and circuits that continuously interconnect, disconnect, and bifurcate according to the logic of the plasticity of neural synapses.[33] The 'body-brain' marks the porous boundary that envelopes these rhizomatic circuits. But, as we have seen, the body-brain of cinema for Bellour includes both the screen as well as the spectator within the dark space of the film hall. This is precisely his way of repeating Deleuze's quite enigmatic statement that the brain is the screen. So, we could say that the linkages and circuits that course through the cinematic body-brain consist of at least three types: (1) the movement between the various *entre-images* projected on the screen, (2) the synaesthetic movement within the brain that

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[31] Deleuze, 'On the Time-Image' in *Negotiations*, pp. 60-61. Translation modified.

[32] Gilles Deleuze, 'The Brain is the Screen' in *Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews 1975-1995*, ed. David Lapoujade, trans. Ames Hodges and Mike Taormina (New York: Semiotexte, 2006), pp. 283-284. Translation modified. Bellour has suggested that one meaning of the concept of the brain as screen has to do with the fact that the impression of a film on a viewer is precisely analogous to Bergson's definition of affect as 'a kind of motor tendency on a sensory nerve.' Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans. N.M. Paul and W.S. Palmer (New York: Zone Books, 1988). p. 55. Furthermore, Anne Sauvagnargues has argued that this concept lies at the heart of the connection between Michaux and Deleuze. She describes Michaux as himself a 'sensor of forces and affects' in whose 'dazzling' work as a poet and artist we see the type of coordination 'between inorganic vitality' and the 'power of kinetic transformation' that Deleuze 'systematized almost twenty years later.' Anne Sauvagnargues, *Deleuze et l'art* (Paris: PUF, 2006), p. 208

[33] Catherine Malabou has developed a philosophical concept of plasticity from her readings of Hegel and contemporary neuroscience. Her work should be praised for its attempt to disclose the ways in which neuroscience has perpetuated an ideology that is complicit with the logic of post-Fordist capitalism, specifically in its tendency to elide the political difference between the terms plasticity and flexibility. The latter — which has become *the* mantra of an increasingly multitasked and multinational immaterial labour force — is only able to 'grasp one of the semantic registers of plasticity: that of receiving form. To be flexible is to receive a form or impression, to be able to fold oneself, to take the fold, not to give it. To be docile, to not explode. Indeed, what flexibility lacks is the resource of giving form, the power to create to invent or even to erase an impression, the power to style. Flexibility is plasticity minus its genius.' Catherine Malabou, *What Should we do with our Brain?*, trans. Sebastian Rand (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), p. 12. Her latest book is a kind of manifesto that calls for a 'neuronal liberation' that moves beyond the politically naive and conceptually reductionist discourses of neuroscience and natural science in general towards an awareness of the plasticity of the brain. However, her decisively *Hegelian* conception of plasticity, which is immodestly offered as the ideology neuroscience needs, itself displays a dialectic logic — to give, receive, and 'explode form' — that belies the real structural and functional complexity of neuroplasticity itself. Catherine Malabou, *The Future of Hegel: Plasticity, Temporality, and Dialectic*, trans. Lisabeth During (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 187

Bellour calls *emotion*,[34] (3) the continuous circuit that links the two types of movement and defines the contours of the cinematic *body-brain* as such. It is hard to know how far we should understand this use of the brain as metaphorical, but both Deleuze and Bellour rely heavily upon the most current research in neuroscience to support their claims. Bellour argues that film-philosophy and brain science should themselves be seen as forming a circuit of knowledge such that 'while Deleuze recognized the cinema as a brain (or body-brain), it is essential for a neurobiologist to be able to recognize the brain (or body-brain) as cinema.'[35] As Bellour notes, Deleuze based his arguments on the research of several scientists, including Gilbert Simondon, Raymond Ruyer, Steven Rose, and Jean-Pierre Changeux. Bellour, as we have already seen, leans heavily upon the work of Daniel Stern and Antonio Damasio. And there are numerous arguments throughout Damasio's work which state that the first problem for understanding the neurobiology of consciousness 'is the problem of how we get an integrated "movie-in-the-brain," a movie with as many sensory tracks as our nervous system has sensory portals — sight, sound, taste and olfaction, touch, inner body senses, and so forth.'[36] Furthermore, Damasio himself suggests that the relation between cinema and the brain is much more than a mere metaphor. Rather, he argues that the very invention of the cinematic apparatus was modeled, 'sometimes consciously and sometimes unconsciously, on the workings of the human mind as produced by the greatest and most baroque of film studios: the human brain.'[37] So, while this circuit between cinematic thinking and neuroscience remains on the order of the speculative, there seems to be enough substance to warrant further and deeper exploration. Indeed, this intuition has been the core premise behind Bellour's most current research. Our interest here — whether we refer to a brain or to a baroque house — is to unravel the various lines and linkages that circulate between images as well as between these images and the movement in our minds.

One important consequence of Bellour's analysis is that it provides another way of moving beyond Deleuze's seemingly mutually exclusive categories of the movement-image and time-image. Elsewhere, Bellour states quite clearly that the division between the two volumes of the *Cinema* books is simply a 'functional' one that serves not only to frame the trajectory of Deleuze's argument, but also to place it within the broader perspective of his work as a whole. The demarcation between movement-images and time-images, therefore

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[34] Bellour acknowledges that emotions *qua* vitality affects are potentially synaesthetic by nature given that they share the same cognitive structure as what Stern calls amodal perception, which allows for cross-modal equivalences: 'If the concept of vitality affects is so important to thought on art in general and the cinema in particular, it is because vitality affects are irreducible to discreet or Darwinian affects, assuming psychological contents like fear, sadness, shame, etc. On the contrary, we are talking about affects associated with the force, intensity, quality, form or rhythm of an experience, which touch it in the detail of its material reality. These vitality affects are the expression of so-called amodal perception, which ensures circulation between the different levels of sensorial reality.' Raymond Bellour, 'Deleuze: The Thinking of the Brain' in *Cinema: Journal of Philosophy and the Moving Image* 1 (2010), p. 85

[35] Bellour, 'The Thinking of the Brain,' p. 83

[36] Antonio Damasio, 'A Neurobiology for Consciousness' in *Neural Correlates of Consciousness: Empirical and Conceptual Questions*, ed. Thomas Metzinger (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000), p. 111

[37] Antonio Damasio, 'Film, Bewusstsein und Emotion: Aus der Gehirn-Perspektive' in *Kino im Kopf: Psychologie und Film seit Sigmund Freud*, ed. Kristina Jaspers and Wolf Unterberger (Berlin: Bertz & Fischer, 2006), p. 82

> has a definite dynamic effect (in spite of ambiguities which belong to the variable historical assignation of the two types of images). But one also feels at times in the second volume a sort slippage in which a will, still only obscurely operative in the first volume, becomes manifest. My suggestion: a will to reconstruct a history of philosophy using that of cinema.[38]
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> There is thus indeed history, evolution, flow, in spite of points of anticipation and reversal (the most notable being the role assigned to Ozu, 'the inventor of opsigns and sonsigns,' who already conceives a pure time-image within the very time of the movement-image).[39]

This 'dynamic' demarcation, which displays 'points of anticipation and reversal,' should perhaps be understood as a *plastic* one, invoking again the logic of neural synapses and circuits. Beyond Deleuze's own framing of this epistemic shift for the purpose of his own theoretical trajectory — which allows him to say in the final sentence of *Cinema 2*, 'there is always a time, midday-midnight, when we must no longer ask ourselves "What is cinema?" but "What is philosophy?"'[40] — it must be admitted that the general *Kunstwollen*, to use the vocabulary of Alois Riegl, involving the sentiment and possibilities of cinema changed dramatically sometime in the mid-20th century. But this epistemic shift cannot be understood as happening at one definitive point in time or as the result of one definitive cause, for example, the horrors of World War II. Furthermore, it has no real bearing on the *ontology* of cinematic images. In this respect, we should quote one source Bellour himself relies upon, which pushes this line of thought to the extreme, suggesting that, despite there being a different focus in Deleuze's respective analyses of films in these two 'historical gestures, ... the movement-image and the time-image are *two modalities of the same substance* in which nothing allows us to presuppose the anteriority of one over the other.'[41] As Bellour notes, the primary examples that Deleuze himself cites as transgressing the boundary between movement-images and time-images are the pre-War films of Yasujiro Ozu, which display the first opsigns and sonsigns — pure optical an sonic images that break with the sensor-motor schema — in the history of film and therefore offer the first indications of the time-image. In these films, the relatively low camera positions, austere camera movements within a 360-degree field and, especially, extended shots of inanimate objects and landscapes undermine the normal spatio-temporal coordinates of the movement-image 'whether by disconnection or vacuity' and therefore exhibit 'a little time in its pure state.'[42] But remember that the broken strokes or 'visual and auditory lines of the universe' drawn out by Mizoguchi's camera — which sometimes replaces the physical movement of actors — also push the logic of the action-image to its extreme limit thus creating a crisis for the movement-image.[43] It should be no surprise then that certain sequences of films like *Ugetsu* display the three deformations of the action-image that Deleuze identifies as early symptoms of the new image: the 'dispersive situation,' in which there is no longer a globalizing situation that holds milieu and action

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[38] Bellour, 'Thinking, Recounting' in *Discourse*, p. 66
[39] Bellour, 'Thinking, Recounting' in *Discourse*, p. 58
[40] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), p. 280
[41] Jean-Louis Leutrat, 'Sur al terre comme au ciel' in *Iris* 10 (April 1990), p. 205
[42] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, pp. 15, 17
[43] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), pp. 194-195

together coherently; the 'deliberately weak links' along the line of the universe, which allow the actuality of the action-image and the virtuality of the affection-image to interchange; the 'rambling stroll and the continual return journey' of a character, the logic of which simultaneously denies the possibility of conventional space, plot, and action.[44]

This is the context in which we should read the first chapter of the 'Emotions' section in Bellour's *Le corps du cinéma*, entitled 'Unfolding the Emotions.' He begins with a classic film analysis — complete with descriptions of several freeze-frames — of the opening scene of Mizoguchi's *Miss Oyu*. His purpose is not so much an aimless '*stopping* of films'[45] as much as it is an attempt to unfold the various intertwined circuits in this sequence that move from affect to action and back again. He sets up his argument by invoking the connection between this sequence and the scroll shot in *Ugetsu* we discussed in the last section. In this regard, he quotes another film critic, Alexandre Astruc, who defines the *mise en scène* in this shot as 'a way to extend the impulses of the soul within the body's movements ... which the camera movements so faithfully support in its own oscillations during the wild ride through the forest.'[46] *Miss Oyu* also begins with a wild, zig-zagging camera ride from inside Shinnosuke's house and through a bamboo forest in a curious yet cautious search for his potential fiancee who is coming with her family to meet him for the first time. Too impatient to wait for their arrival, Shinnosuke tells his aunt that 'I am going to take a stroll,' after which he exits the back of the house and walks around to the front and then into the forest in one long take. The significance of this shot for Bellour is that it seems to draw out, not simply a line of the universe, but continuous circuits that link the movements within Shinnosuke's emotions, to his physical movement through the bamboo forest, to the camera movement, and finally to the movements induced in the spectator's brain. Taken together these circuits define, in the most complete manner, the contours of what Bellour calls the body-brain of cinema. What is most remarkable about his analysis is that the circuits intertwine and co-determine each other in ways that make it increasingly difficult to separate them. So, for example, the rhythm of Shinnosuke's quiet and meandering stroll is mirrored in the movements of the camera that 'doesn't really follow, but seems to linger, constructing its own speed and erudite drift.'[47] Furthermore, it is difficult to distinguish whether the 'perceptual shocks of varying intensity' and 'visible seizures' induced by the encounters between the camera and the variously focused bamboos, primarily relate to the flux of emotions Shinnosuke must be experiencing, to the 'machinic unconscious of the apparatus,' or to the spectator who is watching all of this unfold, since the image, 'like the beating of a tree, ... hits us, with affections of continuous but variable and intermittent speeds.'[48]

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[44] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, pp. 207-208

[45] Bellour, 'Analysis in Flames' in *Diacritics*, p. 54

[46] Alexandre Astruc, 'Qu'est-ce que la mise en scène?' in *Cahiers du cinéma* 100 (October 1959), p. 14. Cited in Bellour, *Le corps du Cinéma,* p. 129

[47] Bellour, *Le corps du Cinéma,* p. 132

[48] Bellour, *Le corps du Cinéma,* pp. 132, 136, 135. This image of a forest of variously blurred bamboo trees — whose vibrational qualities threaten to whack both the character and the spectator in the head, inducing a series of epileptic shocks — immediately evokes the synaesthetic *pathos* Eisenstein describes in the 'Odessa Mist' sequence with its landscape of soft, hazy ship masts.

The blurring between lines that traverse the body-brain of this film is a result of the coincidence between the *mise en scène* and what Bellour calls the *mise en plis,* which together form 'a figure of variable accents.'[49] But he is not simply referring to elements of the film's style here since he further argues that 'the passage from the movement-image to the time-image, can be expressed by this more or less radical and pregnant transformation of the *mise en scène* into the *mise en plis* — as we finally pass into *The Fold* [*Le Pli,* the title of Deleuze's book on Leibniz] of the baroque harmony of disjunctive accords that depend upon the modern divergence of the fold.'[50] With a film like *Miss Oyu*, therefore, we are confronted with images that mark an indiscernible interstice between movement-images and time-images, in which the movement of the sensory-motor schema is not simply broken, but *displaced* and *multiplied*.[51] We still have the physical movements of Shinnosuke's 'rambling stroll' as well as the camera that both impels and traces it. But we also have the type of affective or 'emotional' movement that normally occurs within the brains of the character and the spectator after a sensory-motor meltdown. That is, rather than simply short circuiting into a catatonic state, as in pure time-images, the multiple lines of this shot in *Miss Oyu* touch the brain but, in their plastic dynamism, are also allowed to circulate back down to restore physical movement in a 'return journey.' Bellour emphasizes, beyond Deleuze, that it is in relation to the effect of cinema on the spectator that the reversibility between these two levels — between the interval, or formal fold, of *Cinema 1* and the interstice, or micro-fold, of *Cinema 2, Foucault,* and *The Fold* — is pushed to the limit. And this is precisely what he means when he says that the 'body of the spectator is folded into the folded body of cinema, such that "the folds in the soul resemble the folds of matter," if only through the luminous trace of a projection.'[52] We will discuss in the next chapter the precise philosophical difference between these two levels: between the folds of matter and the infinitely small folds within the 'brain,' which include what Bergson calls memory as well as what Deleuze calls unconscious perceptions. For now, it is sufficient to note that the difference is merely one of perspective. From the empirical point of view, it is possible to make a distinction between matter and memory, between movement-image and time-image. But from a transcendental empirical point of view — that is, from the perspective of Bergsonian duration — there is only a differential continuum that involves both levels on the same immanent plane. This differential line, or

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[49] Bellour, *Le corps du Cinéma,* p. 136. Bellour is alluding directly to the notion of the 'figure' in Deleuze's *Logic of Sensation*, which he addresses in the following page.

[50] Bellour, *Le corps du Cinéma,* p. 137

[51] I would suggest that this point of indiscernibility between movement-images and time-images comes close to what Patricia Pisters calls the neuro-image: 'an impure image regime' that 'repeats and remixes all previous image regimes (the movement-image and the time-image) as well as its temporal orders.' It signifies 'a change in cinema, where we slowly but surely have moved from following characters' actions (movement-images), to seeing the world filtered through their eyes (time-image), to experiencing directly their mental landscapes (neuro-image).' Patricia Pisters, 'Flashforward: The Future is Now' in *Deleuze Studies* 5 (December 2011), p. 110. In *Miss Oyu*, we both follow Shinnosuke's actions and see the world through his eyes, but we do not quite experience *directly* his mental landscape, even though it is somehow suggested by the vibrating bamboo stalks. However, I will show that the cinematic work of Henri Michaux — which should also be placed *between* the logics of the movement-image and time-image — does in fact express the character's inner space. One small point of difference between what I am trying to do here and Pisters' recent work is that, while she emphasizes Deleuze's three syntheses of time as the ground for the three types of images, I emphasize more generally his conception of time *qua* Bergsonian duration, which will be analyzed in the following chapter.

[52] Bellour, *Le corps du Cinéma,* p. 137. The quote is from Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 98

vector, is defined by Bergson as a tendency; by plunging into the intuition of duration 'we accustom ourselves to think and to perceive all things *sub specie durationis* ... reality no longer appears in the static, attenuated, state; it affirms itself dynamically, in the continuity and variability of its tendency.'[53] And beyond Bergson, reaching this perspective, achieving a direct time-image, depends upon a *power of the false* that injects a crack or fissure within subjectivity, displacing the I and provoking an unharnessed redistribution of sensibility. This line, vector, or tendency, according to Bellour, is therefore simultaneously 'the force of time itself' as well as 'a sort of immobilization.'[54] In films like *Ugetsu* and *Miss Oyu* this 'sort of' indicates that actual movement, rather than being simply and entirely sublimated to virtual or affective movement, wells up and continues to course through the brain, albeit a brain redefined in a way that enfolds all the unhinged circuits of *both* levels, from action to affect to camera to spectator. There is no clean break of the sensory-motor circuit here, even if there is an affective shock to thought. The passivity that would apparently result from such a break — along with its ethical, political, and creative consequences, including all the paralyzed mummies and zombies of *Cinema 2* — is replaced with the plasticity of this circuit, understood not in the unidirectional sense of the Greek *plassein*, but in the more dynamic sense developed by contemporary neuroscience or, alternatively, in the sense so beautifully described by Michaux:

> by means of punctuations, of repetitions, of hesitant jerks, by fissurations, by indiscernible sliding, there is, being formed, unformed, re-unformed, a spasmodic building, a building in abeyance, in perpetual metamorphosis and transubstantiation.[55]

We are now in a position to fully grasp the implications of what I'm calling the 'cinematic without film:' *Irrespective of the type of media employed, this conception of the cinematic describes any art, which expresses itself through percepts and affects in a way that provokes a multitude of disparate and disjunctive lines to vibrate and circulate within and between the brains of the artist and the spectator, creating an entire ecology rather than simply an inert object. That is, to appropriate Deleuze, the cinematic 'not only puts movement in the image, it also puts movement in the mind' and brain.*[56] *This includes both the movements of the faculties and the neuro-movements of synaesthesia that result from*

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[53] Henri Bergson, 'The Perception of Change' in *The Creative Mind,* trans. Mabelle Andison (New York: Dover, 2007), pp. 131-132

[54] Bellour, 'Thinking, Recounting', in *Discourse*, p. 71

[55] Henri Michaux, *Miserable Miracle*, trans. Louise Varèse and Anna Moschovakis (New York: New York Review of Books, 2002), p. 32. Translation modified. It is important to note that Deleuze's Spinozist ethics fully supports this interpretation of opening rather than closing the circuit between affect and action after a shock to thought. Here affect is understood as always increasing our power to act even as it creates a joyful movement in the mind, 'bringing us near to action and to the bliss of action.' Conversely, 'the sad passions always amount to impotence' since they 'represent the lowest degree of our power, the moment when we are most separated from our power of acting, when we are most alienated.' Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, trans. Robert Hurley (San Francisco: City Lights, 1988), p. 28. As we shall see, even the most violent shock to thought that produces a 'spiritual automaton' necessarily, in Bergson's own understanding, opens again onto action.

[56] Deleuze, 'The Brain is the Screen' in *Two Regimes of Madness*, p. 283

an encounter as well as the larger movements that occur within what Bellour calls the body-brain.[57] *The resulting ecology, or* Umwelt*, should be understood as a dynamic system that involves the continuous plastic movement of these various circuits that allows for the possibility of opening up new durations. In Bergsonian terminology, as we shall see, this possibility is due to the fact that it 'is the whole of memory that passes over into each of these circuits, since memory is always present; but this memory is capable, by reason of its elasticity, of expanding more and more' into 'deeper strata of reality.'* [58] *Finally, this plasticity and elasticity together ensure the creativity of the cinematic against what Deleuze calls the potential 'Hitlerism' of mass media, in which 'circuits of information and communication are ready-made circuits compromised from the outset."*[59] *That is, unlike mass media and beyond film, cinematic art provokes thought, broadly construed, by shocking the body-brain into forming new synapses and circuits between artist and spectator: 'Creating new circuits in art means creating them in the brain too ... [but] most film production, with its arbitrary violence and feeble eroticism, reflects mental deficiency rather than any invention of new cerebral circuits.'*[60]

These insights, extracted from the various developmental shifts in Bellour's film-philosophy, give us a perspective for understanding a sustained point of reference that underlies his entire career, Henri Michaux, who developed his own remarkable vocabulary of cinematic lines and gestures. Conversely, we will also try to shed some light upon why Deleuze — and Bellour after him — continuously invokes Michaux when describing the various *speeds* of these lines, whether they circulate within the central chamber or the brain.

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[57] This conception of the 'brain' as *both* a physical organ within the body and the site of the circulation of affect within a wider ecology is supported by Deleuze, who discusses the specific 'microbiology of the brain' as well as the 'nonobjectifiable brain,' which is the point of coincidence between creative innovations in art, science, and philosophy. Deleuze, 'The Brain is the Screen' *Two Regimes of Madness*, p. 283; Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 209. But, more directly, it takes its inspiration from the philosopher of mind, Alva Noë, who claims — *contra* the standard neuroscientific paradigm which assumes a direct causal relation between neural activity and mental processes — that consciousness is *decentered* from the biological brain and is embedded in a broader dynamic network that includes brain, body, and world. His fundamental and provocative mantra is that, as subjects, we are quite literally 'out of our heads.' Alva Noë, *Out of Our Heads: Why You Are Not Your Brain and Other Lessons from the Biology of Consciousness* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2009)

[58] Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans. N.M. Paul and W.S. Palmer (New York: Zone Books, 1991), pp. 104-105

[59] Gilles Deleuze, 'On the Time-Image' in *Negotiations*, p. 61. For Deleuze, all art worthy of the name is creative precisely in the sense that it continuously and *actively* resists the mechanisms of capture inherent to the mass media system of information and communication. The political implications of this conception of art have been more thoroughly drawn out in Félix Guattari's idea of 'post-media.' See, for example, his 'Entering the Post-Media Era' in *Soft Subversions*, ed. Sylvère Lotringer, trans. Chet Wiener and Emily Wittman (New York: Semiotexte, 2009), pp. 301-306 as well as his last two solo books, *Chaosmosis: An Ethico-Aesthetic Paradigm* and *The Three Ecologies*. Ethically speaking, Guattari remains entirely neutral towards the technological dimensions of any particular medium so long as it does not become merely 'an instrument of information, but rather a device for destructuring the media system, a trigger for the destructuring of the social nervous system.' Franco Berardi, 'Postmediatic Affect' in *Felix Guattari: Thought, Friendship, and Visionary Cartography*, ed. and trans. Guiseppina Mecchia (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2008), p. 31

[60] Deleuze, 'On the Time-Image' in *Negotiations*, pp. 60-61. Or again: 'It's not that our thinking starts with what we know about the brain but that any new thought traces uncharted circuits directly through its matter, twisting, folding, fissuring it.' Deleuze, 'On Philosophy' in *Negotiations*, p. 149

1.4 Gesture and *pré-geste* in the art of Henri Michaux

Michaux's cinematic gestures

'Speed! Can we forgo extreme speed? Can the Brain? For those who have experienced the unforgettable accelerated tempo of mescaline, speed invariably remains *the* problem, doubtless the key to many others.'[1] These are some of the exclamatory words with which the Belgian artist Henri Michaux describes his experiences with mescaline. For approximately a decade beginning in the mid-50s, he relentlessly plunged again and again into the world of mescaline, not in a hedonistic pursuit of pleasure, but rather in search of a kind of poetico-scientific knowledge of the inner workings of the human brain. Indeed his vehement claim that 'drugs bore us with their paradises; let them give us a little knowledge instead for this is not a century of paradise' clearly displaces Michaux from the Romantic tradition of drug experimentation amongst artists and poets, even though he clearly sits uneasily at the tail end of this lineage.[2] During his ten-year period of mescaline experimentation, he produced hundreds of brilliant drawings, four book-length studies, whose very titles — *Miserable Miracle, Infinite Turbulence, Knowledge through the Abyss, The Major Ordeals of the Mind and the Countless Minor Ones* — already go a long way in characterizing his experience, as well as a handful of poems and one film. He shows us with startling sobriety — given the violent waves of force that pulsed his entire being — psychic experience pushed to its limits. He attempts to describe, with as much objective distance as possible, not only what William James might call mystical experience, but everything that is infinitely folded within the human. Given Michaux's background and lifelong interest in medicine, his citation of the latest neurobiological research, and his acute attention to the details of his first-person investigations, we can safely say that these studies constitute a veritable neurophenomenology *avant la lettre*. It should be noted that the scientific study of the brain has *always* focused on non-normal states of consciousness, which can be induced by injury, mental illness, or psychoactive substances alike. Michaux's experiments should be understood within this context more than as a simple Romantic repetition of Baudelaire's imperatives to 'get high!' or to flee 'anywhere out of this world!'[3] Therefore, Michaux continually and vehemently claimed that — far from merely inducing personal hallucinations

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[1] Henri Michaux, *The Major Ordeals of the Mind & the Countless Minor Ones*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1974), p. 21

[2] Henri Michaux, *Light through Darkness*, trans. Haakon Chevalier (New York: Orion Press, 1963), p. 3. Translation modified. Compare Michaux's words with the title of Baudelaire's classic treatise on opium, wine, and hashish, *Artificial Paradises*, which more or less inaugurated the tradition of avant-garde intoxication. A more literal translation of the title of Michaux's book would be *Knowledge through the Abyss,* which also invokes the famous last stanza of Baudelaire's poem *Le Voyage*: 'Pour us your poison, let us be comforted! / Once we have burned our brains out, we can plunge / to Hell or Heaven — any abyss will do — / deep in the Unknown to find the *new*!' Charles Baudelaire, *Les Fleurs du Mal*, trans. Richard Howard (Boston: Godine, 1982), p. 157

[3] Charles Baudelaire, *The Parisian Prowler*, trans. Edward Kaplan (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1997), pp. 89, 119

— mescaline allowed him to open onto a vision of the micro-mechanisms that underlie the normal workings of the human brain. As we shall see, this statement is not as naive as it sounds.

While it has proven quite difficult to contain Michaux within the rubric of any one artistic movement, it is generally agreed that he falls somewhere on the spectrum between Surrealism and *art informel*. Although he resisted Michel Tapié's effort to heard together various artists under the umbrella of *art informel*, Michaux often hung out with and shared many aesthetic and literary principles with the members of this group, particularly Jean Dubuffet and Jean Fautrier. However, his association with Surrealism is completely misguided. Indeed one of his very first publications was a rant against André Breton's conception of the 'absolute marvelous' in which Michaux characterized automatic drawing as the 'incontinence of gestures.' He admits that the Surrealist marvelous is better than no marvelous at all, but in the end it is too 'monotonous' for his taste. What he was seeking was a marvelous of the diverse and transient depths, a marvelous teeming with a multiplicity of forces which are maintained in a state of suspended animation.[4] His own conception of the 'marvelous normal' in *The Major Ordeals of the Mind,* to which we will shortly return, is an attempt to replace the limited Freudian and Surrealist conception of the unconscious. Rather than Breton, the young Michaux was drawn to the thought of Jean Epstein, who is of course known to us today as a filmmaker and theorist, but whose dream of cinema is, in fact, tied to his earlier manifestoes on poetry. For example, Epstein had this to say in 1921: 'Spatial speed, mental speed ... the importance given to inner life, cerebral life, and the resulting fatigue: these are the most important conditions for modern literary phenomena.'[5] This struck a chord with Michaux, the aspiring poet, who was still trying to find his way in the Paris scene. And for Michaux, like Epstein, this speed ultimately boiled down to the then relatively new art form called cinema. In an article published in *Le Disque Vert* in 1922, Michaux already acknowledges this: 'Cinema is growing: 3,000 images for 10 lines of text and 300,000 gestures for one written page. Prodigious acceleration of the virtual image.'[6] As we shall see, the theme of the 'cinematic,' characterized by speed and fatigue, is the key to understanding Michaux from start to finish. We should also note here that the problem of speed has not been resolved with modernism. Paul Virilio argues that speed remains one of the fundamental political and aesthetic issues of our contemporary moment. Interestingly — in a way reminiscent of Agamben's association of the birth of cinema with the 'discovery' of Tourette Syndrome — Virilio coins the term 'picnolepsy,' which is the quasi-epileptic state of consciousness, full

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[4] Henri Michaux, 'Surréalisme' in *Oeuvres Complètes I*, ed. Raymond Bellour (Paris: Gallimard, 1998), pp. 60-61. Ultimately, however, it was not Breton or Surrealism with which Michaux had a problem. More fundamentally, it was the Freudian unconscious that they had so enthusiastically appropriated. In another early article, Michaux argued that 'Freud only saw a little part. I hope to demonstrate the other part, the big part, in my next work: *Dreams, Games, Literature, and Madness*.' Michaux, 'Réflexions qui ne sont pas Étrangères à Freud' in *Oeuvres Complètes I*, p. 50. Michaux never wrote this latter text and we would have to wait thirty years to get the first real glimpses of his vision of the unconscious.

[5] Jean Epstein, 'Le phénomène littéraire' in *l'Esprit nouveau* 9 (1921), p. 967

[6] Michaux, 'Chronique de l'Aiguilleur' in *Oeuvres Complètes I*, p. 11

of gaps and ruptures, that has become normalized under the conditions of ever-increasing *cinematic speed*.[7]

References to the cinema are scattered throughout all of Michaux's works in a way that forms a kind of subtextual motivation and justification for his different artistic, and psychic, explorations. Even in his travels to Ecuador and Asia during the late 1920s and early 1930s, there is a tendency to project cinematic metaphors onto the various phenomena he experienced. So, for example, in his boredom on the open sea from Amsterdam to Guayaquil, he speculates on the possibility of a series of sculptures arranged along the Paris-Versailles railway, which would be put into motion by the movement of the passing train, superimposing and fusing their images to construct a 'three-dimensional cinema as kinetic sculpture.'[8] Two years later on a trip to India, China, Japan, and Indonesia, he again seems to see cinematic movements everywhere. He claims that the dramatic performances of South India have nothing to learn from the cinema, since the whip-like movements and frantic concatenations they display 'are already much faster.'[9] The Balinese puppet theater goes even further with its 'strangely palpitating electric life,' the projected light flickering constantly, 'making the characters tremble on the screen' and 'giving an impression of magical petrifaction and of a violence that no film could possibly convey.'[10] Of course, Balinese performance would also strongly affect Antonin Artaud's conception of the *theater of cruelty*, whose logic bears some resemblance to Michaux's growing articulation of the cinematic.

In the postface of *The Night Moves*, published a few years after his return from Asia, Michaux discuses the unsettling inner projections of the mind that function as compensation for an ill-adjusted self, saying 'such cinema is for one's health.'[11] And in his decisive turn towards the production of visual

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[7] On the theme of speed, see Paul Virilio, *Speed and Politics*, trans. Mark Polizzotti (New York: Semiotexte, 2006) and Paul Virilio, *War and Cinema*, trans. Patrick Camiller (London: Verso Books, 2009). For his conception of picnolepsy, see Paul Virilio, *The Aesthetics of Disappearance*, trans. Phil Beitchman (New York: Semiotexte, 2009).

[8] Henri Michaux, *Ecuador: A Travel Journal*, trans. Robin Magowan (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2001), p. 19. Compare this to Eisenstein's relation of the Chinese picture scroll with panoramic movement across a landscape: 'as endless ribbon (almost a film reel!) of the panorama of landscape unwinding horizontally. Panorama in the narrow sense of this word, as cinema uses it in those cases when the camera on tracks slides by the changing chain of events and scenes. And panorama also in the sense that the whole picture cannot be grasped entirely by the eye all at once, but in a sequence ... as it appears before the eye as a stream of separate depictions (shots!) merging into one.' Sergei Eisenstein, *Nonindifferent Nature*, p. 230. Or similarly, Hokusai's *One Hundred Views of Mount Fuji* is characterized as 'a series of shots, from which, on being looked through, arises that same many-sided sensation of Fujiama mountain, which grows out of the combination of shots merging into a monumental montage image of phenomena.' *Ibid.*, p. 243

[9] Henri Michaux, *A Barbarian in Asia*, trans. Sylvia Beach (New York: New Directions, 1949), p. 91. His claims about such proto-cinematic art forms are reminiscent of those Eisenstein made about East Asian art. However, in the last few sentences of the section entitled 'A Barbarian in India' Michaux does also argue that Indian cinema — and for him the cinema and the train 'are the real missionaries from the West' *Ibid.*, p. 70 — is itself quite remarkable and even surpasses French cinema in the sense that it makes one think rather than simply seduce one visually: 'If interest in knowledge came before the pleasure of seeing the beautiful, one would have a cinema in Paris where Bengali films were shown. Those who want to think would find something there.' *Ibid.*, 96. Incidentally, in the section on his travels to China, he evokes Eisenstein once again when he describes a four-line poem of Li Bai as 'a bazaar, it is a cinema, it is a great picture. Each word is a landscape, a group of signs.' *Ibid.*, p. 124

[10] Michaux, *A Barbarian in Asia*, p. 182. Translation modified. He also suggests that this puppet theater goes beyond the type of manufactured spectacle of *Un Chien Andalou* when he states that the experience is one of 'a surreality sliced with a knife and taken out of the sky.' *Ibid.*

[11] Michaux, 'La Nuit remue' in *Oeuvres Complètes I*, p. 512

art in the 1940s we find enigmatic statements like, 'it is the cinema that I appreciate most about painting,' that confirm his continued investment in the cinematic.[12] But it is with his so-called mescaline period from the mid-50s to the mid-60s that this cinematic imperative reaches its peak. Interestingly, he indeed referred to the drawings of this period as 'cinematic:'

> I wanted to draw the consciousness of existing and the flow of time. As one takes one's pulse. Or again, more modestly, that which appears when, in the evening, the film that has been exposed to the day's images, but shorter and muted, is rerun. Cinematic drawing.... My own particular film was scarcely more than one or two or three lines meeting up here and there with a few others, now forming a thicket, now a plait, further on joining a battle, rolling into a ball.[13]

These drawings are works of typically black ink on paper which very rarely depict glimpses of color emerging from the movement of 'countless lines, no longer static or immortal, but active, agitated, scurrying around, animated by a life all their own, zigzagging like mad across surfaces as if they had been cinematographically projected onto them.'[14] They are indeed psychedelic — literally 'mind manifesting' — they are kinetic, vibrating, endlessly seething and bubbling. But he admitted his film envy once again when he wrote that 'cinema, blessed with motion, was having far more success when it came to expressing all this.'[15] His decade-long obsession with mescaline, which borders on a real compulsion, is played out in the very quality and quantity of lines in the drawings that have been rightly described as a kind of seizmographic doodling. These drawings exhibit abstract and dense swarms of cryptic information in which he repetitiously filled entire sheets of paper. They are not beautiful by any standard but, in their restless intensity, they express — in the sense of conveying directly to the mind of the viewer — the cinematic speed and fatigue that both Michaux and Epstein were trying to evoke with words 40 years earlier.

Towards the end of Michaux's decade-long experiment, Eric Duvivier, head of ScienceFilms production company, approached him after reading *Knowledge through the Abyss* about the prospect of making a film about the mescaline trip. The whole impetus for the project was to present Michaux's own peseudo-scientific discoveries about the hallucinogen to the psychiatric and medical community. Curiously, the film was to be co-produced by Sandoz laboratories, where LSD was first isolated by Albert Hofmann in 1938. Michaux happily agreed and spent nearly two years preparing the script, taking notes, and traveling to capture footage, including a trip to the Amsterdam zoo. This was his chance to finally reach the apogee of his cinematic yearnings. However, Michaux was deeply disappointed with the resulting film, a disappointment that bordered on bitterness and anger. Watching *Images du Monde Visionnaire* today, we would have to agree with him that it is in fact a cinematic failure. The problem was that, not being a filmmaker himself, Michaux had to relinquish much of the technical labor to Duvivier and his crew, who proved to be not completely up to the task. Rather than utilize the filmic techniques that were concurrently being developed in the United States by figures like Stan

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[12] Henri Michaux, 'En pensant au phénomène de la peinture' in *Oeuvres Complètes II*, ed. Raymond Bellour (Paris: Gallimard, 2001), p. 329

[13] Henri Michaux, *Untitled Passages*, ed. Catherine de Zegher (New York: The Drawing Center, 2000), p. 7

[14] Henri Michaux, *Emergences/Resurgences*, trans. Richard Sieburth (New York: The Drawing Center, 2000), p. 64

[15] Michaux, *Emergences/Resurgences*, p. 66

Brakhage and Jonas Mekas — techniques and figures that were intimately related to the Beat drug experience — Duvivier relied upon various types of basic magnifying glasses, run-of-the-mill kaleidoscopes, and the simply linear editing of sequences.[16] He was particularly criticized for not using a mobile camera and for completely misunderstanding the hallucinatory dimension. The poet, curator, and long-time friend of Michaux, Jean-Jacques Lebel, described the film as a 'monosemic view totally incompatible with Michaux's "visionary world," a documentary on colors filmed by the color blind.'[17] Nevertheless, in what appears to be his sole reference to Michaux's film — in a University lecture of 1982 — Deleuze suggests that it is within the context of American Structural cinema, and its depictions of the gaseous perception of 'certain drug experiences and some beautiful experiences of Buddhism,' that *Images du Monde Visionnaire* should be understood.[18] Michaux gave up his explorations into the visionary world of mescaline a few years after the release of his film. But it is safe to say that they completely and permanently altered his frame of mind, as gauged by the trajectory of the aesthetic sensibilities that persisted for the rest of his life. Indeed, like cinema, the aftereffects and afterimages of mescaline profoundly affected the direction of his work until the very end.

In one of his final essays, 'A Crowd Come Out of the Dark,' Michaux talks about cinema for the last time. Connecting the dark chamber of the film hall to the discourse of the Platonic cave, Michaux describes an experience of a particular sequence of some unspecified foreign film in which 'suspicious looking figures' continuously emerge from the depths of a void. In the context of Michaux's *oeuvre*, these figures immediately evoke the multitude of ill-rooted 'faces' that always seem to spontaneously materialize from the chaotic gestures of his paintings.[19] As these figures march convulsively towards the screen, they seem to pass seamlessly through the boundary it delineates into the space of the hall. In the process, the superficialities of plot and narrative dissolve away into insignificance:

> Something marvelous, something almost miraculous, was being presented to my senses: infinity from one side reaching into the finite world on the other, and passing away in it. I was

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[16] Although released in 1963, its formal relation to abstract shorts from the 1920s — for example, Germaine Dulac's *Étude cinégraphique sur une arabesque* and Man Ray's *Emak-Bakia* — is easily recognizable. However, it takes its content from the long tradition of art and intoxication and is very much in line with the various representations of drug experimentation in 60s counter-cultural art and film: for example Kenneth Anger's *Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome*, Dennis Hopper's *Easy Rider*, Andy Warhol's *Exploding Plastic Inevitable*, Michaelangelo Antonioni's *Zabriskie Point*, as well as the Star Gate sequence in Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odessy*. The music for *Images du Monde Visionnaire — Triade: pour orchestre d'après l'oeuvre mescalinienne* — was composed specifically for the film by Gilbert Amy and is clearly influenced by the late 'electronic' sound pieces of synaesthete French composer Edgard Varèse like *Déserts*, *Poème électronique*, and *La Procession de Verges*, the last of which was incidentally created for a documentary film on Joan Mirò.

[17] Lebel further suggests, provocatively, that 'rather than wondering what a film by Michaux, or the "visionary world" of Michaux could or should have been, it would be better to point the reader to some admirable pages of *The Movement-Image* [pp. 84-85], where Gilles Deleuze evokes a cinematic art which (in Duvivier's film period) was already beginning to take shape, but elsewhere and in a different way.' Jean-Jacques Lebel, 'The Neuronal Dance' in Victoria Combalia, ed., *Michaux: Dibuixos Mescalínics*, (Barcelona: TeclaSala, 1998), p. 157

[18] Gilles Deleuze, 'Cinéma cours 8 du 26/01/82' online at http://www2.univ-paris8.fr/deleuze/article.php3?id_article=92

[19] He talks about the emergence of these faces in quite remarkable terms: 'Draw without anything particular in mind, scribble mechanically: almost always, faces will appear on the paper ... as if one were constantly shaping these fluid faces in oneself, ideally plastic and malleable, forming and unforming from ideas and impressions, automatically sculpted into an instantaneous synthesis, all day long and in a sense cinematically.' Henri Michaux, 'Thinking about the Phenomenon of Painting' in *Darkness Moves: A Henri Michaux Anthology*, ed. and trans. David Ball (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), pp. 311-312

> dumbfounded. It was as if I were present at the turning point of an era, as if the times were set in motion and, thanks to a new discovery kept secret till then, were showing forth their novelty before my eyes.[20]

This new discovery is speculated to be 'some new mechanical technique' devised by the 'astonishing film-maker' which caused 'a sort of sustained vibration to occur, something purely psychic conveyed through a means that was physical.' It was responsible for producing 'a barely perceptible shaking' within his brain, which was connected to the odd movements of the figures to the extent that he could 'feel' and almost 'touch' them as well as the 'mysterious, deep and vibrating darkness' that engulfs the chamber.[21] But as Michaux looked more carefully at this spectacle, he noticed that the figures had only one leg and that fully one half of each of their bodies was vague and indistinguishable. He then noticed a sharp throbbing pain on the left side of his forehead. He was in fact suffering a migraine-induced hemianopsia attack, which resulted in the diminished vision of the left half of his plane of vision. So in fact, the cause and effect had been reversed: 'Spasms in the tiny cerebral arteries had given rise to vibrations of a seemingly emotional kind' and were 'extended into the performance on the screen' and thus 'to the partial obliteration of the bodies, the "magic" of the conspirators.'[22] Michaux does admit that the migraine must have been initially triggered by the bright flickering light on screen, but the circuits traversing the brain of the spectator and the brain of the film have become so enfolded into one another that the entire body of the cinema hall was a vibrating whole: 'The film and my own trembling were dramatically combined, the screen was invaded by my physiology, the spectator and the spectator's impaired vision were confused.'[23] So, even in his last writings, Michaux maintained a hope that cinema would be able to adequately express the various speeds of thought he experienced throughout his life. But, as of 1984, this remains an impossible, or at least postponed, hope — for which the *word* cinema serves as a placeholder — since, for the 'new era (in film, I mean), we shall have to wait.'[24] As Bellour notes, the failure of this film, like the failure of Michaux's own, is a symptom of the incapacity of the apparatus to capture the movements that circulate within dark recesses of his brain:

> Clearly, the paradox here is that Michaux's over-investment in the filmic *dispositif* seems to be a way of displacing the psychic intensity associated with it. The outcome of this anecdote constitutes a complete reversal: Michaux suddenly notices that the effect of the fantastic and disturbing spectacle is due to one of those ophthalmic migraine attacks he suffered until the end of his life, which were due to his drug experimentation. Like the film he would have liked to create, the symptom of 'A Crowd Come Out of the Dark' is, in effect, the burden of producing the hidden reality of the body-brain, towards which he can advance ever closer by qualifying it as 'cinema.' This is precisely what consumes Michaux the moment he begins to envisage the failure of his film as the 'marvelous normal.'[25]

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[20] Henri Michaux, 'A Crowd Come Out of the Dark' in *Spaced, Displaced*, trans. David and Helen Constantine (Newcastle: Bloodaxe, 1992), p. 49. Translation modified.
[21] Michaux, 'A Crowd Come Out of the Dark' in *Spaced, Displaced*, p. 51
[22] Michaux, 'A Crowd Come Out of the Dark' in *Spaced, Displaced*, p. 51
[23] Michaux, 'A Crowd Come Out of the Dark' in *Spaced, Displaced*, p. 53
[24] Michaux, 'A Crowd Come Out of the Dark' in *Spaced, Displaced*, p. 53
[25] Raymond Bellour, 'Le cinéma d'Henri Michaux' in Henri Michaux, *Oeuvres Complètes III*, ed. Raymond Bellour (Paris: Gallimard, 2004), p. 1532

The continuous failure of film to live up to the cinematic aspiration of producing images that 'communicate directly to the brain,' beyond its capacity to tell stories, also disappointed and frustrated another artist that shared many of Michaux's sensibilities, Antonin Artaud, who has himself expressed his hope for cinema in similar language. Artaud initially believed that 'the cinema is an amazing stimulant. It acts directly on the grey matter of the brain.... Above all the cinema is like an innocuous and direct poison, a subcutaneous injection of morphine. That is why the subject of a film cannot be inferior to its power of action, and why it must have an element of magic.'[26] But in 1933 — five years after the failure, in his eyes at least, of the only script of his that actually made it to screen — Artaud declared that film had reached its 'precocious old age' and was only able to 'tickle' the nerves with its 'idiotic,' 'stratified and frozen' images that would never live up to his previous hope of creating a *cinema of cruelty*.[27] He gave up on the cinema and pursued other means of expression including, most strikingly, his infamous 'drawings to murder magic,' which induce a powerful psychic jolt to anyone daring enough to lay their eyes upon them. These drawings occupied, indeed haunted, his creative output from 1937 — the year he returned from his peyote experimentation with Mexican shamans — until the end of his life. After the War, they were displayed alongside Michaux's drawings in a collective exhibition at the Parisian gallery Le Point Cardinale. Jean-Jacques Lebel has stated quite emphatically that, along with Michaux, there is only 'one other writer-artist of genius in this bloodiest of centuries who belongs to the same rhizome and has produced work with such intensity: Antonin Artaud.... Michaux's drawings irradiate that same inspired trembling which gave Artaud's drawings their seismic power.'[28] It is precisely this irradiating, seismic power that circulates within the drawings — mapping out a jumble of felt currents and micro-movements of the artist's brain on the canvas — which in turn

[26] Antonin Artaud, 'Reply to an Inquiry' in *Collected Works III*, trans. Alastair Hamilton (London: Calder & Boyars, 1972), p. 60

[27] Antonin Artaud, 'The Precocious Old Age of the Cinema' in *Collected Works III*, pp. 76-79

[28] Lebel, 'The Neuronal Dance' in *Michaux: Dibuixos Mescalínics*, p. 151

tangibly affects the spectator that makes these drawings more 'cinematic' than *Images du Monde Visionnaire.*[29]

But before we turn to the question of Michaux's drawings, we should properly address the last sentence in Bellour's above statement concerning 'A Crowd Come Out of the Dark.' He suggests that, after the failure of his film, Michaux's life-long quest to adequately express 'the hidden reality of the body-brain' gets displaced onto abstracted concepts of the 'cinema' and the 'marvelous normal.' In order to understand this, it is essential to understand that the first major publication after the production of *Images du Monde Visionnaire* was his fourth and final quasi-scientific account of the drug experience, *The Major Ordeals of the Mind & the Countless Minor Ones*. The first chapter, entitled 'The Marvelous Normal,' provides us with Michaux's belated answer to the Surrealist unconscious, which takes the form of his understanding of what the cinematic could be after the film apparatus proved itself to be inadequate to his inner visions. In the short prologue to this chapter, he exclaims: 'I want to lift the veil from the complex mechanisms which make man, first and foremost, an operator.'[30] The French *opérateur* usually refers more specifically to, for example, a surgeon, a machinist, or a cameraman. Given the anecdote of 'A Crowd Come Out of the Dark,' written twenty years later, and Michaux's usual proclivity towards cinematic metaphors, it seems clear what he might have in mind. But in case we need further clarification, the *very first sentence* of the chapter and book anticipates the uncanny sentiment, which itself contains the kernel of disappointment, of this later essay: 'One day, at the cinema, after taking hashish, a strange, unfamiliar, unpleasant sense of deficiency mounted within me, soon becoming intolerable.'[31] But here, the potential for disappointment does not collapse into a mere symptom — to use Bellour's unfortunate terminology — of an impossible desire as much as it provokes Michaux to construct an entire treatise concerning the mechanisms of the cinematic brain *without film*.

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[29] The Danish artist Joachim Koester has recently created a 16mm film installation, entitled *My Frontier is an Endless Wall of Points,* consisting solely of blown-up snapshots of Michaux's drawings, which have been edited together at a frantic pace. The film itself is silent, so the incessant clicking of the projector adds an almost 'epileptic' effect to the work. This installation is perhaps also more successful, more cinematic, than Michaux's own film since it accentuates the existing kinetic and vibratory qualities of the mescaline drawings giving rise to new images that, in Koester's words, 'span the mental and the physical, directing one's thoughts and body to other repetitive states that ... might be comparable to building new neurological pathways.' Joachim Koester, 'Conversation with Lars Larsen' in *If I Can't Dance, I Don't want to be Part of your Revolution* 3 (2009), p. 10. Furthermore, appeasing Jean-Jacques Lebel's claim that only a 'visionary' director could have made the kind of cinema Michaux was striving for, Koester admits another inspiration for the work: 'the grids and geometrical patterns that I have experienced under the influence of [the hallucinogenic drug] ayahuasca are connected to the pacing of *My Frontier is an Endless Wall of Points*.' *Ibid.*, p. 14. Incidentally, the title of this work comes directly from Michaux's first book on mescaline: 'An endless wall of points is my frontier. Pullulation! Pullulation everywhere! Pullulation with no possibility of escape. Space that is teeming, a space of gestation, of transformation, whose swarming, even is only an illusion, would give a better idea than our ordinary vision of what the cosmos is like.... The stellar interior is so amazing, its motions so accelerated, that it is not recognized as such. Cellular autoscopy, or beyond the cellular where energies are discerned better than particles, and where the images released by an overactive mind are instantly superimposed as on a screen.' Henri Michaux, *Miserable Miracle*, trans. Louise Varèse and Anna Moschovakis (New York: New York Review Books, 2002), p. 67

[30] Michaux, *The Major Ordeals of the Mind*, p. 3. There is evidence to suggest that, in addition to Artaud's work, this book by Michaux fueled Deleuze's own conception of the schizo. We will come back to this point in the next chapter.

[31] Michaux, *The Major Ordeals of the Mind*, p. 3. Translation modified.

Michaux's cinematic imperative, although it sometimes collapses onto filmic tropes, should be understood in a much more expansive way. This has already been suggested by the French writer and critic Maurice Mourier, who argues that 'Michaux discovered another sense, more appropriate or at least more complete, of the adjective "cinematic," which applies as much to the flow of writing as to all the shots of a Renoir or a Mizoguchi, as much to the feverish and decentered movement of drawing as the art of montage-mosaic characteristic of Eisenstein, Welles, Godard.'[32] We could say that, in its reproduction of overly-simplified cliches of how hallucinations should appear, *Images du Monde Visionnaire* failed to render the frenetic movements and durations of mescaline. We would have to politely disagree with Bellour's psychoanalytic reading of Michaux's almost compulsive search for a medium that was adequate to his experience of the particularities of the speed of mescaline; his motivation was much more conscious and deliberate than such language allows. Michaux was indeed enormously disappointed with his film but, in the way artists continuously create new means of expression, philosophers think with new concepts, or scientists develop new formulas and protocols, Michaux simply moved on to the next project, hoping to move ever closer to an expanded idea of the cinematic. This is precisely how we should understand the publication of *The Major Ordeals of the Mind* in 1966 and the corresponding 'drawings of reaggregation' that were exhibited the following year. These works — cinematic writings and drawings as Mourier suggests — would prove to be Michaux's last attempts in expressing the various speeds of mescaline. The significance of these works has to do with the fact that Michaux, now disappointed with the technical limitations of film, explicitly displaces the qualities of the cinema onto descriptions of the fundamental movements and speeds of the human brain. Michaux argues that mescaline merely highlights — by reifying within experience itself — these normal kinematic mechanisms. By 'short-circuiting consciousness' mescaline 'unmasks mental operations.' In this state,

> intensity increases along with speed, an intensity revealing and emphasizing the speed *already there*, a speed now seen as much more considerable than previously supposed, an intensity which brings to perception the images (and micro-impulses) otherwise imperceptible, vague, and remote.'[33]

The interesting point here is not so much the veracity of this claim as much as the fact that Michaux *believes* the perceived movements and speeds of mescaline disclose the 'cinematic' mechanisms of the brain:

> One becomes aware of the splendid mechanism by which it is possible, thanks to a rapid exploratory operation, to continue projecting the montage on the screen of consciousness.[34]

> Questioned about the number of impressions per second (or of images, or of thoughts) experienced by them, persons returning from the speed of mescaline speak of an acceleration of a hundred or two hundred times, or even of five hundred times that of normal speed.... In my own case, I have had the experience of seeing a whole film projected in a few seconds.[35]

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[32] Maurice Mourier, 'Michaux cinémane et cinématicien' in Gérard Dessons, ed., *Méthodes et savoirs chez Henri Michaux* (Poitiers: La Licorne, 1993), p. 56

[33] Michaux, *The Major Ordeals of the Mind*, p. 23

[34] Michaux, *The Major Ordeals of the Mind*, p. 15

[35] Michaux, *The Major Ordeals of the Mind*, p. 22

> Mescaline, by inducing polymorphous overexcitation, changes consciousness into an abstraction so tumultuous, discontinuous, and erratic that the subject feels as though he were a plaything; simultaneously — a more specific phenomenon which never fails to impress — the drugs brilliantly 'dramatize' and illustrate these areas, projecting on the imagination's blackboard the dazzling cinema of images in motion which correspond to them.[36]

Michaux is not saying anything new here; such claims are scattered throughout his mescaline books.[37] Even in the very first text, *Miserable Miracle*, a strong association between the brain on mescaline and cinema is clearly made. Furthermore, the typographic layout of this book invokes the physical structure of a film strip. For example, the following words appear scattered down the margins of two pages of Michaux's most infamous text:

> caricature of composition and of creation / against a given background, at a new speed, certain images alone can circulate / others are not attached to anything, do not correspond to the spasmodic jerkings, and consequently will not show any images on the film, though they may well count for more than others which instantly reveal optical treats / impetus in jerks, impetus indefinitely renewed / everything becoming arrows, shooting desperately / intermittent jolting progressions / speed in measured rhythms.[38]

Unlike the relatively sober pseudo-scientific prose of the main text, these words are the amongst the few impressions he was able to capture and scribble down during his trips. Literary critic Richard Sieburth — who curiously characterizes Michaux's *oeuvre* as 'unpredictably rhizomatic' and 'nomadic,' the progression of which follows the disjunctive logic of 'subterranean continuities or lines of flight' and thus should be hailed as 'a singular example of the "deterritorialization" characteristic of minor literature'[39] — suggests that, typographically, these margin notes invoke the image of a palimpsestic film strip: 'the body of the text is flanked in its margins by a kind of soundtrack composed of telegraphic phrases transcribed from his original manuscripts, while the bottom of the page is thick with qualifying footnotes added at a yet later stage.'[40] Of course, the content itself of this dense and poetic text touches upon some of the issues we have been discussing: circulating and detached images, non-optical images, speed as the integration of movement and time, arrows tracing a disjunctive impetus, and finally the movie-in-the-brain.

But in *Major Ordeals of the Mind,* the explicit link between cinema and the brain as screen becomes more explicit and sustained. And here Michaux makes the bold claim that mescaline simply highlights, by increasing their intensity and speed, the *normal* mechanisms of the brain. That is, he extrapolates from his experience the idea that the brain is itself fundamentally 'cinematic.' Furthermore, before the production of *Images du Monde Visionnaire,* Michaux still believed in the potential for film to

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[36] Michaux, *The Major Ordeals of the Mind*, p. 106

[37] For example, in *Miserable Miracle* (p. 107), Michaux talks about 'visions of the cinema within.' In *Light through Darkness* (p. 139), he explains that 'one's head, suddenly too inhabited, becomes an enforced cinema space with impromptu films that madden, fatigue, occupy, carry away, interrupt.' And in *Peace through in Breaking Flood* (no pagination), he describes a 'nervous projection screen ... a long vibratile carpet which had something in common with a discharge of electricity, sparks branching out, and which also resembled magnetic tracings, this indefinable quivering, burning, seething, like spasms for nerves.'

[38] Michaux, *Miserable Miracle*, pp. 29-30

[39] Richard Sieburth, 'Technician of the Sacred: The Internal and External Voyages of Henri Michaux' in *The Times Literary Supplement* (8 February 2002), p. 4

[40] Sieburth, 'Technician of the Sacred' in *The Times Literary Supplement*, p. 6

express the specific speeds of mescaline and of the brain in general. But now, we get the sense that the film apparatus as a possible mediating agent fades in importance so that the cinematic movements of the brain — understood in the precise sense being drawn out here — can be im-mediately transcribed into the frenzied, zigzagging drawings.[41] This is more or less corroborated by Jean-Jacques Lebel, who argues that 'Michaux's cinematic drawings appear in the space of an ideal cinematographic language — neither metaphorical nor metonymic — which would record and film in the same way as the cerebral cortex, in real time, the oncoming and unfurling of thought. Such cinema has nothing to do with the film industry and everything to do with the Deleuzian movement-image.'[42] In short, the idea of the cinematic in Michaux's work can be retrospectively understood as referring to, on the one hand, the complex movements of the mind and brain that determine us as 'operators' and, on the other, as the 'cinematic drawings' that attempt to express these movements, so long as we remember that there is always a continuous circulation from one to the other. Michaux refers to these two segments of the cinematic circuit as 'pre-gesture' and 'stroke,' respectively, which together form 'a marvelously enveloping unity, not static, but circulating, so filled and fulfilling that a return to the habitual world no longer seems possible.'[43] We will now discuss these two segments in a bit more detail, but first it is useful to note that Michaux attests again and again to the fact that the movements of the mescaline brain — 'otherwise imperceptible ... micro-impulses' — are not only cinematic, but also *synaesthetic,* movements. Furthermore, his conception of the mind in this state is one that consists not of hermetically isolated parts or faculties, but 'rather a system of connections' that encourages movement from sensation to memory to cognition and back.[44]

> However modest its nature, it is sufficient if my mind circulates within it, feels reinforced — nourished, released by this theme and companion and immensity (yes!) and God knows what else beyond. A certain optical pleasure as well? Yes, if it is understood that it proceeds with a limitless inundation and continuation. Does this move me also mentally as symbolic representation of the

[41] Michaux always referred to inner movements as movements in the *brain* rather than simply in the mind and tried to emphasize this by using neuroscientific terminology: 'The seism which at first attacked the visual cortex now sends out its vibrations all over.' Michaux, *Miserable Miracle*, p. 62

[42] Lebel, 'The Neuronal Dance' in *Michaux: Dibuixos Mescalínics*, p. 152

[43] Michaux, *The Major Ordeals of the Mind*, p. 158

[44] Michaux, *The Major Ordeals of the Mind*, p. 22. Michaux, 'Painting' in *Darkness Moves*, p. 309

> texture of the universe? Perhaps. Perhaps. A kind of extraordinary tactile imagination, consisting of saturation, produced by an endless repetition.'[45]

From gesture to pré-geste

In 1972, the French art historian Margit Rowell developed a concept of gesture in order to analyze the type of 'action paintings' that were produced on both sides of the Atlantic in the mid-20th century, namely, those described under the rubrics of abstract expressionism and *art informel*. She argues that, for this type of art, gesture should be clearly distinguished from the brushstroke, which is merely its trace:

> Gesture is an irrational movement of the hand. It should not be confused with the stroke, which is a pictorial technique that refers to aesthetic considerations (for example, filling a space, modulating a surface), and which, because of its reflexive nature, is voluntary. Additionally, a stroke can only exist in space (it needs specific pictorial material to exist) and it expresses no existential connection to the space of Being.... By contrast, gesture is immaterial, abstract, and emanates from the inner movements of psychic life. It does not take into account pictorial space, but only the need to express itself. And, as an incidental seizure regarding a movement that is primarily immaterial, in relation to the stroke, we can say that it is disembodied. When the stroke stops, the gesture continues moving. The stroke is a technique of communication, the gesture is a dialogue between self and self.[46]

Subtracted from the existential ideas that inform and indeed fundamentally support her analysis — which in this sense follows the typical art historical framework for understanding such gestural abstraction — this separation of the concept of gesture from the formal marks, strokes, splatters, spots, and drips of these works allows us to challenge this normative art history. But if we agree to this operation, what ultimately remains of gesture? In other words, how can we understand it as a type of

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[45] Michaux, *The Major Ordeals of the Mind*, pp. 49-50. Michaux often describes synaesthetic imagery that crosses between visual, tactile, and sonic modes of sensation that sometimes directly evokes cognitive responses like memory or intuition. Here are a few examples: 'Savage titillation of a nerve in the dark. Images as energies. Images as skin-pricks.' Michaux, *Emergences/Resurgences*, p. 58. 'The colors broke loose from the first page of a newspaper, latched onto the capital letters like smoldering strands or wiggled against the lines like luminous caterpillars (not just in impressionist fashion, but disrupting vision altogether.' *Ibid.* p. 66. 'Colors were being torn from me, from my head, from a certain spot at the rear of my brain.... Suddenly, an amazing gong-stroke: hit over the head by color, by a riot of colors, ever so bright, beating down on me, rushing, piercing, as dissonant noises. Excruciating colors.' *Ibid.*, p. 52. 'Like a bell ringing out a catastrophe, a note ... like a kick in the belly, an aging note, a note like a minute that has to cross a century.' Michaux, 'First Impressions' in *Darkness Moves*, p. 321. 'An auditory line.' *Ibid.*, p. 314. 'A few red dots were singing tenor over the general pianissimo.' *Ibid.*, p. 316. 'A metamorphic jolt, a spectacular change in *Weltanschauung.' Ibid.*, p. 70. 'The subject as that point possessed, or rather "experienced" a total knowledge of the world ... graphic epitome of an overall — and highly metaphysical — situation.' *Ibid.*, p. 68. 'Evocations, fragments of memories, impressions, images, sounds, return in force.' Michaux, *The Major Ordeals of the Mind*, p. 141. 'A babel of sensations.' Michaux, *Light through Darkness*, p. 151. 'Intuitive knowledge and ineffable Revelation combine here to give him a security which theologians do not possess.' *Ibid.*, p. 169. 'Through diminishing stages that were subtly moving, the visions became memory-images. There was a moment when they were no longer ordinary apparitions, when everything was memory.' Michaux, *Miserable Miracle*, p. 3. The neuroscientist Richard Cytowic claims that the type of synaesthesia that is *cultivated* by hallucinogens or meditation usually traverses not only the individual senses, but the higher faculties of cognition as well. He also claims that such cultivated synaesthesia it is heavily laden with 'strange' affects and limit experiences like *déjà-vu*. Richard Cytowic and David Eagleman, *Wednesday is Indigo Blue: Discovering the Brain of Synaesthesia* (Cambridge: MIT Press 2009), pp. 217-222. Michaux's synaesthesia is discussed by Malcolm Bowie in his excellent monograph on the artist: 'The drug may upset the state of balance which usually exists among the various sense fields: stimuli affecting one sense may provoke responses in others; and the constituent parts of these synaesthetic images may be so completely fused as to persuade the subject that they are taking place in some unknown, intermediate sense.' Malcolm Bowie, *Henri Michaux: A Study of his Literary Works* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 152

[46] Margit Rowell, *La peinture, le geste, l'action: existentialisme en peinture* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1972), p. 67

'seizure' regarding the 'inner movements of psychic life' as opposed to the more formal and material aspects of the brushstroke we see traced upon a canvas? In order to attempt an answer to these questions, we will look at the case of Henri Michaux, one of the main figures of Rowell's study along with Georges Mathieu, Pierre Alechinsky, Asger Jorn, Wols, and Jackson Pollock.

Of all these artists, Rowell claims that Michaux 'attained a more profound level of experience' in his work through an 'irreducible coincidence of thought and body.'[47] By this, she means that he went further than any of these other artists in reaching a 'middle way' between the production of conscious, voluntary, and ultimately mechanical works and the kind of spontaneous automatism that most of them abhorred about Surrealism. The Buddhist connotations of the term middle way refers to the fact that, within this tradition, East Asian calligraphy was often evoked as an exemplary model for the creative process. By relying on the idea that the practices of 'Oriental' painting are more 'meditative' than their Western counterparts, Rowell argues that Michaux attained through his work 'a self that knows no mind/body dualism,' which serves as 'a starting point for a new form of creation.' This ground of creation is the informal and the insignificant, which itself appears in a work only when 'the pure motor activity of life is united with thought.'[48] This is the context in which we should understand her otherwise obscure claim that 'more than any other artist, with the exception of Pollock, Michaux has sublimated his story in nature.'[49] Regardless, even if we were to go along with this slightly Romantic line of thought, in the last analysis it undermines her own quite useful conception of gesture. If Michaux's work goes beyond the dualism of mind and body — whatever that means, and however we might asses that possibility — thereby proving to be one of the most successful proponents of *art informel*, how can Rowell understand the gestural in his work, since her very concept of gesture is based upon its absolute difference from the material brushstroke? Although Michaux, like many of the artists in this tradition, was indeed interested in East Asian calligraphy and thought, perhaps by revisiting the trajectory of his work, including his own self-reflective writings about it, we might arrive at a more sober solution to this problem.

As we have argued, Michaux's shift from poetry to the visual arts, albeit gradual, was motivated by his lifelong search for an adequate means to express speed and movement. One could easily argue that this desire to express the various speeds of movements within the human body became the key motivating factor that shaped the entire trajectory of his poetic and artistic output. This is how we can make sense of his early experiments with creating new hieroglyphic alphabets, which were his first attempts to produce signs that go beyond closed systems of verbal signification in order to communicate directly the affects that traverse the lived body. The search for an alternative and unmediated form of expression led him to study, like so many of his contemporaries, pre-historic cave paintings, which seemed to offer the promise of shifting attention away from what graphic signs mean towards a more performative understanding of the act of writing or drawing itself.

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[47] Rowell, *La peinture,* p. 109
[48] Rowell, *La peinture,* pp. 109-110
[49] Rowell, *La peinture,* p. 112

The French archaeologist Andre Leroi-Gourhan argued that in the visual cultures of the paleolithic and neolithic periods, mark-making was as much a corporeal practice as it was a symbolic one. Artists and philosophers — from Miró to Masson, from Bataille to Merleau-Ponty — were reading and publishing accounts of this phenomenon in avant-garde journals like *Cahiers d'art* and *Documents* in the mid-20th century. For Michaux, the gestural energy of these cave paintings suggested the possibility of attaining a form of expression rooted in the raw kinetic and kinaesthetic body. These pictographic signs appealed to him because they were not only visual and gestural but also visceral and powerful, that is, somehow closer to the texture, rhythm, and intensity that underlies any expression. They were a model that might serve to help Michaux move beyond the more mediated type of writing systems with which he was becoming increasingly frustrated, writing systems that were altogether inadequate in expressing the affective sensations and movements of the body. It should be noted that, like the other proponents of so-called 'new primitivism' like Antonin Artaud and Jean Dubuffet, Michaux was neither interested in fetishizing the exotic nature of these cave paintings nor in mimicking them in order to reach a kind of authentic spontaneity in the wake of the failures of Surrealism. Rather, these paintings simply illustrated to him the *possibility* that a writing system could be much closer to the gestural intimacy of bodily movements than the French language. The whole process was — as he admits in a reflection on a work from 1927 entitled *Alphabet* — an attempt to 'decondition' himself, to rid himself of his linguistic and cultural habits. The rest of his career as a visual artist can be seen as a slow apprenticeship in the lessons of these cave paintings, a critical and self-aware apprenticeship fueled by the visceral imperative to express movement and speed beyond naive spontaneity.

This apprenticeship can be clearly seen in a new series of alphabets Michaux created in 1944, in which he clearly repeats not only the formal characteristics of Neolithic battle scenes depicting strange animals and spear-throwers; he confines their gestural movements within a type of taxonomic gridding that he most certainly appropriated from books — like Leroi-Gourhan's *Préhistoire de l'art occidental* — which attempted to archive these figures. The pseudo-archival structure of these alphabets suggests that Michaux was directly copying the formal layout of certain illustrations from this type of archeological book. It also evokes the gridded pages of children's exercise books, suggesting again his posture of apprenticeship towards these very books. However, in Michaux's next major visual work, entitled *Movements*, this apprenticeship in taxonomy is gradually loosened in favor of allowing the force of the gestures to break free from confinement. In this coherently conceived artist's book, published in 1951, the rather tentative experiment with sign-producing gestures of both *Alphabet* works is now pursued in a more rigorous and confident way. It is book composed of 64 reproductions selected from over twelve hundred paintings in Indian Ink. While still retaining a connection to the pre-historic paintings, both formally and structurally, *Movements* also vaguely bring to mind certain works of East Asian calligraphy. Indeed, it is known that Michaux owned manuals on Chinese ideograms and actually spent a great deal of time in his youth trying to learn the fundamentals of their calligraphic forms. Furthermore, by choosing the number 64, he seems to be evoking the 64 hexagrams of the *I Ching*, the

ancient Chinese divination manual that uses a combination of long and short brush strokes in order to predict movements and changes in the universe.[50] One important aspect of this series is that, as we turn each page, the figures seem to slowly evolve from relatively small and timid strokes that are still contained within an implicit grid towards larger and wilder strokes that shatter the taxonomic structure of *Alphabets,* as if we are watching the secession of individual film frames or are flipping through one of those picture books Benjamin described as prefiguring the cinema.[51] Furthermore, in line with his interest in East Asian aesthetics — and invoking Eisenstein's identification of scroll paintings as proto-cinematic art forms — Michaux would later claim that 'a scroll, a *kakemono*, would have shown it better than a book, provided that it could be unrolled, or a book of one single page folded over and over again.'[52]

These *Movements* are an important stage in Michaux's progression as a visual artist since they link the earlier, meticulously controlled, forms of plastic writing to the later *art informel* paintings in which Indian ink is thrown straight onto the paper, spreading out into big blots, rather than being applied directly with a paintbrush as it still is in *Movements*. Another important aspect of this artist's book is that it contains both a poem inserted in the central pages and a postface that briefly describes the work. Together they express — beyond the task of communicating something beyond the confines of words — Michaux's explicit motivation for producing the original twelve hundred pages as an 'envie cinétique.'[53] But this kinetic desire, or desire for kinesis, is further explained not in terms of the physical or gestural movements of the brush, but the kinesthetic and sensual pleasures of the act of painting itself. Rather than attempting to transmit symbolic knowledge, even the coded or esoteric knowledge of *Alphabets*, *Movements* should be understood as a series of indexical traces of this impulse to move. We should now come back to Rowell, who makes a distinction between the gesture as an immaterial and irrational movement that we might locate along the central nervous system — from the synaptic movements within the brain to those of the quivering hand — and the material stroke that is simply an abbreviated and incidental trace of this inner movement. Indeed, in the poem, Michaux's desire for

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[50] Michaux will come back to Chinese calligraphy nearly forty years after his journey to China and twenty years after the publication of *Mouvements*, in a text written as the preface to Léon Chang's *La Calligraphie chinoise: Un Art à quatre dimensions.* Interestingly, he describes Chinese calligraphy here in a way that evokes descriptions of his own drawings: 'Lines going off in all directions. In every which way: commas, loops, curlicues, stress marks, seemingly at every point, at all levels: a bewildering thicket of accents ... without form.... The calligrapher must first be plunged in meditation, be charged with energy in order to release, to discharge that very energy.' Henri Michaux, *Ideograms in China*, trans. Gustaf Sobin (New York: New Directions, 1984), no pagination

[51] This has been suggested by the French art historian Alfred Pacquement in his *Henri Michaux: Peintures* (Paris: Gallimard, 1993), p. 40

[52] Henri Michaux, *Peace in the Breaking Flood*, trans. Michael Fineberg (Consigny: Embers, 1976), no pagination. Incidentally another Belgian artist, Marcel Broodthaers, also experimented with proto-cinematic forms in his book *Un Voyage en mer du Nord*, which accompanied a silent film of the same name. Here, a single folded page gives the impression of continuous movement as in a roll of film: 'the book is printed with folded, uncut pages like an old book ... the paper is printed on one side only and therefore potentially could open out into a continuous ribbon, like a film. If you cut it, you break the sequence.' Michael Compton, ed., *Marcel Broodthaers* (London: Tate, 1980), p. 23. It is through an analysis of the *Un Voyage en mer du Nord* project that Rosalind Krauss puts forth her important notion of the 'post-medium condition' of contemporary art. See Rosalind Krauss, *A Voyage on the North Sea: Art in the Age of the Post-Medium Condition* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2000)

[53] Henri Michaux, 'Mouvements' in *Oeuvres Complètes II*, p. 440

kinesis evokes a kind of reciprocal movement between the performative act of creating *taches*, the free marks or stains that are the formal characteristics of *tachisme* — the branch of *art informel*, of which he is considered to be a part — and the more immaterial or psychic movements that traversed his entire being:

> taches
> taches to obscure
> to reject
> to uninhabit
> to destabilise
> to be reborn
> to erase
> to pin down
> to spill memory
> to depart[54]

The act of creating this type of free mark on the paper was seen by him as a kind of exorcism through which he was, again, deconditioning himself, not in order to create a beautiful work of art but in order to unleash the latent movements within himself and to form a kind of circuit between them and the material world. Keeping in mind the fact that Michaux characterized automatic drawing as the 'incontinence of gestures,' his method should not be seen as another incarnation of spontaneous automatism, but rather as a more deliberate and balanced practice that takes inspiration from East Asian calligraphy.[55] In the last few lines of the poem, he describes these *taches* as

> signs of the ten thousand ways of keeping one's balance in this moving world that scoffs at adaptation
> signs above all to retrieve one's being from the trap of the language of others ...
> a direct writing for unwinding
> from the compact spool of forms
> to unchoke, to revoke
> to clear the billboard mind of our times from its cluttering of images
> lacking aura, at least let's cast our effluvia to the winds[56]

While the free marks and blotches testify to the fact that gestural movement has taken place, they are merely truncated figures which, although they supplant given or stable forms, ultimately belie the 'quite extraordinary mobility' of which Michaux himself claims to be the 'counterpart and the motor.' Furthermore, the artist inhabits a paradoxical space at the center of this movement who himself remains 'unmoving and slothful,' highlighting the importance of inner movements over and above outward expressions. As he continues in the Postface:

> Their movement became my movement. The more there were of them, the more I existed. Creating them, I became quite other. I invaded my body — my centers of action and repose — which is often a bit remote from my head. I held it now, tingling, electric. Like a rider on a galloping horse which together make one. I was possessed by movements, on edge with these forms which came to me rhythmically.[57]

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[54] Michaux, 'Mouvements' in *Oeuvres Complètes II*, p. 439
[55] Michaux, 'Surréalisme' in *Oeuvres Complètes I*, p. 61
[56] Michaux, 'Mouvements' in *Oeuvres Complètes II*, p. 440
[57] Michaux, 'Mouvements' in *Oeuvres Complètes II*, p. 598

The *Movements* project taught Michaux that the creation of this type of informal art — without abandoning oneself to an entranced spontaneity but instead riding the 'middle way,' as Rowell puts it, between conscious and unconscious practice — reveals a movement much larger than either the implied movements of individual figures or the kinaesthetic movements that traversed his mind and body. These *Movements* actually involve an alternating circuit *between* himself and the work, between gestures and strokes in Rowell's terminology, or in his own words, between the pre-gestural and the *tache*.[58] In one of the most beautiful and revealing stanzas of the poem included in the book, Michaux finally discusses what he means by gestures:

> gestures
> gestures of unknown life
> of impulsive life
> that we are happy to squander
> of jerky, spasmodic, and upright life
> of wretched or whatever kind of life
> of life
> gestures of confrontation and retreat
> and of escape from strangulation
> gestures that exceed
> exceed
> and especially exceed
> gestures we feel but cannot identify
> (pre-gestures in themselves, much larger than the visible
> and practical gestures that will follow)[59]

These 'much larger' pre-gestures — characterized by a 'SPEED!' and excess that must be contrasted with the timid strokes we see on the canvas — are, according to Michaux, 'movements of dislocation and inner exasperation more than marching movements ... inward foldings ... in place of other movements which cannot be shown but inhabit the mind.'[60] This articulation of the pre-gesture was an insight that stayed with Michaux and informed his art-making from this point onward. For example, when he reflected on the *Movements* project three years later, in a prose-poem entitled 'Signs,' he still speaks of

> interior gestures, for which we don't have limbs but desires for limbs, stretching, impulsive movements and all this with living ligaments that are never thick, never big with flesh nor enclosed in skin.... What an experience it will be when the time is ripe at last and, having got into the habit of thinking in signs, we are able to exchange secrets with a few natural strokes like a handful of twigs.[61]

And even in poem written at the end of his life — which is interspersed with figures reminiscent of those depicted in *Movements* and *Alphabets*, and which even ends with a symbol that evokes the *I Ching* — Michaux explains that, in such figures,

> line is not an abbreviation of volume or surface, but an abbreviation of hundreds of gestures and attitudes and impressions and emotions.... A dynamic abbreviation made up of spears, not forms.

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[58] For clarity's sake, while we rely upon the important distinction Rowell makes between the gesture and stroke, we will follow Michaux's terminology such that pre-gesture refers to the *affective* pulsations of the body along the central nervous system and stroke or tache refer to the physical marks of *action* painting.

[59] Michaux, 'Mouvements' in *Oeuvres Complètes II*, p. 439

[60] Michaux, 'Mouvements' in *Oeuvres Complètes II*, p. 438

[61] Henri Michaux, 'Signes' in *Oeuvres Complètes II*, p. 431

> What I wanted to represent was the gesture *within* the human, taking off from the inside, releasing, ripping free; the *eruption* of this intense, sudden, ardent concentration from which the stroke will proceed, rather than the stroke's arrival at its destination.[62]

This concept of the pre-gestural deeply qualifies the context and motivation behind Michaux's artistic output and, crucially, marks the difference from his contemporaries. It also provides a key for understanding the more refined works for which Michaux is known: the Indian ink paintings of the mid-50s, which secured his place within *art informel,* as well as the so-called mescaline and post-mescaline drawings that dominated his creative output for nearly fifteen years.

Michaux's large Indian ink paintings from 1954 onwards, instead of utilizing cautious and controlled micro-movements of the wrist, vastly open up the painterly field both by his use of a larger canvas as well as by his more physical throwing and dripping ink directly on the canvas. Reluctantly taking the advice of a friend that, while 'charming' the movements should be made bigger, Michaux was initially excited and almost overwhelmed about the liberatory potential of expanding the scope of the paintings. He said that 'the fullness of gesture necessitated by the characters that were supposed to come out bigger had changed the spirit of the drawings. Instead of characters, instead of notations of an undefinable "something," they became propulsion, participation, released torrent. Through amplitude I was able to connect with my own speed.'[63] That is, these new paintings seemed to come much closer to fulfilling his expressed desire for *kinesis*. And this internal success was mirrored in the fact that Michaux began to exhibit in the company of Wols, Fautrier, Dubuffet and Pollock. The connection with Wols and Dubuffet is not surprising since Michaux had already been a part of their circle for at least ten years. But it is difficult today to comprehend the affinity between Michaux and Pollock that so many Parisian artists and critics — including Michel Tapié, Geneviève Bonnefoi, Jean-Louis Schefer, Claude Georges, and Jean Degottex — repeatedly insisted on articulating. It is glaringly obvious that while Michaux's large Indian inks had indeed transgressed the rather restricted boundaries of his earlier work, they remain quite timid and delicate compared with Pollock's huge and explosive canvases. Margit Rowell suggests that the resemblance these artists and critics saw between Michaux and Pollock is more than a formal equivalence and has to do with the fact that, each in his own way, invested gesture with the capacity to undo socialization, culturalization and to return to the different speeds and movements that pulse through body and mind. For both, she argues, 'gesture is a motivation, a tendency,' 'the manifestation of a primal state of being' that connects the artist to 'the original source of all ... creation.'[64]

The problem with such an easy and unconvincing conflation of Michaux and Pollock, aside from Rowell's existential rhetoric, is that it obscures one of the most important aspects of Michaux's work, the idea of the pre-gestural. While Pollock had no problems pushing the limits of outward

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[62] Henri Michaux, 'Grasp' in *Stroke by Stroke*, trans. Richard Sieburth (New York: Archipelago Books, 2006), no pagination. Translation modified.
[63] Henri Michaux, 'To Draw the Flow of Time' in *Untitled Passages*, p. 7
[64] Rowell, *La peinture,* p. 49

gestural spontaneity using industrial materials and the full force of his body, Michaux had understood the Romantic trappings of surrealism. His continued use of Indian Ink and canvases that never exceeded one meter in length should be interpreted as an expression of extreme caution against falling completely on the side of the external brushstroke at the expense of loosing his conscious connection to the delicate pre-gestural movements that coursed through his interior. This is corroborated by the Irish artist Francis Bacon, who owned one of Michaux's large Indian ink paintings, and who stated in an interview that 'Michaux is a very, very intelligent and conscious man ... who has made the best *taches* or free marks that have been made. I think he is much better in this way, in making conscious free marks, than Jackson Pollock.'[65] This is also evident when we read Michaux's own remarks about these larger paintings which stress not the visible qualities of the strokes but rather the kinaesthetic experience of making them, an experience that can only be had if one remains vigilant and self-aware, resisting the urge to succumb to a wild gestural frenzy which ends only in catharsis and exhaustion. In fact, Michaux was ultimately skeptical of these paintings, even though they did allow for a liberatory moment beyond *Movements*. He reflected back, exclaiming that 'I hate them ... they disgust me ... so I fight them, whip them, should like to be done with them.' More than anything, the blots, marks, and smears of these works should be interpreted as the expression of Michaux's frustration with the impossibility of 'allying them with everything that moves in the unnamable crowd of beings and non-beings ... insatiable desires or knots of force, which are destined never to take form.' He ends this rant saying: 'If I'm a *tachiste*, I'm one who can't stand *taches*.'[66]

These *taches* ultimately remain too unwieldy to adequately express Michaux's inner speeds and movements, which was the main motivation behind the production of both his visual art as well as his writing, a motivation made evident by the very titles of some of his poems, such as 'Inside-space,' 'The Distant Interior,' and 'Life within the Folds.' If we look closely at the trajectory of his career, it becomes clear that it is only with his infamous mescaline period from the mid-50s to the mid-60s that his quest to find an adequate medium to express the pre-gestural finally looses its compulsive urgency. He referred to these mescaline drawings as kinematic 'attempts to draw the flow of time' rather than physical *taches* that exist only in space as a kind of after-image or after-thought. As we have already said, Michaux admitted that he was not completely satisfied with these drawings since cinema 'blessed with motion, seemed to have far more success when it came to expressing' the vibrational movements that connect us directly with the 'cinematic' mechanisms of the brain.[67] But with these drawings, his almost compulsive search to express the pre-gestural was over and the last two decades of his artistic output can be seen as a recapitulation and refinement of the various techniques he had already experimented with. Michaux had finally discovered a way to transcribe directly what Margit Rowell calls the

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[65] Francis Bacon, *The Brutality of Fact: Interviews with Francis Bacon*, ed. David Sylvester (London: Thames & Hudson, 1987), p. 17

[66] Michaux quoted in *Henri Michaux,* ed. Anthony Spira (London: Whitechapel Gallery, 1999), no pagination

[67] Michaux, *Emergences/Resurgences*, p. 66. Here, it is useful to remember that cinematography is etymologically 'the inscription of movement, a writing with movements — all kinds of movements.' Jean-François Lyotard, 'Acinema,' trans. Paisley Livingston in *Wide Angle* 2.3 (1978), p. 53

'immaterial and abstract ... inner movements of psychic life,' movements that we might locate along the central nervous system from the synaptic movements within the brain to those that stimulate a quivering hand. Indeed, she describes his mescaline drawings as having 'the homogeneity of a cellular tissue, consisting of undifferentiated small vibrations repeated to infinity ... movements that are interwoven at a fundamental level (that is, within the body), in a kind of network like the nervous system.'[68] The abstract and dense swarms of seismographic scribbles, the very quality and quantity of the lines which repetitiously fill entire sheets of paper, are indeed reminiscent of early medical sketches of Golgi-stained neural pathways.[69] But more than simple *illustrations* that evoke images of the nervous system, Michaux believed that these mescaline drawings render visually and directly the type of vibratory waves that might appear on the 'bristling' encephalogram of a subject under the influence.

In some remarkable words that testify to a kind of neurophenomenology *avant la lettre*, Michaux asks: 'It is absurd to think that cerebral waves, which are on the whole slow, become perceptible in certain states of violent nervous hyper-excitation, especially of the visual cortex? New experiments are required in this field as well as more thorough studies of encephalograms of patients in a state of mescaline intoxication.'[70] While this ultimately remains open-ended speculation, it is the closest Michaux gets to articulating and expressing what he calls the pre-gestural. But before we dismiss outright this comment as the groping words of a naive poet, it should be noted that Michaux attended medical school for a year before dropping out to sail the world and, more generally, to put into motion his creative impulses. His interest in the natural sciences was always in the background of his thinking and informed all of his work in one way or another. His initiation into the mescaline experience — evoking the infamous *Club des Hashischins* — was provided by a series of monitored medical studies, which included several other artists and writers, under the supervision of the psychiatrist Julian de Ajuriaguerra.[71] And Michaux's four books on the drug experience are pseudo-scientific treatises filled

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[68] Rowell, *La peinture,* p. 111

[69] Michaux had always been intrigued by the invention of scientific apparatuses that measured and recorded very small phenomena. For example, around the time of *Movements*, he declared that 'one day in the not so distant future, you will find a device for measuring brain power, the force of this power station [*centrale*] to which we owe what we are. I hope to learn from this *cérébromètre* that which is really mine.' Michaux, 'Passages' in *Oeuvres Complètes II,* p. 292. It has been suggested that using such scientific vocabulary is therefore appropriate in describing his mescaline drawings: 'The hand works like a seismograph, registering the smallest and most imperceptible nerve currents. Multiplication and division to infinity, sharp acuity into the innumerable swarm, repetition and symmetry lead to a form of vertigo, which outweighs the infinity and number. Each perception divides itself into an infinity of sensations which are divided in towards an indefinite abyss. Entering its microscopic dimension, matter reveals itself as and endless and groundless, like a maelstrom of sensations. But the sum of all these petite perceptions, usually unnoticed and that blends into an indistinct mass, offered here by Michaux, clearly and distinctly, in a state of total exacerbation of vision.' Florence de Mèredieu, *Histoire matérielle et immatérielle de l'art moderne* (Paris: Bordas, 1994), p. 211

[70] Michaux, *Light Through Darkness*, p. 7

[71] The *Club des Hashischins* was a Parisian group of artists and writers, including Baudelaire, Gautier, Nerval, Delacroix, and Dumas, who explored the effects of hashish under the direction of the psychiatrist Jacques-Joseph Moreau. Interestingly, Bergson cites Moreau's account of these experiments when he states that 'we know that ... it is possible to to reproduce experimentally, by toxic drugs, all the phenomena of madness.' Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans. N.M. Paul and W.S. Palmer (New York: Zone Books, 1988), p. 174. Similar to Moreau's account of these experiments, Dr. Ajuriaguerra wrote a book to document Michaux's controlled experiments with mescaline entitled *Contribution à la connaissance des psychoses toxiques: Expériences et découvertes du poète Henri Michaux*, which was published by Sandoz Laboratories, Basel in 1964.

with references and footnotes that cite the latest neuroscientific literature. It is the scientific attitude of these books that lead Eric Duvivier, after reading *Knowledge through the Abyss*, to approach Michaux in order to make a film about mescaline. Therefore, the context in which we should attempt to fully understand this phase of Michaux's *oeuvre* is not only poetic and artistic, but also a context that utilizes, interrogates, and responds to properly neuroscientific problems. We would like to suggest that the frame for understanding this *scientific* context began to be systematized only after Michaux's mescaline period. Of course, scientific research into hallucinogenic substances began in the mid-19th century — mostly with the intention of studying potential treatments for mental illness — and intensified in the 1950s and 1960s after the synthesis of lysergic acid diethylamide. But Michaux was interested in the much more ambitious question of how these substances might bring to light certain fundamental mechanisms of the human brain. As we have already suggested, this aspect of his work is normally glossed over as utterly naive. But in 1970, immediately following Michaux's intense decade of mescaline experimentation, Oliver Sacks — the neurologist who Agamben credits with the 'rediscovery' of Tourette Syndrome, the disorder that became *the* symptom of the loss of gesture in late modernity — published his first book, *Migraine*.[72] Incredibly, this book discusses — in more legitimate scientific detail from the pen of a respected neurologist — precisely what Michaux was attempting to articulate through his mescaline writings and drawings. And here, of course, we should remember the connection between Michaux's extended mescaline experimentation and his subsequent development of migraine headaches and hemianopsia.

Sacks's book is a neurological and psychiatric study of the different manifestations of migraine, including the more extreme experiences of visual hallucinations as well as affective distortions of space, time, and body-image. Most interesting for the present discussion are the chapters in which Sacks discusses the so-called migraine 'aura,' a term originally used to describe the sensory hallucinations that sometimes precede epileptic seizures, but which has been increasingly used to depict analogous symptoms which inaugurate a certain class of intense migraine. Sacks meticulously relates these experiences not only to the hallucinations that can be experienced at the onset of an epileptic attack but also to acute states of psychosis, whether drug-induced or schizophrenic. His bold conclusion — which draws on the work of Ilya Prigogine and suggests that the model of self-organizing systems should be applied to the study of neural growth and functioning — is that these 'hallucinatory constants' give us a direct and privileged understanding of neuronal organization and the fundamental workings of the human brain. The specific hallucinations and disorders experienced in migraine aura include visual, tactile, and other sensory hallucinations, the most complex of which 'take the form of synaesthesia and other sensory interactions, and dream-like sequences involving sensory images of every modality.'[73] There can also be muscular spasms suggestive of an epileptic seizure as

[72] The book was actually written in 1967, four years before his famous *Washington Post* article which reignited the discussion and awareness of Tourette syndrome. His account of this rediscovery can be found in Oliver Sacks, *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998), pp. 92-102

[73] Oliver Sacks, *Migraine: Revised and Expanded* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), p. 199

well as alterations of affect and mood.[74] Disturbances to higher-order brain functions include difficulties in the perception and use of the body, the entire range of speech and language disorders, states of double consciousness associated with feelings of *déjà vu,* other dislocations of time-perception, and elaborate dreamy, nightmarish, or trance-like states. Finally, amongst the higher-order disturbances are complex disorders of perception, the types of which Sacks rather poetically describes as Lilliputian, Brobdignagian, zoom, mosaic, and cinematographic visions:

> Lilliputian vision (micropsia) denotes an apparent diminution, and Brobdignagian vision (macropsia) an apparent enlargement, in the size of objects, although the term may also be used to denote the apparent approach or recession of the visual world — these representing alternative descriptions or hallucinations or disordered size: distance constancy. If such changes occur gradually rather than abruptly, the patient will experience zoom vision — an opening-out, or closing-down, in the size of objects as if observing them through the changing focal lengths of a 'zoom' lens. The most famous descriptions of such perceptual changes have, of course, been provided by Lewis Carroll, who was himself subject to dramatic classical migraines of this type.[75]
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> The term mosaic vision denotes the fracture of the visual image into irregular, crystalline, polygonal facets, dovetailed together as in a mosaic. The size of the facets may vary greatly. If they are extremely fine, the visual world presents an appearance of crystalline iridescence or 'graininess' reminiscent of a pointillist painting. If the facets become larger, the visual image takes on the appearance of a classical mosaic, or even a 'cubist' appearance.[76]
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> The term cinematographic vision denotes the nature of visual experience when the illusion of motion has been lost. At such times, the patient sees only a rapidly-flickering series of 'stills,' as in a film run too slowly. The rate of flickering is of the same order as the scintillation-rate of migrainous scotomata (6 to 12 per second).[77]
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> In mosaic and cinematic vision we seem to be presented with an intermediary state which has an inorganic, crystalline character, but no organic personal character, no 'life' which may inspire a strange horror.... The phenomena of 'mosaic' and 'cinematographic' vision are of extreme importance. They show us how the brain-mind constructs 'space' and 'time,' by demonstrating to us what happens when space and time are broken, or unmade.[78]

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[74] Michaux himself speculates about the connection between epilepsy and the mescaline trip: 'It is curious that in the case of mescaline one is conscious of this state but not in epilepsy when a person simply falls. The electrical discharge of the neurons is probably less massive and the waves different.' Michaux, *Miserable Miracle*, p. 60

[75] Sacks, *Migraine*, pp. 73-74. Compare this to Michaux: 'When the action of mescaline is at its height, it produces blinding images, or images ringed with lightning, trenches of fire, as well as, in the distance, lilliputian men whose motions are more like those of the pistons of an engine than human gestures.' Michaux, *Miserable Miracle*, p. 58

[76] Sacks, *Migraine*, p. 74. Sacks notes that, if the latticework facets are not too intense, 'they appear superimposed on whatever the subject is seeing, like a faint, delicate, ever-changing web or grid.... Typically there is movement — a continual changing of scales — and often, simultaneously, an admixture of several scales.' *Ibid*., p. 278. Compare this to a mescaline experience recorded by Michaux: 'the various objects in front of me — vases, tables, armchairs, the Louis XV fireplace — would be covered with these same patterns, but now larger, more numerous, made up of countless lines, no longer static or immortal, but active, agitated, scurrying around, animated by a life all their own, zigzagging like mad across these real surfaces as if they had been cinematographically projected onto them.' Michaux, *Emergences/Resurgences*, p. 64

[77] Sacks, *Migraine*, p. 75. A scotoma, or retinal blind spot, is a general term that includes the type of hemianopsia Michaux occasionally experienced in the latter part of his life which, as Sacks indicates, is triggered by migraine aura in particular ways: 'In [migraine] scotoma the idea of space itself is extinguished along with the extinction of the visual field, and we are left with no trace, space, or place.' Possibly related to the type of flickering and diminished vision Michaux reports in 'A Crowd Come out of the Dark,' Sacks describes the more complex, but quite common, phenomenon called 'scintillating scotoma' in which 'flickering light of the same frequency, the "boiling motion" of visual images, the sense of timelessness and *déjà vu,* and not least the experience of a synaesthetic equivalence between auditory stimuli and visual images' are often reported. Sacks, *Migraine*, p. 87. Sacks also directly refers to hemianopsia in migraine aura in language deeply reminiscent of Michaux's essay: 'The whole visual field — or half of it — may be taken over by a violent, complex turbulence, sweeping the perceived forms of objects into a sort of topological turmoil.' *Ibid*., p. 278

[78] Sacks, *Migraine*, p. 75

It is notable that Sacks uses language reflective of the filmic apparatus in attempting to describe migraine visions: flickering cinematographic stills, zoom lenses, graininess. The use of this terminology obviously goes against our own attempt in conceptualizing the cinematic *without* film. However, in the last part of the book, where he speculates about the types of 'universal' hallucinatory constants that are common not only to migraine aura, but also to different acute states of psychosis, this explicitly filmic terminology falls away. Instead of attempting a reductive analysis of Michaux's mescaline drawings and writings *vis-à-vis* these neuroscientific findings, we could simply let Sacks's remarkable words speak for themselves. We will come back to Michaux's own descriptions of lilliputian, crystalline, and cinematic visions in the next chapter. For now, it would be fair enough to suggest that Sacks's research legitimates Michaux's seemingly naive claim that science would one day be faced with the task of describing what he experienced in the mescaline-induced visionary world, which he believed '*reveals* more than it creates:'[79]

> I believe that I am showing a basic phenomenon which was bound to be discovered one day ... a primeval and general phenomenon which underlies even the most placid consciousness, the most strictly controlled and headstrong intelligence, and which, perhaps vaguely felt, but not seen, passes by unperceived behind other perceptions which are of greater interest.[80]

Ultimately, his mescaline drawings should be understood as 'pre-gestural' in the sense that they attempt to directly express inner neural movements and vibrations onto the canvas rather than trace the gross outer movements of twitching muscles of the arm or hand

Sacks begins the last chapter of his book with a review of several first-person accounts of the various sensory disturbances that occur in the migraine aura by mid-nineteenth century scientists and physicians. The most thorough of these accounts have been written by John Herschel and Hubert Airy, who — through the analysis of their own experiences as well as those of others — independently came to the same conclusion as Michaux, namely, that hallucinations point to universal and fundamental structures of either the workings of the mind, in the case of Herschel, or of the brain, in the case of Airy. Herschel explains that, while perceptual representations and imagination are personal, what he calls the abstract 'geometrical spectra' of migraine hallucinations seem to arise *de novo* from some impersonal and unconscious 'geometrizing' part of the mind that works as a kind of 'kaleidoscopic power' inherent to its organization and functioning, which remains 'distinct from that of our own

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[79] Michaux, *Major Ordeals*, p. 22

[80] Michaux, *Peace in the Breaking Flood*, no pagination. Or again: 'More than the all too excellent mental skills of the metaphysicians, it is these dementias, backwardnesses, deliriums, ecstasies and agonies, these breakdowns in mental skills which are really suited to "reveal" us to ourselves.' Michaux, *Major Ordeals*, p. 7. Compare this to the position of Oliver Sacks himself: 'It must not be imagined that such self-organizing activity, the complex patterns of order and chaos, occur only in pathological conditions. There is increasing evidence to show that chaotic and self-organizing processes occur normally in the cortex, and that they are, indeed, a prerequisite for sensory processing and perception, as well as being constrained by these too. One of the clearest signs of this is their emergence in grossly exaggerated form if there is no sensory input to constrain them. But the processes of chaos and self-organization in the cortex are normally local, microscopic, and, as such, invisible — it is only in pathological conditions that they cohere, synchronize, become global, become visible, take over, and thrust themselves as patterned hallucinations into awareness.' Sacks, *Migraine*, p. 297

personality.'[81] Similarly, Airy noted that the brilliant geometrical patterns of migraine aura are invariant and therefore constitute a 'photograph' of some, equally invariant, structure in the brain.[82] These geometrical hallucinations are typical in advanced stages of the migraine aura, normally occurring only after one has progressed through the experience of phosphenes, or 'seeing stars,' and scotoma. Differing descriptions of such geometrical hallucinations bear striking resemblance to each other and usually consist of a multitude of polygonal shapes, each of which contains tiny replicas of itself, giving rise to a kind of self-transforming fractal mosaic or, in terminology of the nineteenth century, an arabesque. One envisions, for example,

> a form of visual tumult or delirium, in which latticed, faceted and tessellated motifs predominate — images reminiscent of mosaics, honeycombs, Turkish carpets ... or moiré patterns.... These figments and elementary images tend to be brilliantly luminous, colored ... highly unstable, and prone to sudden kaleidoscopic transformations.[83]

John Herschel was perhaps the first scientist to make the connection between migraine hallucinations and those of a drug-induced vision, when he provides a fascinating description of complex geometrical patterns under 'the blessed influenced' of chloroform, namely, 'a kind of dazzle in the eyes, immediately followed by the appearance of a very beautiful and perfectly regular and symmetrical "Turks-cap" pattern, formed by the mutual intersection of a great number of circles outside of, and tangent to, a central one.'[84] But it is only with Heinrich Klüver's extensive research on mescaline hallucination that Sacks really begins to understand the extent of what he comes to label 'hallucinatory constants.' Klüver was a physiological psychologist who made several contributions to neuroanatomy and wrote two short but influential works on mescaline, *Mescal: The 'Divine' Plant and Its Psychological Effects* and *Mechanisms of Hallucinations*. Proceeding from his own first-person experience, as well as accounts of mescaline intoxication which proved to be strikingly similar despite very different cultural contexts, Klüver extracts certain universals of hallucinatory experience, which he calls 'form constants.' He shows that similar form constants may appear in a variety of conditions including — in addition to migraine aura — hypnagogic hallucinations, insulin hypoglycemia, fever deliria, cerebral ischemia, some epilepsies, exposure to rotating or flickering visual stimuli, and sensory deprivation. Explicitly building upon Klüver's schema, Richard Cytowic has recently added natural and cultivated synaesthesia to this list of pathological conditions that may produce form constants within a subject's peripersonal space, that is, on the 'screen' at the inner limit of their perceptual field.[85] With so many etiologies producing more or less the same phenomena, Klüver argues that there must be a universal mechanism at work in the sensory cortex. More or less in line with the positions of Herschel and Airy,

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[81] John Herschel, 'On Sensorial Vision' (1858), quoted in Sacks, *Migraine*, p. 274

[82] Hubert Airy, 'On a Distinct Form of Transient Hemianopsia' (1871), quoted in Sacks, *Migraine*, p. 274

[83] Airy, quoted in Sacks, *Migraine*, p. 276. Michaux is even bold enough to suggest that 'the Orient as such was not the source of these forms, so exaggeratedly thin, sharp. Rather, oriental architects — Persian and Arabian — had seen these ornaments with infinite variations [in a drug-induced vision] and tried to copy them.' Michaux, *Light Through Darkness*, p. 12. Translation modified.

[84] Herschel, quoted in Sacks, *Migraine*, p. 277

[85] Cytowic and Eagleman, *Wednesday is Indigo Blue*, pp. 56-60

Klüver argues that form constants must correspond to constants of cortical structure or organization and, more specifically, that they reveal something fundamental about the functioning of the sensory cortex and the nature of sensory perception. Remarkably, this somewhat speculative view has recently been empirically corroborated by a group of computational neuroscientists.[86]

The main form constants Klüver names are gratings, cobwebs, tunnels, and spirals. But he also discusses at length two other fundamental characteristics of advanced-stage hallucinations that in fact undo form altogether. Both concern psychological affect and the crossing of sensory modalities. The first is the simultaneous seeing and feeling of movement: 'Slow, majestic movements along differently shaped curves simultaneously with "mad" movements. Feeling there is motion *per se*.'[87] The second is what he calls 'haptic hallucinations' that are synaesthetic and kinaesthetic amalgams involving both the visual and tactile spheres:

> a luminous spiral forms itself through the active movement of stripe. This quickly rotating spiral is moving back and forth in the visual field. At the same time ... one of my legs assumes spiral form.... The luminous spiral and the haptic spiral blend psychologically ... one has the impression of somatic and optic unity.[88]

Taken together, Sacks argues, these are not merely *visual* phenomena nor even sensory *form* constants, but 'hallucinatory constants' that should be described 'most generally, as forms of organization, presumably physiological, which can become apparent to any spatially-extended sense.'[89] Relying upon more recent neurological studies of drug-induced hallucination, Sacks further argues that

> Klüver's use of the term 'form constants,' with its purely spatial connotations, gives a misleading impression of stability and invariance in time. This is not a stable, equilibrium sate, but a highly unstable, far-from-equilibrium state, which is continually reorganizing itself. There is incessant movement at this stage of hallucinosis, not only concentric, rotational, and pulsating — some form of oscillation is almost invariable — but with sudden fluctuations as well, sudden replacements of one pattern or one image by another, which Herschel, a century ago, had called 'kaleidoscopic.'[90]

Sack's term 'hallucinatory constants' is therefore meant to correct and extend Klüver's pioneering research on form constants by adding the category of movement. But as Klüver's own analyses suggest, the hallucination of movement should be understood both as the perception of the movement of kaleidoscopic forms as well as the sensation of movement within the body (affective kinaesthesia) and the movement between sensory modalities themselves (synaesthesia). He believes that this

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[86] Paul Bressloff, Jack Cowan, Martin Golubitsky, Peter Thomas, and Matthew Wiener, 'What Geometric Visual Hallucinations tell us about the Visual Cortex' in *Neural Computation* 14 (2002), pp. 473–491

[87] Heinrich Klüver, *Mescal and Mechanisms of Hallucinations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), p. 17, quoted in Sacks, *Migraine*, p. 281

[88] Klüver, *Mescal,* pp. 24, 74, quoted in Sacks, *Migraine*, p. 281. Karl Clausberg, a German art historian who has a strong interest in neuroaesthetics, has written an important article that analyzes the connection between synaesthesia and Walter Benjamin's 'Haschisch-Aura' by drawing on the work of Richard Cytowic, Heinrich Klüver, and Oliver Sacks. Karl Clausberg, 'Aura und Ausdruck: Synästhesien der Beseelung' in *Ausdruck, Ausstrahlung, Aura: Synästhesien der Beseelung im Medienzeitalter,* Karl Clausberg, Elize Bisanz, and Cornelius Weiller, eds. (Bad Honnef: Hippocampus, 2007), pp. 41-86

[89] Sacks, *Migraine*, p. 282

[90] Sacks, *Migraine*, p. 284. The most detailed analysis Sack relies upon is Ronald Siegel, 'Hallucinations' in *Scientific American* 237.4 (October 1977), pp. 132-140. Sacks claims that, while Klüver's approach is more anecdotal and qualitative, Siegel's is experimental and quantitative. Furthermore, Siegel uses his data to extend the number of Klüver's form constants to nine and adds 'constants of movement,' which include concentric, rotational, and pulsating movements.

understanding of hallucinatory constants provides a clearer and more complete picture of the dynamism and complex organization of both hallucinations and their physiological origin in the brain.

In the last few pages of *Migraine*, Sacks constructs a theory for the neurological mechanisms of such hallucinatory constants. He traces a lineage of research from the early nineteenth century which seems to support Michaux's claim that geometric patterns perceived in a strong hallucinatory experience are the result of the wavelike diffusion and interference of nerve impulses in the brain. He shows that, while this proposition began as a kind of metaphor for explaining how nerve transmission spreads through a particular region of the brain — 'like the ripples in a pond into which a stone is thrown'[91] — it has now been confirmed through magnetoencephalographic imaging that such wave excitation spreading across the striate cortex is 'a quantitative and measurable fact' that 'may actually be visualized during the course of migraine aura,' mescaline hallucinations, and similar acute pathological conditions.[92] He admits in the revised edition of the book that science needs a 'radically new principle or theory' in order to fully understand this type of complex neuronal functioning and organization. In this regard, Sacks believes that Ilya Prigogine's breakthroughs in irreversible thermodynamics might one day be applied to biology and to neuroscience more specifically. It is a hope inspired by Prigogine himself who, Sacks claims, 'reminds us that nature "thinks" in non-integrable differential equations, "thinks" in terns of chaos and self-organization, "thinks" in terms of non-linear dynamical systems. "The universe," Prigogine says, "is like a giant brain."'[93] Sacks, like Michaux before him, also hopes that advances in brain imaging technology will one day confirm not only a general neuronal wave diffusion during acute hallucinations, but will be able to illustrate precisely and in real time that the form and movement constants seen in such hallucinations are indeed mapped on the striate cortex. 'This imaging would provide an objective "photograph" of migraine processes, where hallucination can only provide a subjective one.'[94]

Francisco Varela's work on autopoiesis can be seen, in the biological domain, as offering a scientific model comparable to what Prigogine has done in physical chemistry. Furthermore, in his later work, Varela began to develop a method he calls 'neurophenomenology' that fully addresses this last hope and concern of Oliver Sacks, namely, that we need to find an adequate connection between 'objective' and 'subjective' analyses of hallucinatory experience. The premise of neurophenomenology is that no purely third-person model would ever be sufficient to overcome the so-called 'hard problem' of consciousness and that neuroscience must be expanded to include methodologically rigorous first-

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[91] William Gowers, 'Subjective Sensations of Sight and Sound' (1904), quoted in Sacks, *Migraine*, p. 286

[92] Sacks, *Migraine*, pp. 287-288

[93] Sacks, *Migraine*, p. 291

[94] Sacks, *Migraine*, p. 296. As evidence to support this claim that cortical mappings of Klüveresque patterns can emerge from the propagation and interference of normal neuronal wave diffusion, Sacks explains in technical detail an experiment he devised in which an artificial neural network — under different types of parameters and stimulation — is shown to produce not only wave patterns that resemble those attributed to phosphenes and scotoma, but also patterns reminiscent of the most complex geometric and kaleidoscopic forms: Here, we see 'the emergence and evolution, quite spontaneously, of complex geometrical patterns in space and time. Some of these geometric patterns are relatively simple, corresponding to the lattices, radial forms, and spirals seen in migraines; others are more complex, and hint at the more elaborate "ornamental" forms described by Klüver.' Sacks, *Migraine*, p. 295

person investigations of experience. He claims that 'disciplined first-person accounts should be an integral element of the validation of a neurobiological proposal, and not merely coincidental or heuristic information ... not a convenient stop on our way to a real explanation, but an active participant in its own right.'[95] Neurophenomenology does appropriate from the tradition of Husserlian phenomenology — and reformulate more explicitly as *praxis* — 'the basic attitude of suspension, redirection, and receptive openness known as the *epoché*, a term that originally comes from Greek scepticism, where it simply means to refrain from judgment ... through a suspension of beliefs or habitual thoughts.'[96] But more crucially, it also recognizes as legitimate a plethora of other methodologies for first-person investigations, including not only phenomenology proper, but also psychology, psychotherapy, and even Buddhist meditative traditions. This is acknowledged by the wide range of practices included in a special edition of the *Journal of Consciousness Studies,* entitled 'The View from Within: First-Person Approaches to the Study of Consciousness,' which was edited by Varela in 1999. It is true that Varela himself has focused on developing Husserlian phenomenology for the first-person accounts of neurophenomenology. But in an article entitled 'The Gesture of Awareness,' which attempts to develop a rigorous methodological *praxis* from Husserl's concept of reduction, the crucial gesture of such a *praxis* is stated in very general terms that are not specific to phenomenology: 'the core of this specific act is the *suspension* of habitual thought and judgment.'[97] Furthermore, he clearly states that he is interested only in the practical implications of the phenomenological reduction, not in 'its theoretical structure or as an *a priori* justification of knowledge.' Simply put, he is not 'interested in calling into question those of their ['phenomenologists, past or contemporary'] doctrinal arguments that remain speculative, thus perpetuating the endless logic of commentaries upon commentaries.'[98] While this seems fair enough from the point of view of a purely practical neurophenomenology, from a philosophical point of view, the task of applying critical pressure to this project seems quite necessary. The philosopher of mind Thomas Metzinger has stated, rather ambiguously, that 'neurophenomenology is possible; phenomenology is impossible.' Similarly, but from a completely different perspective, the French philosopher Éric Alliez also talks about the 'impossibility of phenomenology.'[99] So what would neurophenomenology without Phenomenology — with a capital P — look like? The first answer comes from one of Varela's closest collaborators, Evan Thompson, who argues that strictly from the perspective of biological autopoiesis the intentional phenomenological subject cannot be the ground of a neurophenomenological practice since 'it seems unlikely that

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[95] Francisco Varela, 'Neurophenomenology: A Methodological Remedy for the Hard Problem' in *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 3.4 (1996), p. 344

[96] Evan Thompson, Antoine Lutz, and Diego Cosmelli, 'Neurophenomenology: An Introduction for Neurophilosophers' in *Cognition and the Brain: The Philosophy and Neuroscience Movement*, ed. Andrew Brook and Kathleen Akins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 70

[97] Natalie Depraz, Francisco Varela, and Pierre Vermersch, 'The Gesture of Awareness: An Account of its Structural Dynamics' in *Investigating Phenomenal Consciousness: New Methodologies and Maps*, ed. Max Velmans (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2000), p. 121

[98] Depraz, Varela, and Vermersch, 'The Gesture of Awareness' in *Investigating Phenomenal Consciousness*, p. 122

[99] Thomas Metzinger, *Being No One: The Self-Model Theory of Subjectivity* (Cambridge: MIT, 2003), p. 83. Éric Alliez, *De l'impossibilité de la phénoménologie: Sur la philosophie française contemporaine* (Paris: Vrin, 1995)

minimal autopoietic selfhood involves phenomenal selfhood or subjectivity, in the Phenomenological sense of a pre-reflective self-awareness constitutive of a phenomenal first-person perspective.'[100] Instead, he suggests that an alternative lies in the tradition of radical empiricism beginning with William James, whose late conception of 'pure experience' replaces the intentional ego. And interestingly, Henri Michaux experienced again and again in his self-explorations this unstable, non-egoic ground of Being: 'There is not one self. *There are not ten selves. There is no self. ME is only a position in equilibrium.* (One among a thousand others, continually possible and always at the ready.) *An average of me's, a movement in the crowd.*'[101]

In the next chapter, before returning to Michaux's mescaline drawings, we will attempt to show how the radical empiricisms of William James, Henri Bergson, and Gilles Deleuze offer theoretical and practical alternatives to the phenomenological *epoché*. The idea that radical empiricism may serve as the basis for a neurophenomenological *praxis* or method has already been suggested by Andrew Bailey, in the special edition of the *Journal of Consciousness Studies* mentioned above, as well as by Evan Thompson, who discusses 'the Jamesian heritage' of neurophenomenology.[102] While taking into account James's radical empiricism, we will focus on how Deleuze rearticulates Bergson's non-Romantic concept of intuition explicitly as 'a fully developed method, one of the most fully developed methods in philosophy.'[103] This will prove to be a radical — or 'transcendental' — empirical method in its own right that offers an alternative to the phenomenological reduction.

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[100] Evan Thompson, 'Life and Mind: From Autopoiesis to Neurophenomenology' in *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences* 3 (2004), p. 389

[101] Henri Michaux, 'A Certain Plume' in *Darkness Moves*, p. 77

[102] Andrew Bailey, 'Beyond the Fringe: William James on the Transitional Parts of the Stream of Consciousness' in *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 6.2-3 (1999), pp. 141-153. In order to highlight the philosophical exception radical empiricism took towards phenomenology, Bailey notes that William James 'completely ignored the publication of Husserl's *Logische Untersuchungen* in 1901, despite Husserl's idolization of his own *Principles of Psychology* ... and indeed James was even influential in preventing its publication in translation in America until the second half of the 20th century.' *Ibid.*, p. 142. The quote by Evan Thompson can be found in his 'Neurophenomenology and Contemplative Experience' in *The Oxford Handbook of Science and Religion*, ed. Philip Clayton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 228. Thompson also analyses some important differences between Husserl and James in his recent book on enactive cognition and neurophenomenology: *Mind in Life: Biology, Phenomenology, and the Science of Mind* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007)

[103] Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Zone, 1988), p. 13

2 *Aisthesis* in radical empiricism

Now that we have defined the nature of the cinematic, we can discuss cinematic *aisthesis* and *poiesis* in this and the next chapter, respectively, which roughly map onto the domains of what Michaux has called *pré-geste* and *geste*. As we shall see, the moment of cinematic *aisthesis* is, in some ways, Deleuze's equivalent to the Heideggerian encounter with nature, which compels an artist to create a work. But Deleuze models his own conception of the encounter on Bergson's idea of intuition. This intuition should be understood as the expansion of perception beyond the normal human coordinates or, more clearly, beyond the scope of the phenomenological or Kantian subject. Such intuition, as Deleuze conceives it, has absolutely nothing to do with a Jungian notion of 'sixth sense.' It is also neither the intellectual intuition of Idealists like Schelling, nor the otherworldly imagination of Romantics like Novalis. Finally, if it isn't clear reading Bergson, Deleuze makes one point explicit: intuition, like all perception, is false or hallucinatory and does not open us to a supposed 'real.' Furthermore, Bergson names art and philosophy as the primary modes of inquiry that are able to plunge us into intuition, but both he and Deleuze also seem to suggest that the usual Romantic suspects — the genius and the madman — might also be included on this list. Against any remaining Romantic tendencies in their work, we would say not only that intuition is fundamentally 'false:' it is something that, in a world without geniuses, must be induced by different technologies. That is, beyond the typical figure of the mad genius that we depict in our summary of Gustav Fechner, we present Henri Michaux, who shows how the *technics* of drugs or of cinematic art expand perception beyond the human. As we shall see, this Deleuzian encounter can be refracted into three distinct moments: *sentiendum*, *memorandum*, *cogitandum*.

2.1 Fechner's experimental aesthetics and psychophysics

In 1876, Gustav Fechner — a German physicist, philosopher of nature, and founder of experimental psychology — published the results of his analysis of color synaesthesia as the concluding section of his two-volume work *Vorschule der Aesthetik*. Despite the facts that synaesthesia, as a literary and artistic trend, had been well underway since Baudelaire's *Correspondences* and that numerous cases of this curious 'disorder' had been reported in the medical literature during the 19th century, Fechner's was the only significant empirical study of the phenomenon until the Congrès Internationale de Psychologie Physiologique set up a special committee to make systematic investigations in 1890.[1] Until Fechner's work, the prevailing scientific view of sensory perception was based on Johannes Müller's principle of 'specific nerve energies,' itself modeled after Aristotle's schema in *De Anima,* in which each of the five senses was restricted to its own distinct sphere of operation. Clearly the burgeoning field of a quantitative, empirical psychology still had much to learn about the methods of scientific research. Fechner's insight into the necessity of shedding antiquated ideas that might blind empirical investigations — illustrated here by his interest in synaesthesia against the grain of the current paradigm — was the main methodological thrust of his work in general. Indeed, the provocative premise of his 'Preschool' was that aesthetics must proceed, like any other science, from the bottom up, by utilizing empirical data to develop aesthetic concepts inductively. 'Whoever is searching for light — and pursuing the path from below is such a search — cannot seek to illuminate this path with a light that is already given.'[2] This call for an aesthetics 'from below' ran straight in the face of the German

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[1] John Gage, *Color and Meaning: Art, Science, and Symbolism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), p. 247. For Fechner's discussion of synaesthesia, see 'Über den Farbeneindruck der Vokale' in his *Vorschule der Aesthetik* (Hildescheim: Georg Olms, 1978), volume 2, pp. 315-319.

[2] Gustav Fechner, 'Aesthetics from Above and from Below,' trans. Jason Gaiger, in *Art in Theory: 1815-1900*, ed. Charles Harrison, Paul Wood, and Jason Gaiger (London: Blackwell, 1998), p. 635. Compare this to Deleuze's definition of empiricism, which alludes to the 'radical' empiricism of William James: 'I have always felt that I am an empiricist, that is, a pluralist.... the abstract does not explain, but must itself be explained; and the aim is not to rediscover the eternal or the universal, but to find the conditions under which something new is produced (*creativeness*).' Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues II*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), p. vii. Deleuze's interest in James and Fechner — and, in particular, their connection with Bergsonism and empiricism — was probably influenced by Jean Wahl's first book, *Les Philosophies Pluralistes d'Angleterre et d'Amérique*, which includes entire chapters on each of these philosophers. Indeed, Deleuze specifically acknowledges his indebtedness to Wahl, who began his own philosophical career as a disciple of Bergson. 'Apart from Sartre, who remained caught none the less in the trap of the verb to be, the most important philosopher in France was Jean Wahl. He not only introduced us to an encounter with English and American thought, but had the ability to make us think, in French, things which were very new.' *Ibid.,* pp. 57-58.

tradition of speculative aesthetics in the wake of Kant.[3] However, before discussing Fechner's *Vorschule* as the starting point for a radically empirical aesthetics, I would like to briefly outline the context of his work generally since, as a whole, it connects many of the issues considered in this chapter: the links between synaesthesia and aesthetics, between art, philosophy, and science, between Bergsonian and Leibnizian intuition, between ordinary and radical empiricism.

The complex progression of Fechner's scientific career is significant in that it is punctuated by moments of philosophical tension and mental crises. He is precisely the type of scientist Deleuze and Guattari refer to in *What is Philosophy?*, one who, against the grain of the accepted dogma of his time, was able to plunge into the unknown, return 'with bloodshot eyes,' and then — by establishing mathematical functions through 'groping experimentation' — consolidate a plane of immanence by treating it as 'a moveable and moving ground, a field of radical experience.'[4] Though he was born a son and grandson of church pastors, during his university years, in the midst of his medical studies and the burgeoning scientific positivism of the time, he became a devout atheist. He spent more than seventy years at the University of Leipzig, first as a pupil, then as a docent, and finally as a professor of physics. All this time, he was engaged in unremitting scientific labor, covering nearly all fields in an encyclopedic frenzy of which, in our era of increasing specialization, we have no real example. Indeed Wilhelm Wundt and Sigmund Freud in psychology, William James and Alfred Whitehead in philosophy, as well as Ernst Mach and Ilya Prigogine in physics have all testified to his profound influence on and inspiration for their work. However, two events — one in 1820 and the other in 1840 — disrupted and then completely shattered his faith in positivism and perhaps, more than his scientific education, defined the trajectory of his investigations. The first was an introduction to Lorenz Oken's philosophy of nature by a fellow classmate, which challenged his mechanistic world-view: 'At once there shone for me a new light illuminating the whole world and the science of the world; I was as though dazzled by it ... in short, I have gained at once the point of view for a great unifying conception of the world.'[5] Although he never fully subscribed to the speculative method of *Naturphilosophie* — and instead developed an empirical and inductive method adapted from his training in science to develop the vitalist philosophy of nature he called the 'day-view' — his encounter with it forever imprinted upon his mind the need to challenge the dogma of mechanistic determinism. Around the same time, Fechner

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[3] In the first edition of his *Critique of Pure Reason,* Kant conceived of aesthetics according to its etymological sense — *aisthesis* — and in opposition to the narrow definition of aesthetics as the 'science of beauty and art' widely held at the time. (Of course, in the 'Transcendental Aesthetic,' sensible perception in space and time has its own 'origin and content' and is not derived from empirical sensation.) The normative definition of aesthetics crept into the second edition, where Kant subtly extends the domain of the aesthetic to include the critique of taste. This move paved the way for the analyses of the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* — where aesthetics unequivocally refers to the critique of beauty, the sublime, and art — which in no small way informed the speculative aesthetics of German Romanticism and Idealism. Against this speculative tradition — which includes those in the vein of 'Schelling, Hegel, and even Kant' — Fechner claimed that 'what is still missing is an empirical foundation; and for this reason all of our systems of philosophical aesthetics seem to me like mighty giants with feet of clay.' Fechner, 'Aesthetics from Above and from Below' in *Art in Theory*, p. 634

[4] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?,* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), pp. 41, 105

[5] Gustav Fechner, *Religion of a Scientist*, ed. and trans. Walter Lowrie (New York: Pantheon, 1946), p. 26

was also strongly influenced by another of his university friends, a roommate and fellow student of medicine who was seized by Romanticism and who relinquished his studies in favor of becoming a wandering poet and agitator. Fechner spoke of this encounter as 'an epoch-making experience,' which undoubtedly influenced his subsequent interest in *belles-lettres* as well as the birth of his alter-ego, the rebellious clown 'Dr. Mises.'

Dr. Mises was the pseudonym for Fechner's satirical and philosophical rants — published alongside his properly scientific studies and translations — against the arrogant over-confidence of medicine, natural history, and positivism generally, as well as speculative metaphysics. The very titles give an indication of the humoristic tone of these publications: 'Proof that the Moon is Made of Iodine', 'The Comparative Anatomy of Angels', 'Little Book on Life After Death,' 'Stapelia Mixta.' The latter is an uneven collection of fantastic tales and *Naturphilosophie* satirically named — following the Romantic obsession with bestowing floral names upon books — after a flower, which 'emits such a stench that the carrion fly lays her eggs in it quite by mistake.'[6] His particular literary blend of rigorous science and humoristically absurd logic can be seen as a forerunner to the type of science *fiction* that would emerge at the end of the 19th century in the writings of J.H. Rosny and H.G. Wells.[7] In fact, Dr. Mises' satirical idea of time as the fourth dimension was appropriated by Wells in *The Time Machine* and Fechner himself figures in *When The Sleeper Wakes.*[8] Additionally, the physicist and philosopher Kurd Lasswitz, who is considered the father of German science fiction, also wrote a biography of Fechner.[9] His titles — for example his last book *Star Dew: the Plant of Neptune's Moon* — sound remarkably close to something Dr. Mises might have penned. Perhaps this humoristic, yet rigorously philosophical,

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[6] Fechner quoted in Marilyn Marshall, 'Gustav Fechner, Dr. Mises, and the Comparative Anatomy of Angels' in *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 5:1 (January 1969), p. 41. Fechner sent a copy of this text to the poet Jean Paul, whom he deeply admired, along with a letter in which he describes himself as someone who 'at heart perhaps sometimes does not truly know what he wants ... except that, as I am aware, in all individual things I constantly search for the whole or would like to make them into a whole, but unfortunately I lack the inner talents for *art*, although I would prefer it to *science*.' Fechner quoted in Michael Heidelberger, *Nature from Within: Gustav Theodor Fechner and His Psychophysical Worldview,* trans. Cynthia Klohr (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004), p. 37. Other purely literary texts by Dr. Mises include his *Book of Riddles*, which was written in rhyme and enjoyed four editions, and a more serious book of *Poems.*

[7] Interestingly, Deleuze was familiar with Rosny's science fiction — which he refers to as 'naturalism in intensity' — but, more importantly, he directly relies upon Rosny's philosophical theory of intensive quantities (developed in *Les sciences et le pluralisme*) in the last chapter of *Difference and Repetition*, 'Asymmetrical Synthesis of the Sensible.' Just to indicate the reception of *Les sciences et le pluralisme,* following its publication Rosny was placed in the most exalted company of scientists and philosophers in Jules Sageret, *La révolution philosophique et la science: Bergson, Einstein, Le Dantec, J.H. Rosny aîné* (Paris: Alcan, 1924). His range of publications, like Fechner's, testify to the slippery boundary between science fiction and the philosophy of science.

[8] Elmar Schenkel, 'White Elephants and Black Machines: H.G. Wells and German Culture' in *The Reception of H.G. Wells in Europe*, ed. Patrick Parrinder and John Partington (London: Continuum, 2005), pp. 91-92

[9] Steven Dick, *The Biological Universe: The Twentieth Century Extraterrestrial Life Debate and the Limits of Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 227

subset of Fechner's *oeuvre* might give us some clues about Gilles Deleuze's cryptic statement that 'A book of philosophy should be ... a kind of science fiction.'[10]

By the beginning of 1840, after years of rigorous scientific experimentation and publication, Fechner's growing insomnia and exhaustion became an acute crisis, forcing him to discontinue lecturing. The event that seemingly pushed him beyond the threshold of mental stability was the temporary eye damage — which amounted to prolonged retinal after-images and flickering, even when his eyes were closed — he incurred while staring at the sun through colored glass, apparently as part of his investigations into the phenomenology of vision.[11] He became 'so sensitive to light that he blindfolded himself and diagnosed himself as blind, ... lost all appetite and emaciated himself to the point that he could no longer stand upright.... In addition to the anguish of starvation and blindness, Fechner was afflicted ... by worry about a mental disturbance, namely, the 'total destruction' of his 'mental energy' — as he put it. A severe loss of thought caused him to break off all social contact. His main activity consisted in trying to control his thoughts. The scenario he had depicted in the *Little Book* now happened to his own mind.'[12] This condition lasted until his sudden recovery nearly three years later.

This traumatic ordeal is precisely the type of event that, according to Deleuze and Guattari, legitimates serious investigative work, whether it be in art, science, or philosophy. In all three cases, real thinking begins with a shock to thought which itself depends upon 'a sort of groping experimentation and ... measures that are not very respectable, rational, or reasonable. These measures belong to the order of dreams, of pathological processes, esoteric experiences, drunkenness, and excess. We head for the horizon, on the plane of immanence, and we return with bloodshot eyes, yet they are the eyes of the mind. Even Descartes had his dream. To think is always to follow the witch's flight.... But then 'danger' takes on another meaning.... This is because one does not think without becoming something else, something that does not think — an animal, a molecule, a particle — and that comes back to thought and revives it.'[13] Recollecting on his experience, Fechner admitted: 'I was mentally occupied, not with thinking, but with banishing and bridling thoughts. I sometimes felt like a rider on a wild horse

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[10] Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition,* trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. xx. A few lines later Deleuze states: 'This is the secret of empiricism. Empiricism is by no means a reaction against concepts, nor a simple appeal to lived experience. On the contrary, it undertakes the most insane creation of concepts ever seen or heard. Empiricism is a mysticism and a mathematicism of concepts, but precisely one which treats the concept as object of an encounter.' This important remark makes even more sense within the context of the work Fechner undertook after 1840. The idea of philosophy as science fiction, interestingly, brings together the three modes of knowledge Deleuze and Guattari refer to in *What is Philosophy?*: art, science, and philosophy. This 'science fiction' has implications not only for philosophy but also for science itself, especially modern physics which — lacking the empirical tools necessary for verifying complex mathematical models, tools that have traditionally grounded claims for a metaphysics of Truth — ultimately falls into the fuzzy realm of belief.

[11] Fechner was at the forefront of scientific research into the corporeality of color and vision in the wake of Goethe and Maine de Biran. One of his discoveries was the phenomenon now known as 'Fechner color,' which refers to the illusion of color observed while looking at rapidly moving black and white lines. See Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), pp. 141-149

[12] Heidelberger, *Nature from Within*, p. 48

[13] Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* pp. 41-42. The quote continues with a reference to Henri Michaux: 'Take Michaux's plane of immanence, for example, with its infinite, wild movements and speeds.'

that has taken off without him, trying to tame it.'[14] Furthermore, if we attempt to understand his mental collapse as a version of the 'scenario he had depicted in the *Little Book*' — a book which concerns the experience of the soul, particularly with regard to the expansion of consciousness and perception, after death — the parallels with Deleuze and Guattari's depiction of the dangers of thinking are even more pronounced, although Fechner's language is steeped in the rampant Romanticism of his time:

> Even in this world, at the approach of death (by narcotics, in imminent drowning, or in exaltation) there occur flashes of recognition of the spiritual meaning of things.[15]
>
> Even in this life exceptionally, in rare cases, we see the light of consciousness wander out of the narrower body into the wider and return again, bringing news of what happens in distant spaces, in distant times.[16]
>
> To the subjective vision there comes a flash so unusually vivid as to bring to the earthly sense an impression rising above the threshold from an otherwise inaccessible distance. Here begins the wonders of clairvoyance, of presentiments, and premonitions in dreams.... They advance and surprise you with overpowering force ... really entering into you and bringing into your mind far more dismay than comfort.[17]

Subtracted from its theological resonances, Fechner's account also sounds remarkably close to Bergsonian intuition, to which we will shortly turn:

> Perception in you dissolves, and memory ascends from within you; your whole life of intuition dissolves in God, and a higher existence of recollection rises from it to God; and like memories in your mind, so the spirits of the other world communicate within in the divine mind.[18]

However we interpret Fechner's traumatic experience, it unquestionably altered the trajectory of his career and, indeed, every aspect of his life. In 1846, he reported to the Ministry of Culture in Leipzig that, while his health had been restored, he felt unable to return to his previous post at the university — 'because neither can my eyes tolerate keen observation, nor my mind tolerate mathematical thinking'[19] — and he requested permission to lecture on only philosophical topics. His appeal was granted and, although he was allowed to keep his title of professor of physics, as well as his salary, he was relieved of all lecture obligations. Fechner, free to pursue his own interests, began to publish in the creative vein of

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[14] Heidelberger, *Nature from Within*, p. 48

[15] Gustav Fechner, *Little Book of Life After Death*, trans. Mary Wadsworth (New York: Pantheon, 1943), p. 62. This statement is quite reminiscent of the 'dizziness' involved in a Leibnizian intuition of *petites perceptions*. Indeed, Deleuze names Fechner the last important figure in the tradition that develops a Leibnizian differential unconscious based upon these minute perceptions: 'If I look for the lineage, it's Leibniz who proposed this great idea, the first great theory of this differential unconscious, and from there it never stopped. There is a very long tradition of this differential conception of the unconscious based on minute perceptions. It culminates in a very great author who, strangely, has always been poorly understood in France, a German post-Romantic named Fechner.' Gilles Deleuze, 'Les Cours de Gilles Deleuze: Leibniz 29/04/1980,' online at http://www.webdeleuze.com/php/texte.php?cle=55&groupe=Leibniz&langue=2. See also Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 108 and Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, trans. Tom Conley (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), pp. 92-97

[16] Fechner, *Little Book of Life After Death*, p. 82

[17] Fechner, *Little Book of Life After Death*, pp. 83-85

[18] Fechner, *Little Book of Life After Death*, p. 88. Indeed, regarding this type of shock to thought, Fechner's language is quite close to Bergson's: 'It is impossible to be lost in external perception and to think deeply at the same time.' Gustav Fechner, *Elements of Psychophysics*, ed. Davis Howes and Edwin Boring, trans. Helmut Adler (New York: Henry Holt, 1966), p. 33

[19] Heidelberger, *Nature from Within*, p. 49

Dr. Mises, albeit now with a definite philosophical thrust: first with a short sketch on naturalistic, empirical ethics in which he politely disagreed with Kant's categorical imperative followed by a satirical piece aimed to a great extent against the negativity of Hegel's dialectic.[20] It could also be argued that Fechner's two identities — which were artificially kept apart due to the necessity of maintaining his reputation at the university — now became integrated into a Mises-Fechner as he increasingly published works, which before would have been reserved for the pen of Mises, in his own name.[21] The only difference is that, now, all traces of sarcasm are replaced with the sober tone demanded of scientific research. For example the hypotheses, originally put forward in jest by Dr. Mises in *The Comparative Anatomy of Angels* — that planets are living creatures and, following Oken, that angels must have a spherical form — were again proposed thirty years later, this time with a straight face, in Fechner's *Zend-Avesta: Or Concerning Heavenly Things and the Hereafter, from the Standpoint of Natural Science.*

In 1848, Fechner published a long piece of *Naturphilosophie* entitled *Nanna, Or the Soul-life of Plants* in which, as a part of his day-view project, he tried to demonstrate that plants have souls using scientific and philosophical methods, namely empirical observation coupled with the logics of induction, inference, and analogy.[22] This was the method 'from below' that he developed specifically against the speculative philosophies of Schelling and Hegel. William James, who repeatedly declared his indebtedness to Fechner for his own philosophical conversion, describes the day-view quite succinctly: 'He was in fact a philosopher in the "great" sense.... For him the abstract lived in the concrete, and the hidden motive of all he did was to bring what he called the daylight view of the world into greater evidence, that daylight view being this, that the whole universe in its different spans and wave-lengths, exclusions and envelopments, is everywhere alive and conscious... The original sin, according to Fechner, of both our popular and our scientific thinking, is our inevitable habit of regarding the spiritual not as the rule but as an exception in the midst of nature.'[23] In pursuing this vitalist philosophy of nature, Fechner repeatedly insisted that he was not trying to provide hard scientific evidence concerning things beyond the realm of the given, but rather to philosophically relate these things to the observable. When no exact proof is available, Fechner argued, one must use substitute methods, but

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[20] *On the Greatest Good* and *Four Paradoxes,* respectively, which were both published in 1846.

[21] 'For three years, he was out of touch with the world, and when he re-emerged it was an integrated Mises-Fechner. He turned his efforts primarily to a systematic resolution of those broad puzzles of the world which, previously, he had allowed himself to touch only in jest or in miniature in the fantastic tales of Dr. Mises. As if in public acknowledgment of Dr. Mises' identity, the second and subsequent editions of *The Little Book of Life After Death* appeared with Fechner's own name on the title page. The unique product of Fechner's absorption of Dr. Mises was the *Elements of Psychophysics* and the broader, empirically grounded philosophy of nature which he called the *Day View*. Dr. Mises spoke alone now only as a riddle maker and a poet.' Marshall, 'Gustav Fechner, Dr. Mises, and the Comparative Anatomy of Angels,' p. 41

[22] In his self-avowed book on the philosophy of Nature, Deleuze claims that plants share with humans an underlying inorganic life, which in plants manifests as a vibratory micro-brain synonymous with what he calls '*soul* or *force*.' 'The plant contemplates by contracting the elements from which it originates — light, carbon, and the salts — and it fills itself with colors and odors that in each case qualify its variety, its composition: it is sensation itself. It is as if flowers smell themselves by smelling what composes them, first attempts of vision or of sense of smell, before being perceived or even smelled by an agent with a nervous system and a brain.' Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?,* pp. 211-212. The concept of inorganic life will be discussed more fully in the following chapter.

[23] William James, 'Concerning Fechner' in *A Pluralistic Universe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977), p. 70. Incidentally, James also wrote the 'Introduction' to the first English edition of Fechner's *Little Book*.

these methods must be consistent with empirical data. According to him, this is 'the great art of inferring things beyond from things present, *not from final causes* ..., *nor from assumptions* ..., *but from facts*.'[24] James sums up the style of argumentation that emerges:

> His earliest book was a vision of what the inner life of plants may be like. He called it 'Nanna.' In the development of animals the nervous system is the central fact. Plants develop centrifugally, spread their organs abroad. For that reason people suppose that they can have no consciousness, for they lack the unity which the central nervous system provides. But the plant's consciousness may be of another type, being connected with other structures. Violins and pianos give out sounds because they have strings. Does it follow that nothing but strings can give out sound? How then about flutes and organ-pipes? Of course their sounds are of a different quality, and so may the consciousness of plants be of a quality correlated exclusively with the kind of organization that they possess.... Truly plants can foresee nothing, neither the scythe of the mower, not the hand extended to pluck their flowers. They can neither run away nor cry out. But this only proves how different their modes of feeling life must be from those animals that live by eyes and ears and locomotive organs, it does not prove that they have no mode of feeling life at all.[25]

In the end, whether or not Fechner succeeded in his task of convincing his reader of this day-view of the natural world perhaps has less to do with his methods of argumentation than with the reader's own vision or belief. However, he approached the invisible world as far as was possible given his rule that philosophy, like science, must begin with empirical evidence. His task was not to prove that a realm beyond the normal functions of the senses existed — for this was already adequately known by the theories of electromagnetism of the mid-19th century — but rather to attempt to provide the philosophy of nature this new physics needed in order to create a coherent world-view. Despite the possible claim that Fechner's inductive argumentation goes no further than the sarcastic hyperbole of Dr. Mises — and is even more laughable do to its scholarly tone — more important for Fechner's *radical* empiricism are indeed vision and belief.[26] William James claimed that 'philosophy is more a matter of passionate vision than of logic ... logic only finding reasons for the vision afterwards' and Fechner, as a 'great' philosopher, 'is a man who doesn't live second-hand, but who *sees*.'[27] Indeed, Fechner's rebirth as a philosopher literally began with a tremendous vision — what might be called, in the language of James, a mystical experience — from which he returned 'with bloodshot eyes.' As he claimed in the preface to *Nanna*, the direct motivation for writing the book was the traumatic physical and mental breakdown that occurred after his prolonged staring into the sun. The first time Fechner walked through the garden after his recovery 'he literally soaked in the beauty of the flowers. He saw

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[24] Fechner quoted in Marshall 'Gustav Fechner, Dr. Mises, and the Comparative Anatomy of Angels' in *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences,* p. 47

[25] James, 'Concerning Fechner' in *A Pluralistic Universe*, pp. 77-78

[26] Of course, I borrow the term radical empiricism from James. The idea that some concept of 'belief' is required to support such a radical empiricism — which is called 'intuition' in Bergson or 'transcendental empiricism' in Deleuze — is held by all of these philosophers, in different ways, as we can glean from titles like Fechner's *Three Motives and Grounds of Belief* (1863) and William James's *The Will to Believe* (1897).

[27] James, 'Concerning Fechner' in *A Pluralistic Universe*, pp. 81, 72

everything in exaggerated clarity and believed to perceive that the plants' souls were 'glowing."[28] Although the seeds of the late Fechner's philosophy were inherent in the works of Dr. Mises, the movement from the Humean empiricism of Fechner the scientist to the radical empiricism of Fechner the *Naturphilosoph* began with, and was arguably *dependent upon*, his debilitating but ultimately revealing 'plunge into the chaos.'[29] Incidentally, James's own movement from his early research in quantitative, empirical psychology to the radical empiricism and pantheistic metaphysics of the final years began with his growing interest in abnormal states of consciousness and psychical research after the publication of his *Principles of Psychology*. These new interests were, in part, influenced by the work of Henri Bergson but, perhaps more than this, they were directly motivated by the hallucinatory visions he

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[28] Heidelberger, *Nature from Within*, p. 54. Fechner recalled his emergence from blindness and mental instability in almost manic terms: 'I felt that I in part possessed extraordinary psychic and physical powers, and in part was on my way toward achieving them, that the whole world now appeared to me in another light ... the riddles of the world seemed to reveal themselves; my earlier life had been extinguished and the present crisis seemed to be a new birth.' *Ibid.*, p. 49. Interestingly, the first major impression of Aldous Huxley's famous mescaline trip in 1953 was that of 'flowers shining with their own inner light and all but quivering under the pressure of the significance with which they were charged ... and in their living light I seemed to detect the qualitative equivalent of breathing — but of a breathing without returns to a starting-point, with no recurrent ebbs but only a repeated flow from beauty to heightened beauty, from deeper to ever deeper meaning.' Aldous Huxley, *The Doors of Perception and Heaven and Hell* (New York: Vintage, 2004), p. 7. We will turn to Henri Michaux's own experiments with mescaline — and their relation to the visions of Fechner and Huxley — at the end of this chapter.

[29] Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* p. 202. James describes radical empiricism — which he calls his *Weltanschauung* — as a 'mosaic philosophy ... of plural facts, like that of Hume and his descendants.' William James, *Essays in Radical Empiricism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), p. 22. As such it focuses on 'the part, the element, the individual and treats the whole as a collection and the universal as an abstraction.' *Ibid.* However, there is one key difference between the 'ordinary' or 'half-way' empiricism of Hume (as well as positivistic science) and James's version, which is signified by the epithet 'radical.' His axiom is simple: 'To be radical, an empiricism must neither admit into its constructions any element that is not directly experienced, nor exclude from them any element that is directly experienced. For such a philosophy, *the relations that connect experiences must themselves be experienced relations.*' *Ibid.* James claims that his empiricism differs from that of Hume insofar as he counts the connectedness between parts — the 'conjunctive and disjunctive relations' — as integral to the possibility of any experience at all. British Empiricism 'has always shown a tendency to do away with the connections of things' (*Ibid.*, p. 23), but James's attention to connection *and* plurality is meant to save empiricism from skepticism and the futility of attempting to piece things back together from a set of disjointed particulars. The transition between each seemingly discrete sense perception is not empty, but is made up of specific, if difficult to articulate, felt qualities of tendency and relationality. This is something Leibniz also explores with his idea of *petites perceptions*. James makes it clear that this connectivity is not a rationalist or supersensible concept but rather an *experience* of relations between terms, which was already expressed — in his chapter on 'The Stream of Thought' in *Principles of Psychology* — as 'a feeling of *and*, and a feeling of *if*, a feeling of *by*.' William James, *Principles of Psychology* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), p. 238. Pragmatically speaking, this feeling of relations has as much reality or 'truth' as the weight of a stone in your hand. Another important consequence of James's axiom of radical empiricism is that it admits, not only the experience of connectivity, but also the experience of normally 'hidden' mental states, including his own drugged hallucinations as well as Fechner's quasi-mystical revelation. Deleuze takes radical empiricism one step further. While James attempts to level the playing field between parts and their relations — in effect finding a middle ground between an overly-optimistic rationalist Unity and an overly-pessimistic empiricist disconnection — Deleuze elevates relations above their terms. He does agree with James's move beyond Hume: 'Substitute the AND for IS. A *and* B. The AND is not even a specific relation or conjunction, it is that which subtends all relations ... empiricism has never had another secret.' Deleuze and Parnet, *Dialogues II,* p. 57. But he also moves beyond James: 'In a multiplicity what counts are not the terms or the elements, but what there is "between," a set of relations which are not separate from each other.' *Ibid.* p. viii. Multiplicity is Deleuze's word for the set of relations and their terms, precisely James's 'mosaic' or 'pluralistic universe.' However, favoring relations allows us to comprehend a multiplicity in its differential emergence, or becoming, rather than as a mere set of inert objects. For more on differential relations, see notes 177 and 178 below. 'Transcendental empiricism is the term I will use to distinguish it from everything that makes up the world of subject and object ... sensation merely cuts a slice in the continuous stream of absolute consciousness.' Gilles Deleuze, 'Immanence: A Life' in *Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews 1975-1995*, ed. David Lapoujade, trans. Ames Hodges and Mike Taormina (New York: Semiotexte, 2006), p. 384. That the transcendental field is beyond the subject-object distinction relates again to James, this time to his concept of 'pure experience.' See note 207 below.

experienced during his experimentation with psychoactive drugs around the same time.[30] A quick conclusion might suggest that, in the cases of both Fechner and James, empiricism became radical after a visionary shock to thought, an encounter with chaos which James referred to as a 'painful hyperaesthesia of all the functions.'[31] In Fechner's next major publication — *Elements of Psychophysics,* which remains his legacy today — the union of Fechner and Mises is completed, as evidenced by the equal weight he gives here to the ordinary empiricism of the scientific method and the radical vision of his day-view philosophy.[32] What is even more remarkable about this text is that, with it, Fechner not only fulfills the role of a Deleuzian scientist who consolidates a particular section of chaos by establishing mathematical functions; the function he establishes is precisely one that attempts to make sense of the shock to thought itself.

In this two-volume opus, Fechner supplied the theory and techniques of 'psychophysics,' which effectively christened the burgeoning field of quantitative, experimental psychology and laid the foundations of modern neuroscience.[33] By psychophysics, Fechner was really referring to the neural processes, as yet unobserved, that lie between stimulus and sensation. He did not consider the lack of knowledge concerning the precise nature of these processes to be an obstacle to his investigations since, ultimately, the shock of sensation is felt physically as a kind of vibration which could be quantitatively determined.[34] Unlike the positivists who reduced mental sensations to mere epihenomena of physical events, Fechner broadly followed Spinoza in treating mind and body — or, more precisely, thought and extension — as different attributes of the one and only substance. However, utilizing the positivists' scientific method, he attempted to establish an exact and direct relationship between them.[35]

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[30] That is, *circa* 1890. For James these substances, notably nitrous oxide and mescaline, 'stimulate the mystical consciousness' and with them one can 'have a genuine metaphysical revelation.' William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), p. 307. For in-depth analyses of James's conversion from positivism to radical empiricism see Eugene Taylor, *William James on Consciousness Beyond the Margin* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996). Interestingly, it is also around this time that James began to take Fechner's work seriously; in his *Principles of Psychology*, for example, he all but dismissed Fechner's psychophysics. However, Fechner's word-view ultimately became attractive to James — and his own burgeoning philosophy of a pluralistic, radical empiricism — because it could accommodate the accumulating evidence of other forms of consciousness provided by psychopathological, psychical, and mystical experience, including especially his own experiments with drugs. These experiences 'establish, when taken together, a decidedly formidable probably in favor of a general view of the world almost identical with Fechner's.... The drift of all the evidence we have seen seems to me to sweep us very strongly towards the belief in some form of superhuman life with which we may, unknown to ourselves, be co-conscious.' James, *A Pluralistic Universe*, p. 140

[31] James, 'Concerning Fechner' in *A Pluralistic Universe*, p. 69

[32] The idea of psychophysics as 'a direct mathematical approach' to psychology was, in fact, first proposed in one of the appendices to *Zend-Avesta*. See Gustav Fechner, 'Outline of a New Principle of Mathematical Psychology,' trans. Eckart Scheerer, *Psychological Research* 49 (1987), pp. 203-207

[33] The French positivist historian Hippolyte Taine alluded to the importance of Fechner's achievement in the preface of his influential *On Intelligence*: psychology was now 'a science of facts ... we can speak with precision and detail of a sensation, of an idea, of a memory, of a prevision, as well as of a vibration or other physical movement.' Hippolyte Taine, *On Intelligence*, trans. T.D. Haye (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1998), p. ix

[34] 'Whether one attributes nervous energy to a chemical or an electrical process, one must still regard it as the play of the vibration of the minutest atoms.... Vibrations, however, can only apparently expire by extending themselves into their environment ... according to the law of the conservation of energy.' Fechner, *Little Book of Life after Death,* p. 59

[35] 'The only difference between Fechner and Spinoza here is that Fechner is eager to discover a mathematical functional relation between the two sides of existence.' Harald Høffding, *History of Modern Philosophy* (New York: Macmillan, 1955), p. 529. Fechner defines psychophysics as 'the exact science of the functionally dependent relations of body and soul or, more generally, of the material and the mental, of the physical and the psychological worlds.' Fechner, *Elements of Psychophysics*, p. 7

In short, carrying on the tradition of Müller, Weber, and Helmholtz in sensory physiology — which sought to quantify anything and everything about the human brain — he sought to find a mathematical function that showed the precise relation between sensation and stimulus and, therefore, between mind and body that didn't simply reduce the one to the other. In short, the main motivation for Fechner's investigations into psychophysics was to offer another scientifically-grounded piece of puzzle he called the day-view, rather than establish a positivist psychology. Regardless, this is how he is remembered today. The logarithmic function at the center of psychophysics — which is now known as Fechner's Law — basically shows that 'equal relative increments of stimuli are proportional to equal increments of sensation.'[36] Central to Fechner's investigations was rigorous experimentation which related various directly measurable stimuli to increments and thresholds of sensation.[37] For the first time, by mathematically correlating mental events with physical stimuli, subjectivity is made quantifiably determinable. 'Vision, as well as the other senses, is now describable in terms of abstract and exchangeable magnitudes. If vision previously had been conceived as an experience of *qualities* (as in Goethe's optics), it is now a question of differences in quantities.'[38] This 'confusion of quality with quantity'[39] is at the heart of Bergson's forceful critique of Fechner. Bergson's theory of duration — and by extension his entire philosophy — is built upon this critique, which was put forth in the first chapter of his first book. In the last analysis, Bergson's philosophy has much more in common with Fechner's vitalist world-view and radical empiricist method than his critique would admit.

It should now be clear that Fechner helps us make sense of Deleuze's imperative that philosophy should be a kind of science fiction for which 'empiricism is a mysticism and a mathematicism of concepts.'[40] One's allegiance to this imperative is registered by the extent to which one has pushed the limits of radical empiricism down to the very depths of the *chaosmos*. In short, one's *vision* legitimates this task more than disciplinary rigor even though, for both Deleuze and Fechner, disciplinary rigor is quite necessary up to a certain point. For example, after taking great pains in separating art, science, and philosophy as distinct modes of knowledge, Deleuze and Guattari claim that ultimately there is an undecidable point at which these three disciplines meet. Although they

> are still distinct in relation to the cerebral plane, they are no longer distinct in relation to the chaos into which the brain plunges. In this submersion it seems that there is extracted from

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[36] Fechner, *Elements of Psychophysics*, p. 54

[37] Fechner adopted the important notion of a threshold of sensation — which we will come back to in our discussion of Leibniz's *petites perceptions* — from the Idealist philosopher and psychologist Johann Herbart. In many ways Fechner loathed Herbart for perpetuating the kind of *speculative* psychology he was trying to discredit. However, in addition to supplying Fechner with the Leibnizian idea of threshold, Herbart made mathematizing the mind somewhat respectable, paving the way for his psychophysical research in the first place.

[38] Crary, *Techniques of the Observer*, p. 147

[39] Henri Bergson, *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness*, trans. F.L. Pogson (New York: Dover, 2001), p. 74

[40] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition,* p. xx. Here, mysticism should not be understood in the naive or Romantic sense of merging with a greater Whole, since 'even Descartes had his dream.' Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* p. 41. But neither should it be confused with the 'oceanic feeling' of Freud's primary narcissism or the later Lacan's non-phallic *jouissance*. Rather, it acknowledges the existence of a plurality of worlds, or durations, as seen in the self-induced 'anesthetic revelations' of William James, the 'experimental schizophrenia' of Henri Michaux, and the 'active mysticism' of Bergsonian intuition.

> chaos the shadow of the 'people to come' in the form that art, but also philosophy and science summon forth: mass-people, world-people, brain-people, chaos-people — nonthinking thought that lodges in the three.... It is here that concepts, sensations, and functions become undecidable, at the same time as philosophy, art, and science become indiscernible.[41]

The message is basically something like this: one must initially rely upon a specific set of disciplinary techniques, pushing them to the extent that empiricism becomes radical. After one arrives at the smooth space of chaos — a place where disciplinary boundaries dissolve since the techniques that defined them have now been exhausted — and returns 'with blood-shot eyes,' one joins the disjunctive community of 'chaos-people' for whom it is now possible to say:

> We are well aware, unfortunately, that we have spoken about science in a manner which was not scientific. The time is coming when it will hardly be possible to write a book oh philosophy as it has been done for so long: 'Ah! the old style...'. The search for new means of philosophical expression was begun by Nietzsche and must be pursued today in relation to the renewal of certain other arts, such as the theatre of the cinema.... the history of philosophy would play a role roughly analogous to that of *collage* in painting.[42]

This is the context within which we must understand Fechner's multifarious albeit rigorous scientific career, punctuated as it was by encounters with philosophy and (literary) art as well as with the visionary event that traumatized him for nearly three years. This is also the context in which we can now begin to understand his contribution to aesthetics.

Fechner's *Vorschule der Aesthetik* not only supplies the first scientific analyses of synaesthesia; in it he also offers, for the first time in the history of philosophy, a theory of aesthetics based upon an empirically-grounded *aisthesis*. This aesthetics 'from below' was developed in direct contrast to the speculative and normative aesthetics dominant in Germany at the time, which was concerned mainly with those aesthetic forms that truly represented the metaphysical value of beauty and which therefore had to appear as beautiful to a cultivated and erudite mind. However, Fechner was also unimpressed with the aesthetics of the British Empiricists who, although they pursued the path from below, remained 'trapped in particularities, one-sidedness and viewpoints which possess only subsidiary value and compass.'[43] The Empiricists were not overly concerned with metaphysical investigations into the nature of taste and showed a much more relaxed attitude towards the *variety* of aesthetic experience. For them, rather than being an objective or Ideal form, the beautiful was completely subjective. According to Hume, 'Beauty is no quality in things themselves: it exists merely in the mind which

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[41] Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* p. 218. In a certain way, this statement sums up the entire ethico-aesthetic trajectory of Deleuzian thought. One has a vision of the *chaosmos* and return with bloodshot eyes — *aisthesis*. One then creates a concept, a sensation, a function — *poiesis* — and joins the disjunctive community (i.e., multitude) of seers. These brain-people and world-people 'to come' are precisely what Henri Michaux calls the 'artists of the future ... who see before others have seen ... [and who] find the terrain to carry out a life, another life in the making, a new life ... another world.' Henri Michaux, *Emergences/Resurgences*, trans. Richard Sieburth (Milan: Skira, 2000), p. 52

[42] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. xxi. This moment of *aisthesis*, defined as a radical shock to thought, replaces the need for the Romantic genius, even though Deleuze sometimes (regrettably) refers to these figures as 'hybrid geniuses.' Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* p. 67

[43] Fechner, 'Aesthetics from Above and from Below' in *Art in Theory*, pp. 633-634

contemplates them; and each mind perceives a different beauty.'[44] This whimsical and utterly relativized definition of beauty belies the discussions concerning taste in 18th century England, since the standard of 'refined taste' was ultimately determined by 'true critics.' That is, what probably amounts to nothing more than social constructions — the true and the beautiful — are here morally, rather than metaphysically, justified. Therefore, aesthetics in both German Idealism and English Empiricism ultimately amounts to the same thing, despite the fact that the latter allows for differences in the experience of beauty: a given standard of taste can be used to make aesthetic *judgments* and, ultimately, philosophy remains nothing but a mouthpiece for the status quo.

Fechner was too committed to the rigors of his scientific method 'from below' to subscribe to either -ism and, therefore, his empirical aesthetics represents a clean break with the aesthetic tradition in its entirety.[45] He relied upon psychophysics, as well as analyses being developed in positivist psychology and sociology at the time, to establish empirical and statistical proof concerning that which is pleasurable and displeasurable. From this empirical ground, he thought that a meaningful aesthetic theory could be developed by 'increasingly generaliz[ing] these laws thereby arriv[ing] at a system with the greatest possible universality.'[46] This is the sense in which Fechner's empirical aesthetics can be thought of as a 'preschool:' 'There can then be a philosophical aesthetics of a higher order in relation to empirical aesthetics, just as there can be a philosophy of nature which is higher than physics and physiology.... However, what is still missing is just this empirical foundation; and for this reason all of

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[44] David Hume, 'Of the Standard of Taste' in *Selected Essays,* ed. Stephen Copley and Andrew Edgar (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 136

[45] Fechner was widely criticized and even ridiculed for questioning the competence of the experts of the true and the beautiful. For example, even as late as 1917, one philosopher sneered at the 'ridiculous' attempt to establish aesthetic laws by analyzing 'the aesthetic feelings of young children, Senegal negroes, and similar representatives of culture.' Fritz Medicus, *Grundfragen der Ästhetik. Vorträge und Abhandlungen* (Jena: Diderichs, 1917), p. 99. We could interpret Fechner's psychophysical aesthetics — and indeed the entirety of his later work — as 'nomad science' which, according to Deleuze and Guattari, is opposed to 'State science' in two ways. First, it no longer functions as an autonomous, hermetically-sealed discipline since such disciplinarity only makes sense on the 'cerebral plane' of State science and not on the 'chaos plane' of nomad science where art, philosophy, and science are ultimately indiscernible. Second, it follows the course of its research without regard to State-sanctioned morality and publishes its results despite the possibility of going against the grain of the status quo. 'Nomad sciences do not destine science to take on an autonomous power, or even to have an autonomous development. They do not have the means for that because they subordinate all their operations to the sensible conditions of intuition and construction — *following* the flow of matter, *drawing and linking up* smooth space.' The State attempts to makes science 'a strictly dependent organ with an autonomy that is only imagined yet is sufficient to divest those whose job it becomes simply to reproduce or implement all of its power.' Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari*, A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), pp. 373, 368. In Fechner's case, his position at the fringes of the State-run university structure — which was conceived by Wilhelm von Humboldt in the early 19th century in order to re-orient science towards the 'spiritual and moral training of the nation' — allowed him this freedom. Humboldt quoted in Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge,* trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), p. 32

[46] Fechner, 'Aesthetics from Above and from Below' in *Art in Theory*, p. 633. His aesthetic research consisted in collating psychophysical data from people of different ages, educational backgrounds, and characters specifically avoiding 'those persons whom we thought capable of having good taste.' In one experiment, the subjects were asked to report on 'the pleasantness of proportions among ten different quadrangles. The peak of pleasingness was found with the golden section rectangle (35%).' What has been deemed a standard, and even Ideal, form beauty throughout history has been reduced by psychophysical aesthetics to a mere percentage. Gustav Fechner, 'Various Attempts to Establish a Basic form of Beauty: Experimental Aesthetics and the Golden Section,' trans. Holger Höge, *Empirical Studies of the Arts* 15:2 (1997), p. 123. This article is a translation of Chapter XIV of Fechner's *Vorschule der Aesthetik*.

our systems of philosophical aesthetics seem to me like mighty giants with feet of clay.'[47] To Fechner's mind, the discipline of aesthetics needed the same empirical and inductive approach as did his vitalistic philosophy of nature. He was not interested in contributing to the endless debates — whether metaphysically or morally motivated — concerning the correct determination of art, genius, the beautiful, the sublime, the agreeable, or the good. The precise definition of these terms must be decided only after careful consideration of the empirical evidence, which had yet to be fully established. He did however adopt a pragmatic concept of beauty — as an 'auxiliary term' useful only in 'the linguistic sense' — the working definition of which was everything that 'has the property of *immediately* causing pleasure, not only after reflection or through its consequences.'[48] Here, pleasure should be understood not as a reflective judgment in the Kantian sense (including the sensory judgment of the agreeable) but rather as an immediate psychophysical affect, a shock to the brain beyond judgment and indeed beyond thought itself. As the case of Fechner clearly shows, this shock is not always pleasurable, thus his pragmatic concept of beauty must remain secondary to the larger project of defining the parameters and potential uses of psychophysical aesthetics.[49] In short, Fechner's work considered as a whole helps us to re-define aesthetics as the radical-empirical science of *aisthesis*. For radical or transcendental empiricism, what is ultimately interesting is neither sensation, understood in its psychological or colloquial meanings, nor experience, including even aesthetic or religious experience.

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[47] Fechner, 'Aesthetics from Above and from Below' in *Art in Theory*, p. 634

[48] Fechner, *Vorschule der Aesthetik*, p. 15

[49] 'Should one speak of pleasure? It was unpleasant.' Henri Michaux, *Miserable Miracle,* trans. Louise Varèse and Anna Moschovakis (New York: New York Review of Books, 2002), p. 7. Fechner's psychophysical aesthetics, though barely noted today, had a direct impact on art theory in the late-19th and early-20th centuries, where it was roughly defined thus: 'The multiplicity of shapes and colors in a painting or of sounds in a piece of music is held together by a configuration of forces generated in the nervous system and reflected in the awareness of the artist and of every percipient of his work.' Rudolf Arnheim, *New Essays on the Psychology of Art* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), p. 47. It is even seen as laying 'the ground for what came to be known as "empathy" ... the conceptual slogan of an important school of art interpretation' which included Robert Vischer, Heinrich Wölfflin, Alois Riegl, and Wilhelm Worringer. Moshe Barasch, *Theories of Art 3: From Impressionism to Kandinsky* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 92. But perhaps more important and lasting was his indirect influence, through the mediation of Charles Henry, on the symbolist and neo-impressionist artists in France and, by extension, the birth of the avant-garde. Henry was more a translator and synthesizer than an original thinker. Nonetheless, his unique blend of Fechner's psychophysical aesthetics and Jozef Hoene-Wronski's mystical mathematics defined — together with their own interest in synaesthesia and anarchism — the aesthetic of certain members of the *Société des Artistes Indépendants*. As we will see later in this chapter, Wronski also influenced Deleuze's use of 'esoteric' calculus. On Henry's aesthetics see José Argüelles, *Charles Henry and the Formation of a Psychophysical Aesthetic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972) and Henri Dorra, *Symbolist Art Theories* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995). Important paintings based entirely on techniques developed from Henry's syncretic theory include George Seurat's *Le Chahut* (1890) and *Le Cirque* (1891) as well as Paul Signac's *Portrait de Félix Fénéon* (1890). In these works, the vibratory nature of formal elements, especially light, color, form, and line, has been measured and manipulated — using Henry's theories as well as tools like his 'aesthetic protractor' and 'color circle' — according to the desired psychophysical effect. All three represent 'frenzied spectacles, supercharged displays, overpacked with acute angles and darting lines,' freezing 'instants from rehearsed actions, reducing them to sharp, flat, foregrounded codes, leg kicking up, acrobat jumping in air, fingers arching over.' Martha Ward, *Pissarro, Neo-Impressionism, and the Spaces of the Avant-garde* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), p. 124. Here, despite the depiction of chaotic and almost psychedelic scenarios, art loses its importance as a representational device altogether and becomes simply a vehicle utilized to capture and convey forces that can affect the mind of the viewer, leading it to different states of consciousness. This idea of art as a vehicle for impersonal forces and psychophysical affects is remarkably similar to the theory of painting Deleuze develops in his book on Francis Bacon. Art is simply one barometer — albeit a privileged one — that records the traces of what Deleuze calls affects and percepts, the elements of a radical *aisthesis*. A reading of Deleuze's *Logic of Sensation* — with its concepts of rhythm, color, vibration, and forces — that keeps in mind the history of psychophysical aesthetics would indeed be quite fruitful.

The real object of this science of *aisthesis* is, as Deleuze states, precisely that which is encountered in a psychophysical shock to thought: 'not an *aistheton* but an *aistheteon* ... not a sensible being but the being *of* the sensible.'[50] The balance of this chapter will attempt to show how Deleuze, and particularly his readings of Bergson and Leibniz, allows us to transform Fechner's hasty pre-Critical aesthetics — which seems to naively disregard Kant by adopting the Platonic relation of *aisthesis* to pleasure and pain as well as the Wolffian relation of pleasure to beauty[51] — into a rigorous *transcendental* aesthetics which takes into full consideration the Kantian intervention.

[50] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, pp. 140-141. 'Something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but of a fundamental *encounter*.... It is not the given but that by which the given is given. It is therefore in a certain sense the imperceptible [*insensible*]. It is imperceptible precisely from the point of view of recognition — in other words, from the point of view of an empirical exercise of the senses.'

[51] For the former, see *Timaeus* 64a-e. Interestingly, Plato also refers to the golden section in 31c-32a of this text. Plato, *Timaeus and Critias*, trans. Robin Waterfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 61-62 and p. 20, respectively. Concerning the later: In his pre-Critical work, Kant himself largely follows the Wolffians in understanding the experience of pleasure in the beautiful as arising from the subjective, sensible perception of its perfection. Against the British Empiricists, he also tends to emphasize the objective side of beauty itself. See Immanuel Kant, *Lectures on Logic,* ed. and trans. J. Michael Young (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 547-549

2.2 Bergsonian intuition

We can now turn to a detailed philosophical discussion of Deleuze's transcendental aesthetics, whose object is precisely the kind of psychophysical shock to thought Fechner helps to elucidate. Ultimately, Deleuze sides with the 'grandiose Leibnizian or Bergsonian perspective that every philosophy depends upon an intuition that its concepts constantly develop,'[1] provided this intuition is defined — neither as an intellectual intuition nor as a phenomenological reduction — through the type of *empiricism* that has, until now, been only hinted at. It is this intuition, or radical *aisthesis,* that provides the basis for Deleuze's transcendental aesthetics. In this context, Fechner can be seen as a bridge between, on the one hand, the rationalist philosophy of Leibniz and the post-Kantian empiricism of Bergson and, on the other, between the ordinary empiricism of Hume and the radical empiricism of William James. It is James who first suggests the common ground between Fechner and Bergson — despite the latter's harsh criticism of psychophysics — by including laudatory chapters describing their respective philosophies in his *A Pluralistic Universe.* What ultimately unites them is their concerted and sustained attack on Idealism and positivistic science. They were both, like James, interested in abnormal states of consciousness and used research on these states to develop a new philosophical method inspired by, but ultimately skeptical of, the late Schelling's 'superior empiricism.'[2] With this method, they both attempted to conceive a metaphysics — and the beginnings of a vitalistic philosophy of nature — that was consistent with, and indeed supplied the philosophical ground for, contemporary science as well as the *visionary* experiences of modern artists.[3] In this section, we will consider Bergson's unique contribution to transcendental empiricism. In the following section, we will offer an analysis of Deleuze's appropriation of Leibnizian intuition in which we find a more robust integration of Fechner and Bergson.

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[1] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 40

[2] The ambiguous superior empiricism of Schelling's late period of 'positive philosophy' was perhaps his final answer to the failed project of establishing an intellectual intuition, which itself was an attempt to establish the possibility of metaphysics after Kant through a superior faculty of reason. Fechner's day-view philosophy, James' radical empiricism, Bergson's intuition, and Deleuze's transcendental empiricism can also be seen as various attempts to reestablish metaphysics from an empiricist angle. Other attempts to go beyond Kantianism in order to provide a metaphysics adequate to modern science — this time from various methodological points of view between Schelling's two extremes — include the 'speculative materialism' of contemporary philosophers like Ray Brassier, Iain Hamilton Grant, Alberto Toscano, Quentin Meillassoux, and Graham Harman as well as what Didier Debaise calls Whitehead's 'speculative empiricism.' See also note 109 below.

[3] Whether we consider the real or induced synaesthesia of Baudelaire, Cézanne, or Kandinsky, it is absolutely clear that a certain type of visionary experience was inseparable from the birth of modern art at the end of the 19th century: 'I can see rising these rainbows, these cosmic prisms, this dawn of ourselves above nothingness.... I breathe the virginity of the world in this fine rain. A sharp sense of nuances works on me. I feel myself colored by all the nuances of infinity. At that moment, I am as one with my painting. We are an iridescent chaos.' Paul Cézanne quoted in Michael Doran, ed., *Conversations with Cézanne*, trans. Julie Cochran (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), p. 114

In the first chapter of *Matter and Memory,* Bergson claims that conscious perception is not simply an interior subjective vision since it has as its basis an impersonal and 'pure' perception that is at the heart of matter-as-image itself. Matter is composed of images for which pure perception is an inherent function. In this view, perception is not dependent on an anchored subject that illumines matter with its gaze, but rather consists in the 'reciprocal actions and vibrations' of a self-illumined matter, a gaseous 'perception, which is the genetic element of all perception.'[4] In a move that attempts to avoid the impasses of both strict idealism and materialism, Bergson describes matter as an assemblage of images in order to suggest that they have the immanent potential to be perceived by a mind, which is itself only a special type of image.[5] Bergson's image is located somewhere between the 'idea' of idealism and the 'thing' of materialism, although at first glance it seems much closer to the former. Indeed in *Mind-Energy*, images are actually called ideas.[6] Bergson finally makes explicit the proximity of his image to George Berkeley's 'idea' in a lecture from 1911:

> What Berkeley's idealism signifies is that matter is co-extensive with our representation of it; that it has no interior, no underneath; that it hides nothing, contains nothing; that it possesses neither power nor virtuality of any kind; that it is spread out as a mere surface and that it is no more than what it presents to us at any given moment. The word 'idea' ordinarily indicates an existence of this kind, I mean to say a completely realized existence, whose being is indistinguishable from its seeming, while the word 'thing' makes us think of a reality which would be at the same time a reservoir of possibilities; that is why Berkeley prefers to call bodies ideas rather than things.[7]

In this lecture, Bergson concedes that his image, like Berkeley's idea, allows for no hidden depth or power in the material world; for both philosophers, matter is coextensive with our perception of it since there *is* nothing but images. Essentially the real is imaginary for Bergson, even if this is complicated later with the processes of memory. That there is no separation between matter and image, no difference *in kind* between reality and the perception of it, already leaves little room for an absolute

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[4] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), pp. 76, 85. It should be noted at the outset that this idea that 'consciousness *is* something' rather than 'consciousness *of* something' (*ibid.*, p. 56) — that conscious perception is inherent to matter itself — separates Bergson unequivocally from the tradition of phenomenology. Any confusion on this matter can only be explained by an incomplete reading — for example one that focuses on his doctoral thesis, *Time and Free Will*, in which duration remains confined to the psychological realm — or incomplete understanding of Bergson. Furthermore, it is certainly no accident that Deleuze chooses the apparatus of cinema, rather than the intentional subject, to illustrate the transcendental conditions of perception. Nonetheless, there remains a *seemingly* ambiguous relation between Deleuze and phenomenology, which will be analyzed more closely in the following chapter. Note that, since I am interested in Deleuze's non-phenomenological interpretation of Bergson, I sometimes — without warning — let the former speak for the latter. Important philosophical differences between the two thinkers, however, will be explicitly highlighted.

[5] Bergson's famous gesture in the introduction to *Matter and Memory* of positioning his philosophy 'halfway between' idealism and materialism is merely axiomatic. As we shall see, it is only until we reach his theory of perception *qua* intuition — a perception adequate to the pure flux of movement-images — that we finally 'pass beyond idealism as well as realism.' Henri Bergson, 'Introduction to Metaphysics' in *The Creative Mind,* trans. Mabelle Andison (New York: Dover, 2007), p. 155

[6] See Henri Bergson, 'Brain and Thought' in *Mind-Energy,* ed. Keith Ansell Pearson and Michael Kolkman, trans. H. Wildon Carr (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007)

[7] Bergson, 'Philosophical Intuition' in *The Creative Mind,* p. 95

distinction between hallucination and perception.[8] There are however two essential differences between Bergson and Berkeley, both of which originate from the former's materialist leanings. The first is simply that, for Bergson, matter is not merely in the mind and persists whether or not it is perceived by a subjective consciousness. Second, although there is no difference in kind between matter and its *pure* perception — 'in which everything compensates and neutralizes everything else … balancing each other by a reaction which is always equal to the action'[9] — conscious perception introduces a difference, a 'zone of indetermination' within the law of action and reaction that breaks with the simple repetition of pure matter. This zone of indetermination veils not a 'reservoir of possibilities' in the thing, but rather the 'numberless vibrations'[10] in matter that are in excess of conscious perception, a excess that corresponds to a *virtual or unconscious* perception: There is no difference in kind between the material world and the 'virtual perception of all things.'[11] All of this is extremely complicated, and will need to be unpacked carefully and deliberately.

Before the moment subjective consciousness arrives as a point of reference, we have the perpetual, acentered flux of self-illumined images acting and reacting on themselves in their universal variation. This is a self-perceived assemblage of *movement-images* — a real flux requires that there can be no distinction between movement and images that move — that are 'all linked together in uninterrupted continuity, all bound up with each other, and traveling in every direction like shivers.'[12] This is a gaseous perception — an eye *in* and *as* matter — that is 'not tailored to solids'[13] since it is not anchored to an immobile point of view. This acentered vision without boundaries, without distances is

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[8] Bergson never really draws out the philosophical consequences of this point but, for Deleuze, it is absolutely crucial and is stated quite bluntly: 'Every perception is hallucinatory.' Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, trans. Tom Conley (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), p. 93. This formulation is present everywhere in Deleuze despite its different articulations, from his theory of simulacra to Leibnizian dizziness. It is only when intuition is wedded to *fabulation* that we can begin to grasp the Deleuzian *seer*. Deleuze fully concurs with the Nietzsche who so emphatically declared in *Twilight of the Idols* that the 'true world' has become a fable. For Deleuze, the transcendental empiricism of a *seer*, unlike Bergsonian intuition, has no claim to be adequate to 'noumena.' This, along with his rejection of the philosopher- or artist-hero (see, for example, Gilles Deleuze, 'Les Cours de Gilles Deleuze: Leibniz 20/05/1980,' online at http://www.webdeleuze.com/php/texte.php?cle=130&groupe=Leibniz&langue=2), marks the difference between his conception of the *seer* and any brand of Romanticism. This position highlights Deleuze's break not only with Bergson and the Romantics, but also with Kant, for whom hallucination is merely a pathological production of desire. Whereas the transcendental form of desire for Kant is the 'will' determined by a universal legislation, the transcendental form of desire for Deleuze is precisely the will to falsehood. Deleuze follows Kant in admitting that the will is a faculty which 'by means of its representations is the cause of the actuality of the objects of these representations' but he pushes this already revolutionary thesis to its ultimate transcendental end at the same time as he removes the *transcendent legislator* of the will: the pure form of the categorical imperative. Immanuel Kant, 'Critique of Practical Reason' in *Practical Philosophy*, ed. and trans. Mary Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 144, translation modified. The result is an aesthetics subtracted from the Power of Judgment (*Urteilskraft*), an aesthetics that instead believes in the will to *power* of the false (*puissance*, rather than *Pouvoir*, *du faux*), in the intoxication and hallucination of Nietzsche's *Rausch* as well as Artaud's *Peyote Dance*: 'What we seek in states of intoxication — drinks, drugs, ecstasies — is an antidote to both the dream and judgment.' Gilles Deleuze, 'To Have Done with Judgment' in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel Smith and Michael Greco (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), p. 130. This is the first step in understanding Deleuze's politics of aesthetics.

[9] Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory,* trans. N.M. Paul and W.S. Palmer (New York: Zone, 1988), p. 235

[10] Bergson, *Matter and Memory,* p. 209

[11] Bergson, *Matter and Memory,* p. 39

[12] Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, p. 209

[13] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 80

'what Cézanne had already called the world before man … an iridescent chaos.'[14] It is also re-constructed in Vertov's kino-eye through the heavy use of montage and in Michaux's *Images du monde visionnaire.*[15] This inhuman perception, this genetic element of all perception as the universal variation and interaction of movement-images, blurs *a priori* the distinction between perceiver and perceived. Furthermore, given an ontology of the movement-image, the question whether perception is subjective or objective can no longer be asked. For Bergson, it is simply a false problem. In a world that is only an assemblage of self-perceiving images, it makes little sense to ask whether it is within or without us 'since interior and exterior are only relations among images.'[16] To be sure, the mad vision of an iridescent chaos before man is depicted in *both* the hyper-subjective 'panoramic visions' of expressionist films as well as by the inhuman vision of Vertov's constructivism. 'What can be more subjective than a delirium, a dream, a hallucination? But what can be closer to an [objective] materiality made up of luminous wave and molecular interaction?'[17]

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[14] Deleuze, *Cinema 1,* p. 81

[15] 'It is not surprising that we have to *construct* it since it is given only to the eye which we don't have.' Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 81, my emphasis. Ultimately, Deleuze suggests, Vertov's program fails because of its commitment to a communist program that no longer has meaningful consequences. As an alternative, he suggests 'drugs as the American community.' The drug experience, for *both* Deleuze and Michaux, is capable of re-constructing gaseous perception: 'It is a primeval phenomenon that underlies even the most placid consciousness — the most strictly controlled and headstrong intelligence — perhaps vaguely felt but not seen, passing by unperceived behind other perceptions that are of greater interest … the present drawings are, need I say? *Reconstructions*. A hand two hundred times more agile than the human hand would not be up to the task of following the speeding course of this inexhaustible spectacle.' Henri Michaux, *Peace in the Breaking Flood*, trans. Michael Fineberg (Consigny: Embers, 1976), no pagination. The ethical implications of Deleuze's move from a Marxism *à la* Vertov or Eisenstein in favor of a hallucinatory politics of aesthetics will be discussed later.

[16] Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, p. 25

[17] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 77. As we shall see, not everything is merely *given* in this ontology since it is always in the process of being reconstructed as a continuous kaleidoscopic alteration. Deleuze's allusions to artistic vision as well as to physics follows directly from Bergson: 'A suggestion of this vision of material things already come to us from physical science. The more it progresses the more it resolves matter into actions moving through space, into movements dashing back and forth in a constant vibration so that mobility becomes reality itself.' Bergson, 'Perception of Change' in *The Creative Mind,* p. 123. Bergson's belief in the ability of art, philosophy, *and* science to have access to the world of pure movement-images is a model for Deleuze's insistence, in *What is Philosophy*, that these three modes of thinking all touch the plane of immanence in order to extract from it percepts, concepts, and functions. In a related but separate note, Zizek claims that Deleuze's virtual 'in Lacanian terms, is the Real.' Slavoj Zizek, *Organs without Bodies: Deleuze and Consequences* (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 3. To my mind, this statement is too loaded to be helpful. The most we can say is that the Deleuzian virtual sometimes has the *appearance* (rather than the transcendent conceptual structure) of the *Zizekian* Real. Zizek may be correct in conflating the virtual with the bizarre strata of quantum reality, which is the condition of possibility for the perception of empirical things: 'Conscious perception reduces this spectral, pre-ontological multiplicity to one ontologically, fully constituted reality.' 'Does this not give some kind of scientific credibility to Deleuze's 'idealist' project of generating bodily reality from virtual intensities?' *Ibid.,* pp. 4, 24. In another book, Zizek writes rather provocatively about what an 'encounter' with *his* Real might look like by referencing a science fiction novel by Robert Heinlein. In one of the scenes, a few people in defiance of police orders, open a car window onto a universe with some 'minor defects.' They experience 'no sunlight, no cops, no kids — nothing. Nothing but a grey and formless mist, pulsing slowly as is with inchoate life. They could see nothing of the city through it, not because it was too dense but because it was — empty.' Zizek writes: 'This grey and formless mist, pulsing slowly as is with inchoate life, what is it if not the Lacanian Real, the pulsing of the pre-symbolic substance in its abhorrent vitality?' Slavoj Zizek, *Looking Awry* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), p. 14. This description of the Real does have the *appearance* of Deleuze's 'gaseous perception,' and indeed has much in common with the *Bergsonian* virtual, but in Deleuze there can be no return to the 'pre-symbolic;' ultimately for Deleuze, the Real (if we must use that word) is 'artifice' as the Lacan-trained Guattari claims; it is a constructed hallucination. The gaseous perception of the pure flux of matter is only possible in a Bergsonian world of the movement-image, a world which we still believe is 'true,' that is, real. For a critique of Zizek's appropriation of Deleuze see Daniel Smith, 'The Inverse Side of the Structure: Zizek on Deleuze on Lacan' in *Criticism* 46:4 (Fall 2004), pp. 635-650

This vision of the universe can already be seen in the ontology of Lucretius, whose influence on both Bergson and Deleuze is evident.[18] Lucretius reveals a world composed of self-illumined objects which, as Bergson shows, 'are extremely minute; they come from everywhere and move with inconceivable speed'[19] and thus cannot be discerned from the images they emit. Of course Bergson pushes this ontological indiscernibility to the point at which matter becomes *only* this movement of images. However, the difference Lucretius leaves between matter and its images is useful when Bergson begins to discuss the mechanism of conscious perception: 'A sort of outer skin perpetually peeled off the surface of objects and flying about this way and that through the air. It is these whose impact scares our minds, whether waking or sleeping, on those occasions when we catch a glimpse of strange shapes and phantoms of the dead.'[20] If Berkeley took great pains to maintain a distinction between the real and the imaginary, between perception and hallucination — despite his claim of absolute identity between ideas and matter — with Lucretius and Bergson, perception itself begins to look like a host of floating specters or chimeras. This is especially true for Bergson, for whom matter is coextensive with our representation of it leaving no room for a completely subjective vision, and for whom there are no solid objects except as a sort of mental snapshot of movement-images. If hallucination is defined as a perception without an object, and if we are given an ontology without clear and distinct objects — an ontology of movement-images that self-perceive their own kaleidoscopic flux — then any absolute distinction between the real perception of objects and the hallucination of subjects becomes impossible.

For Bergson, perception is the simple result of a biological need. It never adds anything to matter; rather, it subtracts biologically relevant images which become a sort of immobilized 'outer skin perpetually peeled off the surface' of an otherwise continuous flux of movement-images. Indeed Bergson repeats Lucretius' language when he talks about this conscious coalescence of objects from the flux of matter: 'To transform [material] existence into representation, it would be enough to suppress what follows it, what proceeds it, and also all that fills it, and to retain only its external crust, its superficial skin.'[21] The difference between perception and matter is ultimately not a difference in kind, but a difference in degree, since both are only composed of images. Thus, for Bergson, the problem of perception is not between phenomena and noumena but between part and whole.[22] Matter is an assemblage of movement-images. Conscious perception involves a selection from these images that is determined by the set of actions available to a special image: the mind. In Bergson's view then,

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[18] See Henri Bergson, *The Philosophy of Poetry: The Genius of Lucretius,* ed. and trans. Wade Baskin (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959) as well as Gilles Deleuze, 'The Actual and the Virtual' in Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues II*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), pp. 148-152

[19] Bergson, *The Philosophy of Poetry*, p. 20

[20] Lucretius, *On the Nature of the Universe*, trans. R.E. Latham and John Godwin (London: Penguin, 1994), pp. 95-96

[21] Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, p. 36

[22] As we shall see, this is slightly more complicated. From the point of view of time, it no longer makes sense to talk about differences in kind or degree; everything becomes a *degree of difference* itself. And the whole of which perception-images are a part is not a given whole, but an open process of creation. From this perspective, perception — which from the point of view of space is a simple subtraction — becomes contraction and differentiation.

conscious perception neither fabricates representations nor receives impressions, rather it is the function of real biological action that merely selects images and envisions the world according to an organism's needs. 'The separation between things and their environment cannot be absolutely definite and clear-cut. Our perception outlines, so to speak, the form of their nucleus; it terminates them at the point where our possible action upon them ceases, where, consequently, they cease to interest our needs.'[23] Bergson argues that the more complex an organism is, the wider its field of perception to the point at which man — who stands at the apex of the evolutionary chain — is capable of rediscovering the entire field of perception that 'elsewhere can only be embodied in different species.'[24]

Bergson calls the first moment of conscious perception 'habitual recognition.'[25] Here memory, whether as biological instinct or accumulated experience, effects a 'contraction of the real' and moulds a vision of the universe that suits the practical functions of the organism. Even though memory is combined with, or 'grafted onto,' the pure and impersonal perception of movement-images in habitual recognition, it does not add anything to perception itself; rather, it subtracts what is biologically irrelevant while still 'remaining on one and the same plane'[26] of matter-perception. That is, although memory is different *in kind* from matter, when it is combined with pure perception it still only effects a difference in degree between them: through the contracted sieve of memory, a perceived image is merely subtracted out of the wider field of movement-images. What Bergson calls the 'virtual' is the gap that memory introduces between matter and conscious perception such that there is no essential difference between the entirety of matter and the 'virtual perception of all things.'[27]

But how are we to make sense of this virtual perception and Bergson's claim that 'we perceive virtually many more things than we perceive materially and actually?'[28] Are not the virtual — which belongs to the realm of time — and perception — which belongs to the field of matter — two mutually exclusive terms? At first glance, one might be tempted to think that we have come upon a point of difference between Bergson and Deleuze; the former sometimes uses the word virtual in ways that are seemingly inconsistent, while the latter seemingly reserves it strictly for the being of memory. But Deleuze himself writes: 'It could be said that the object itself merges with a *pure* virtual perception, at the same time as our real perception merges with the object from which it has abstracted only that which did not interest us.'[29] To confuse things even more, in a posthumous text Deleuze relegates to the virtual an almost material existence even though he still maintains that it consists in 'memories of

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[23] Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, p. 209

[24] Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Zone, 1991), p. 106

[25] An example of this type of recognition would be: 'The cow recognizes grass.' It is precisely the mode of thought Deleuze criticizes Kant of falling back on when the latter traces the 'transcendental' conditions of judgment from a merely psychological theory of the operation of the faculties. See also Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), pp. 133-138

[26] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Goleta (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), p. 44

[27] Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, p. 39

[28] Henri Bergson, 'Letter to G. Lechalas' in *Key Writings,* ed. Keith Ansell Pearson and John Mullarkey (London: Continuum, 2002), p. 355

[29] Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, p. 25

different sorts;'[30] here, virtual images form an imperceptible cloud of particles that are emitted and reabsorbed by the actual nucleus that they surround. And Éric Alliez has argued that 'we will only attain the plane of immanence by conferring upon the virtual a full *materiality* upon which depends its actualization qua different/ciation.'[31] This becoming-material of the virtual goes a long way towards countering the charges Alain Badiou has raised against Deleuze's philosophy, but we still need to understand how such a shift makes sense. Ultimately, 'virtual perception' is analogous to what Bergson calls intuition. But there is also a meaningful way in which it may be used to discuss the ordinary conscious perceptions in habitual and attentive recognition.

For Bergson, the virtual spans the entire range of memory from biological instinct, to psychological memory, to an ontology of the pure past. This seems to be the only way to understand clearly his claims that conscious perception subtracts aspects of an object's 'real action in order to manifest the virtual action of the living being upon them.'[32] Here, the virtual action of memory — in any of its three incarnations — introduces a difference in pure perception, although pure perception is not essentially different from conscious perception. In the case of habitual recognition, biological instinct and behavior patterns form a sieve that subtracts out practically relevant images, leaving a partial world that is seen according to an organism's habits and interests. In attentive recognition, to which we shall soon turn, the virtual action of memory is the reflection of recollection-images upon pure perception-images, thus *redrawing* the field of matter-perception. What Deleuze's means by virtual perception is a bit more complicated but, in the end, it will give us a much more rich and consistent account of a Bergsonian ontology and its perception. In short, conscious perception, no matter how instantaneous, is always colored by an incalculable number of remembered elements such that in it perception is always intertwined with memory. More fundamental, however, is that conscious perception has to occupy a certain 'duration;' from this perspective, perception is redefined as being contained within a duration of which it is only a contraction, or what Deleuze calls a degree of difference.

Deleuze takes great pains to show that, however baroque and convoluted Bergson's philosophy may seem, it is in fact completely coherent from a certain point of view. Most of the inconsistencies in his work arise because, even though he insists that problems should be posed strictly in terms of time, he often argues from the perspective of space, creating many confusing dualisms that need to be sorted out.[33] From the point of view of space, there is an essential dichotomy between matter and duration. Matter differs from itself as a pure repetition or as a simple difference in degree; duration, which differs from matter as a difference in kind, does so because it already differs from itself in kind 'with

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[30] Deleuze, 'The Actual and the Virtual' in *Dialogues II*, p. 148

[31] Éric Alliez*, The Signature of the World*, trans. Eliot Ross Albert and Alberto Toscano (London: Continuum, 2004), p. 110

[32] Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, p. 37

[33] Bergson himself argues that Kant's Transcendental Illusion results precisely from his privileging of space over time, of things over processes. And Bergson prescribes his philosophical intuition as the way out of the impasses of this illusion. For his part Deleuze offers transcendental empiricism, which is modeled upon Bergson's intuition.

the result that the matter from which it differs is still duration.'[34] However, from the point of view of time everything — or more precisely every *tendency* — is contained as a *degree of difference* measured by relative degrees of contraction and relaxation of duration. 'Space is broken up into matter and duration, but duration differentiates itself into contraction and relaxation; and relaxation is the principle of matter.'[35] From the point of view of time, we have a monism within which everything exists not as the succession of so many things but rather as the coexistence of different tendencies of duration. Thus if Deleuze inherits Bergson's ontology of the image, he does so only with the clarification that the image is not merely material, but rather 'a bunch of temporal relations;'[36] 'you see, I don't believe in things.'[37]

Tendencies are processes that extend in time, precisely movement-images for which movement and image are inseparable. Solid and unchanging things are mere mental snapshots taken by a subtracting point of view; they are the illusions of a Kantian-type thinking. For Bergson they are not illusory phenomena but only partial or frozen views of reality. A sugar cube, to use Bergson's example, has a spatial configuration, a material aspect that is seen only from a point of view in which differences in kind are not immediately apparent. But the sugar cube also, and more fundamentally, is a tendency, which is revealed in part as it dissolves in a glass of water. From this perspective, the sugar cube is not simply a thing that differs in degree from other things; as a tendency, it 'differs in kind not only from other things, but first and foremost from itself. This alteration, which is one with the essence or the substance of a thing, is what we grasp when we conceive of it in terms of duration.'[38] This alteration, or differentiation, of tendencies is precisely how we can begin to understand the virtual — which consists as time, duration, memory — *as substance*, and how this substance is, in a certain way, thicker than matter which is itself only a partial aspect of duration. The virtual 'is alteration, and alteration is substance. Difference of nature is itself a thing, a tendency opposed to some other tendency … Duration or tendency is the difference of self with itself; and what differs from itself is, in an *unmediated* way, the unity of substance and subject.'[39] We will come back to this important point of the virtual *as subject*, but for now we will finish drawing out the consequences of this substantial monism of the virtual for our discussion of perception.

When Deleuze discusses virtual perception early in *Bergsonism*, he does so from the point of view of space; here perception is still only 'the object *minus* … everything that does not interest us.'[40] But after revealing the source of Bergson's seemingly incoherent dualisms and reinstalling a monism of the

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[34] Gilles Deleuze, 'Bergson' in *Desert Islands and Other Texts*, ed. David Lapoujade, trans. Mike Taormina (New York: Semiotexte, 2003), p. 27

[35] Deleuze, 'Bergson's Conception of Difference' in *Desert Islands*, p. 39

[36] Gilles Deleuze, 'The Brain is the Screen' in *Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews 1975-1995,* ed. David Lapoujade, trans. Ames Hodges and Mike Taormina (New York: Semiotexte, 2006), p. 290

[37] Gilles Deleuze, 'On Leibniz' in *Negotiations: 1972-1990*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), p. 160

[38] Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, p. 32

[39] Deleuze, 'Bergson's Conception of Difference' in *Desert Islands*, pp. 37-38

[40] Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, p. 25, my emphasis

virtual, perception becomes a contraction since the field of matter-perception is already duration: 'When we perceive, we *contract* millions of vibrations or elementary shocks into a felt quality; but what we contract, what we 'tense' in this way, is matter … by means of mind or duration.'[41] From the perspective of time, everything exists as a degree of difference[42] on a continuum of more or less contracted duration, with the most contracted being pure time and the least contracted pure space. From the point of view of duration, then, one is thus able to move by imperceptible degrees (of difference) from memory to perception.

With this ontology of duration and tendency, what at first seems to be a point of difference between Bergson and Deleuze — the concept of virtual perception — is in fact entirely consistent. When Bergson talks about virtual perception he is clearly pointing to the fact that, with conscious perception, there is always unperceived matter; virtual perception would simply be the perception, or intuition, of the imperceptible. But in a move that anticipates both the move from perception to intuition — which, as he claims, always concerns duration and not matter — as well as Deleuze's clarification of virtual perception, Bergson also conflates unperceived matter and the 'ghosts of memory,' arguing that both are ultimately of the nature of unconscious states: 'When a memory reappears in consciousness, it produces on us the effect of a ghost whose mysterious apparition must be explained by special causes. In truth, the adherence of this memory to our present condition is exactly comparable to the adherence of unperceived objects to those objects which we perceive; and the unconscious plays in each case a similar part.'[43] In similar language, Deleuze makes the same point; for him unperceived matter and unrecollected memory ultimately refer to the same thing — a virtual Leibnizian unconscious[44] — since, from the point of view of time, things are no longer material objects but tendencies and memory is no longer psychological but a certain contraction of duration. For Deleuze, virtual perception points to virtual images that 'exist outside of consciousness, in time, and we should have no more difficulty in admitting the virtual existence of pure recollections in time that we do for actual existence of non-perceived objects in space.'[45] Ultimately unperceived matter and unrecollected memory can be related as nuances within the differential continuum of a virtual Leibnizian unconscious, such that 'we are no longer able to discern what is perception and what is memory.'[46] However, from the limited point of view of human consciousness there is a seeming duality between perception and memory, the threshold between them being the outline that perception traces

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[41] Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, pp. 87-88

[42] Not a difference in degree which would allow a simple addition or subtraction — for example the 'counting as one' of pure matter in Badiou's ontology — but rather a degree of difference itself that necessitates differentiation as a change in nature with each movement of contraction and expansion.

[43] Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, p. 145. Bergson makes the same point in a letter to William James: 'I cannot help but provide a large place for the unconscious, not only in psychological life, but also in the universe in general, as the existence of unperceived matter seems to me to be something of the same kind as that of a non-conscious psychological state.' Bergson, 'Bergson-James Correspondence: 15th February 1905' in *Key Writings,* p. 359

[44] The following section will deal with the Leibnizian unconscious especially in regard to unconscious, or molecular, perception.

[45] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 80

[46] Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, p. 103

around 'objects' as the limit of possible action upon them. Or more precisely, from the point of view of duration, this threshold is marked by the '*period of time* shorter than the shortest continuous period imaginable.'[47] This latter conception of the threshold of the virtual, from one of Deleuze's posthumous writings, clearly shows his increased indebtedness to what Leibniz calls the 'virtual' in the Preface to his *New Essays on Human Understanding*.[48] For Deleuze's Leibniz, space and time cease to be a priori givens since both are 'determined *genetically* by the ensemble or nexus of the differential relations of the subject. Similarly, objects themselves cease to be empirical givens and become the product of these relations in conscious perception.'[49] As will be discussed in the following section, Leibniz's theories of continuity and differential relations annul completely any absolute distinction between space and time, subject and object, perception and hallucination, and thus avoid all the confusing dualisms that contaminate Bergson's philosophy.

In what Bergson calls attentive recognition, memory fills in the gaps at the limit of perception, retracing, sketching — 'creating or reconstructing' — objects whose details are normally left unperceived. Through a leap into memory and then into deeper and deeper circuits of attention to an object, attentive recognition grafts more and more contracted degrees of 'recollection-images' onto perception-images thus not only redrawing perception itself, but discovering 'deeper strata of reality.'[50] The example Deleuze gives of attentive recognition is when the heroine of *Europe 51* sees a factory but then envisions a prison; she projects upon reality a 'mental vision, almost a hallucination.'[51] Thus in attentive recognition, as in habitual recognition albeit in a completely different way, perception is necessarily indistinguishable from hallucination; as in Lucretius, perception is itself intertwined with phantoms and specters. But how can we believe that memories — 'with their affective coloring … the images of idle fancy or of dream'[52] — can retrace perception and thus reconstruct deeper layers of *reality* itself? The problem is that recollection-images, like what Deleuze calls dream-images and world-

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[47] Deleuze, 'The Actual and the Virtual' in *Dialogues II*, p. 148

[48] Here, Leibniz argues that Ideas exist within us as 'virtualities, and not as actualities; although these virtualities are always accompanied by certain actualities, often insensible ones, which correspond to them.' Through awareness or attention, we are able to bring these Ideas into perceptual clarity 'removing everything that prevents their being seen.' Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *New Essays on Human Understanding,* ed. and trans. Peter Remnant and Jonathan Bennett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 52, translation modified

[49] Daniel Smith, 'Deleuze on Leibniz: Difference, Continuity, and the Calculus' in *Current Continental Theory and Modern Philosophy,* ed. Stephen Daniel (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 2005), p. 142

[50] Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, p. 105

[51] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 46

[52] Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, p. 106

images, are still too personal.[53] 'What causes our mistake is that recollection-images, and even dream images or dreaming, haunt a consciousness which necessarily accords them a capricious or intermittent allure, since they are actualized according to the momentary needs of this consciousness. But if we ask *where* consciousness is going to look for these recollection-images and these dream-images … we are led back to pure virtual images of which the latter are only modes or degrees of actualization.'[54]

It is only when memory moves away from the types of personal memory we find in habitual and attentive recognition, and approaches the virtual *qua* the impersonal being of time that perception — without falling into the impasses of a merely subjective hallucination — can return to the vision of reality as the delirious flux of 'numberless vibrations, all linked together in uninterrupted continuity, all bound up with each other, and traveling in every direction like shivers through an immense body.'[55] With recollection-images and dream-images, personal memory is actualized in psychological states. But in pure virtual images, we have a transcendental memory that remains outside of consciousness — in

[53] Although in a way, dream-images and world-images go farther than recollection-images in achieving the moment of liquid perception before subjectivity, they still do so using personal memory and the relative failures of the sensory-motor circuit. Dream-images evoke the panoramic vision of expressionism and its 'unstable set of floating memories, images of a past in general which move by at dizzying speed, *as if* time were achieving a profound freedom. It is *as if* a total and anarchic mobilizing of the past now responds to the character's motor powerlessness … But [the dream-image] does not guarantee the indiscernibility of the real and the imaginary, any more than the recollection-image does. The dream-image is subject to the condition of attributing the dream to a dreamer, and the awareness of the dream (the real) to the viewer.' Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, pp. 55-58. My emphasis. In the world-image, characters do not move, cannot move because their vision has short circuited the sensory-motor loop; rather, the world itself 'takes responsibility for the movement that the subject can no longer make … causes the movement of the path on which they walk.' The apex of the world-image is seen in the musical comedy where characters evoke Kierkegaard's knight of faith since their 'walk imperceptibly becomes dance.' Ultimately, however, their 'personal actions and movements are transformed by dance into a movement of world which goes beyond the motor situation only to return to it.' *Ibid.,* pp. 59-62. Of course 'world-image' immediately brings to mind Heidegger's notion of *Weltbild*, which will be discussed in the next chapter. Dream-images point towards the subjective side of what Deleuze calls becoming-imperceptible in which perception is raised to its proper transcendental limit, that is, perception unbound from the laws of recognition; world-images point towards the objective side of becoming-imperceptible where one becomes clandestine and blends in with one's surroundings. However, conceptions of the 'dream' are still too subjective and those of the 'world' still too pious for Deleuze. Both evoke 'the three Ideas or illusions of transcendence' — Soul, World, God — that Kant resurrects as postulates of practical reason despite being the very objects of the first Critique. Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?,* p. 57. *Cf.* Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 58. Deleuze prefers a vision of a chaosmos off its hinges, beyond the legislation of any transcendent principle whatsoever: 'The dream erects walls, it feeds on death and creates shadows, shadows of all things and of the world, shadows of ourselves. But once we leave the shores of judgment, we also repudiate the dream in favor of an 'intoxication,' like a high tide sweeping over us. Deleuze, 'To Have Done with Judgment' in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 130. Incidentally, the Nietzschian distinction between Apollonian dream and Dionysian intoxication is the key for understanding this statement.

[54] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 80

[55] Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, p. 209

time — and that is only perceived as a question like 'What happened?' or as a feeling like déjà-vu.[56] Virtual images present time in its pure, unactualized state and thus affect a shock to thought.[57] The virtual image is no longer actualized in consciousness but coexists in its pure state as the double of its own actual image; the actual perception-image is intertwined with its own virtual recollection-image to form a crystal-image in which — before the turn of what Deleuze calls transcendental experience — the two are indistinguishable yet distinct. They are distinct only because the speed of virtual images is in excess of the capacities of actual perception relegating the latter to 'a principle of the unconsciousness.'[58] However, the turn of transcendental experience, which is modeled after Bergson's intuition, opens up other speeds of consciousness such that there is no longer even a crystal-image

[56] Virtual memory, or the pure past, is the *being* of time that has never been lived. It is fundamentally different from the mere recollection of a former lived present and is thus a transcendental memory that works beyond the empirical or psychological experience of time. Whereas actual memory is able to recall only those things that have already been seen, heard, imagined, or thought, transcendental memory is able to grasp that which can *only* be recalled. It concerns not a memory contingent on the functions of the other faculties, but with the being of a pure past — the past of all time — and thus it reveals an ontology of the virtual. Deleuze criticizes Kant for tracing the transcendental from the given, empirical mechanisms of psychological consciousness. He shows that in a properly transcendental memory 'forgetting is no longer a contingent incapacity separating us from memory which is itself contingent: it exists within essential memory as though it were the 'nth' power of memory with regard to its own limit or to that which can only be recalled.' Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition,* p. 140. Transcendental memory presents itself as the otherwise hidden, or forgotten, aspect of virtual time. It enlarges our perception since it goes beyond the merely empirical to encounter virtual times that are irreducible to the actual present. It is the virtual half of what Deleuze calls the transcendental structure of time — which is an indeterminate doubling of an actual moment with its virtual aspect — that is revealed in the experience of *déjà-vu*. See also Deleuze, 'Three Novellas, or What Happened' in *A Thousand Plateaus* and Bergson, 'Memory of the Present and False Recognition' in *Mind-Energy*.

[57] In this experience of time *out of joint*, time is no longer merely empirical, it is transcendental in a Kantian sense: we have the direct presentation of 'the pure order of time.' The virtual image makes perceptible relationships of time that are not reducible to the empirical present, it presents the co-existence of different durations which are now unhinged from the rule of successive movement: 'a single event can belong to several levels: the sheets of the past coexist in a non-chronological order.' Deleuze, *Cinema 2,* p. xii. Instead of being determined by the logical succession of events, the transcendental experience of time is revealed as a force of which succession is only a relation or a fragment. See also Deleuze, 'On Four Poetic Formulas that Might Summarize the Kantian Philosophy' in *Essays Critical and Clinical.*

[58] Deleuze, 'The Actual and the Virtual' in *Dialogues II*, p. 149

with two distinct sides; the perception of dualism gives way to a *non-Romantic* intuition[59] of monism that reveals the entire plane of duration beyond human subjectivity, a plane that includes the inhuman and superhuman nuances of duration.

Beyond the 'turn of experience' — beyond the moment of phenomenology — the direct presentation of time 'forces us to think a pure perception identical to the whole of matter.' But matter, or the actual, is only a partial aspect of duration thus transcendental experience 'must lead to the re-

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[59] Bergson takes great effort in making a clear distinction between his intuition and the more or less Romantic conception: 'Because a Schelling, a Schopenhauer and others have already called upon intuition, because they have more or less set up intuition in opposition to intelligence, one might think that I was using the same method. But of course, their intuition was an immediate search for the eternal! Whereas, on the contrary, for me it was a question, above all, of finding true duration.' Bergson, *The Creative Mind,* p. 18. Several of the *Frühromantiks* — Schelling and Hölderlin in particular — attempted to overcome the Kantian moratorium against metaphysics through the disclosure of the 'wonderful and secret faculty' of intellectual intuition, which has immediate access to the unconditioned. Even the early Hegel claimed that 'Without intellectual intuition one cannot philosophize!' G.W.F. Hegel, *Werke 2: Jenaer Schriften 1801-1807* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1986), p. 42. This faculty is intellectual in that it should be understood as distinct from both sensible intuition and conception; it is an intuition in the Kantian sense of a pure immediate representation. Basically, the Early Romantics charged Kant with relying upon a too-limited concept of reason, which was nothing more than an extension of the understanding. Their strategy for resurrecting metaphysics lied in arguing that 'there is a form of rational knowledge of the unconditioned that is not limited by the principle of sufficient reason, and hence that there is a kind of knowledge of the absolute that is not subject to Kant's strictures about the limitations of the understanding.' Frederick Beiser, *German Idealism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), p. 579. See also Manfred Frank, *The Philosophical Foundations of Early German Romanticism*, trans. Elizabeth Millan-Zaibert (Albany: SUNY Press, 2004), pp. 77-96. Schelling argued that intellectual intuition was not subject to Kant's strictures upon knowledge since these apply only to an understanding attempting to go beyond the limits of experience, and not to this new faculty of reason, which of course is inspired by Spinoza's third type of knowledge: the 'intellectual love of God.' By the time of the publication of *The Phenomenology of Spirit,* Hegel rejected intellectual intuition on the grounds of being dogmatic, elitist, and unverifiable, and put in its place the discursive logic of the dialectic, which purports to arrive at absolute knowledge solely through the maneuvering of concepts in the understanding. In his *Lectures* on religion and the history of philosophy he called this type of intuition 'Oriental,' which reflects his later distaste for Romantic Spinozism. Schelling also eventually left behind intellectual intuition, but the problem it attempted to address remained. He ultimately suggested to replace it with an ambiguous 'superior empiricism' in his late, so-called 'positive,' philosophy. For details, see Jean Wahl, *Vers le concret: Etudes d'histoire de la philosophie contemporaine, William James, Whitehead, Gabriel Marcel* (Paris: Vrin, 2004), pp. 32-33 and Chris Lauer, 'Spinoza's Third Kind of Knowledge as a Resource for Schelling's Empiricism' in *Pli* 18 (2007), pp. 168-181. It is in this sense that Deleuze sees Schelling as a forerunner to Bergsonism. Gilles Deleuze, *Desert Islands*, p 36. Although this project of establishing a superior empiricism is largely left incomplete in Schelling, for Bergson it is rigorously worked out in a way that allows metaphysics to move beyond the realm of *speculation:* 'this true empiricism is the real metaphysics.' Bergson, 'Introduction to Metaphysics' in *The Creative Mind*, p. 147. For Bergson, the failure of Early Romantic intuition is that it is employed to resolve the *false* problems of the *noumenon* as well as the unconditioned absolute and eternal. *Noumena* are not a problem for Bergson for the simple fact that perception is not an appearance, but always a slice or attenuation of the real. The absolute and the eternal are direct relics of 17th century Rationalism which ultimately 'cannot sustain difference.' Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 276. The Romantics blindly inherit them from Spinoza rather than registering the Kantian revolution on the concept of time that shatters them. 'Time is out of joint, time is unhinged, signifies the first great Kantian reversal: movement is now subordinated to time.... Everything that moves and changes is in time, but time itself does not change or move, any more than it is eternal. It is the form of everything that changes and moves, but it is an immutable form that does not change — not an eternal form, but precisely the form of what is *not* eternal, the immutable form of change and movement.' Deleuze, 'On Four Formulas that might Summarize the Kantian Philosophy' in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, pp. 27, 29. Elsewhere, Deleuze refers to this unlimited form of what is *not* eternal, the form of pure difference and change, as *Aiôn,* something very close to Bergsonian duration, which of course completely radicalizes Kant's conception of time unhinged. This radical unhinging allows Deleuze to argue that modern cinema makes perceptible the direct presentation of 'the pure order of time,' relationships of time that are reducible neither to the empirical present nor some abstract idea of the eternal. Cinema of the time-image, like Schelling's genius, testifies to the possibility of intuition. But rather than an intellectual intuition of the unconditioned, Bergson's is a sensible intuition which presents the co-existence of different durations unhinged from the rule of successive movement. It is for these reasons that Bergson both contrasts his intuition with the Romantic version and believes it completely 'escapes Kantian criticism.' Bergson, 'Introduction to Metaphysics' in *The Creative Mind*, p. 168. See also notes 113 and 124 below.

formation of a monism' of time.[60] For Deleuze, the ontology of matter-as-image is valid only if the image is seen as 'a bunch of temporal relations.… Temporal relations are never seen in ordinary perception but the virtual image renders visible, and creative, the temporal relations which cannot be reduced to the present.'[61] However, with transcendental experience, the virtual is envisioned not only as substantive but as subjective[62] as well such that the real and the imaginary become utterly indistinguishable; that is, with the monism that is reveled beyond the turn of experience, the virtual replaces the duality of subject and object. The human subject becomes-*voyant*, becomes a visionary 'adequate to the virtual …[able to] express naturing nature' itself.[63] For Bergson, as for Deleuze, perception is already hallucination, but the hallucinogenic vision of the iridescent chaosmos in transcendental experience no longer involves the chimeras of a personal memory and perception; in perception *qua* intuition man as seer becomes an active participant in the expression of the vibratory 'frenzies' of a whole that is not given. 'Man therefore creates a differentiation that is valid for the Whole, and … *traces out* an open direction that is able to express a whole that itself open.'[64] In

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[60] Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, p. 29. It is clear that Bergsonian intuition is wholly a matter of perception — albeit perception extended by various means, including art, philosophy, madness as well as mysticism — and not at all an other-worldly cognition or intellectual intuition. However, neither should it be merely conflated with pure perception. Although the two resemble one another, pure perception is the *theoretical* removal of duration from perception, while intuition consists in the *practical* and methodological disengagement from one's particular duration in order to gain access to different durations, whether inferior or superior.

[61] Deleuze, 'The Brain is the Screen' in *Two Regimes of Madness*, p. 290. Ultimately, and this is what Deleuze makes clear for Bergson, even though for the latter virtual perception refers to unperceived matter, this matter virtually contains a 'depth — more then depth, something like a forth dimension' of time; only in virtual perception is this revealed such that 'what was immobile and frozen in our perception is warmed and set in motion.' Bergson, 'Perception of Change' in *The Creative Mind,* p. 131

[62] 'The only subjectivity is time, non-chronological time, Cronos and not Chronos, the powerful non-organic Life which grips the world … and it is we who are internal to time, not the other way around. … subjectivity is never ours, it is time, that is, the soul or the spirit, the virtual.' Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 83

[63] Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, p. 107. Achieving a virtual perception makes the visionary adequate to creation itself; Bergson argues that he is thus able to express the pre-individual and non-organic flux of the chaosmos — *natura naturans* — and no longer the limited point of view of the individuated subject — *natura naturata*. Here Bergson is reversing Spinoza's claim that it is humanly impossible to break from the condition of being natured nature. Furthermore, both Deleuze and Bergson argue that transcendental perception, or intuition, resolves the Kantian problematic of transcendental illusion because it allows us to express real, rather than merely possible, experience. And both argue that intuition is not just a philosophical fantasy; it is exemplified by artists and mystics. Deleuze follows Bergson in this movement beyond Kant. By using the method of intuition — by *believing* in another time, that of duration — we are able to move past the turn of phenomenological experience: 'In order to reach intuition it is not necessary to transport ourselves outside the domain of the senses and of consciousness. Kant's error was to believe that it was. After having proved by decisive arguments that no dialectical effort will ever introduce us into the beyond and that an effective metaphysics would necessarily be an intuitive metaphysics, he added that we lack this intuition and that this metaphysics is impossible. It would in fact be so if there were no other time or change than those which Kant perceived.' Bergson, 'Philosophical Intuition' in *The Creative Mind*, p. 105. But in Deleuze's estimation, Bergson goes *too far* beyond Kant, or better, not enough in the direction of Nietzsche when he says that, in intuition, perception becomes adequate to things, even if these 'things' for Bergson are no longer things at all but a flux of tendencies. This is merely the thesis of the movement-image, in which we still believe in the 'truth' of an open Whole. But ultimately Deleuze's position in the time-image is a Bergsonism 'cleansed of any spiritualism of presence.' Éric Alliez, 'Midday, Midnight,' trans. Patricia Dailey, in *The Brain is the Screen: Deleuze and the Philosophy of Cinema,* ed. Gregory Flaxman (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), p. 297. Deleuze avoids the phenomenological debate concerning the metaphysics of presence — which is sometimes wrongly grafted onto Bergson's philosophy — by focusing instead on his conception of non-organic vitalism: 'The concept of presence, even if I use the word, does not interest me much. It's too pious. It is 'life' which seems essential.' Giles Deleuze, 'Lettre-Préface' in Mireille Buydens, *Sahara: l'esthétique de Gilles Deleuze* (Paris: PUF, 2005), p. 7

[64] Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, p. 106, my emphasis

transcendental experience, perception becomes unattenuated and returns to the kaleidoscopic and delirious flux of a self-perceiving matter precisely because with it subjectivity itself has become adequate to the virtual, has been overcome by the paroxysm of a cosmic memory that forces it to think and see, indeed to express, the perpetual hallucination of the *real as process*.[65] Henri Michaux's numerous descriptions of the mescaline trip come remarkably close to the language of Bergsonian intuition: 'The mechanism of [normal perceptual] attenuation which tended to efface everything no longer functions. One no longer rests in the attenuated, will soon no longer know what it is. Here everything moves towards paroxysm. The hallucinations will be the most brilliant, the most dazzling.… The taking over by the 'small' — the micro-undulations and the micro-perceptions — the wholly new persistence of the images appears, which is not merely an apparition, but one of the most real and troublesome inner accentuations.'[66]

For Bergson, the method of intuition begins with a creative emotion[67] — which is evoked by artistic or mystical reverie but may also be induced by philosophical thinking — that challenges the habits of the intellect; these affective states install one firmly within one's own duration, which is discovered to be but a nuance within the continuous spectrum of *the* totalizing, if fluid, duration.[68] If there is a difference between the material universe and different perceptions of it, this difference ultimately lies only in the qualitative differentiation of the multiplicity of durations. Deleuze emphasizes this point, which is precisely the way in which we should make sense of his perspectivism *contra* Bergson's intuition of *the* duration, his equation of the 'true empiricism' of intuition with the 'real

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[65] We can now make better sense of Deleuze's declaration: 'What can be more subjective than a delirium, a dream, a hallucination? But what can be closer to an [objective] materiality made up of luminous wave and molecular interaction?' Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 77

[66] Henri Michaux, *Light through Darkness*, trans. Haakon Chevalier (New York: Orion, 1963), p. 140. We shall return to the conception of hallucination as micro-perception at the end of this chapter. Aldous Huxley explicitly equates his mescaline trip with Bergsonian intuition: 'Reflecting on my experience, I find myself agreeing ... that we should do well to consider much more seriously than we have hitherto been inclined to do the type of theory which Bergson put forward in connection with memory and sense perception. The suggestion is that the function of the brain and nervous system and sense organs is in the main *eliminative* and not productive. Each person is at each moment capable of remembering all that has ever happened to him and of perceiving everything that is happening everywhere in the universe. The function of the brain and nervous system is to protect us from being overwhelmed and confused by this mass of largely useless and irrelevant knowledge, by shutting out most of what we should otherwise perceive or remember at any moment, and leaving only that very small and special selection which is likely to be practically useful. According to such a theory, each one of us is potentially Mind at large.' Aldous Huxley, *The Doors of Perception and Heaven and Hell* (New York: Vintage, 2004), pp. 10-11

[67] 'And what is this creative emotion if not precisely a cosmic Memory, that actualizes all the levels at the same time, that liberates man from the plane or the level that is proper to him, in order to make him a creator, adequate to the whole movement of creation.' Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, p. 111

[68] 'To philosophize means to reverse the normal direction of the workings of thought … to be installed in the mobile reality, adopt its ceaselessly changing direction, in short, grasp it intuitively. But to do that, it must do itself violence, reverse the direction of the operation by which it ordinarily thinks, continually upsetting its categories, or rather, recasting them.' Bergson, 'Introduction to Metaphysics' in *The Creative Mind,* p. 160. Or again, 'what is required is that we should break with certain habits of thinking and perceiving that have become natural to us. We must return to the direct perception of change and mobility.' Bergson, 'Perception of Change' in *The Creative Mind*, p. 118. In this sense, Bergsonian intuition is a kind of cognitive *effort* that ultimately goes beyond the intellect. It is a method like Kant's 'disinterestedness' or Husserl's 'bracketing,' although the theoretical backgrounds and aims are entirely different in each case. In general, the latter two both require cognition to *subtract* information about the object. For Bergson, on the other hand, habitual perception is already a subtraction — a slice of the real — and therefore intuition requires an addition or, more precisely, an expansion of consciousness beyond itself. Although Deleuze refers to intuition as Bergson's philosophical method, he tends to emphasize its passive side in his own formulation: hence his terms 'shock to thought' and 'spiritual automaton.'

metaphysics.'[69] Intuition is a method 'by which we can emerge from our own duration, by which we make use of our own duration to affirm the existence of other durations, above or below us.'[70] In intuition, one is installed within ones own duration but immediately senses beneath it the entire spectrum of duration such that there seems to be 'a choice between an infinity of possible durations.'[71] With intuition, man is able to open onto all the nuances of duration that are normally only available to individual species; he is able 'to affirm the existence of objects both inferior and superior to [him], though nevertheless in a certain sense interior' to him.[72] Intuition thus expands perception 'by breathing life once again into the phantoms that surround us' making perception itself perfectly adequate to the real and thus to metaphysics; with the 'superior empiricism' of intuition, 'nothing in the data of the senses would be sacrificed; no aspect of the real' would need to be substituted with concepts since nothing is left undisclosed.[73] Again by way of playing on Spinoza, Bergson argues that by plunging into the intuition of duration 'we accustom ourselves to think and to perceive all things *sub specie durationis*, the more we plunge into real duration.… Then reality no longer appears in the static, attenuated, state; it affirms itself dynamically, in the continuity and variability of its tendency. What was

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[69] Bergson, 'Introduction to Metaphysics' in *The Creative Mind,* p. 147. We might adopt the language of Jean-Luc Nancy and say that the main difference between Bergson and Deleuze is that, for the latter, 'there is no *the*' duration. What is important for Deleuze is that intuition allows us to move beyond the confines of a phenomenological point of view, not that this point of view becomes adequate to some antiquated rationalist ideal of the 'true world.' The clearest statement of Deleuze's Bergsonian perspectivism is the following: 'man is capable of rediscovering all the levels, all the degrees of expansion and contraction … all the frenzies ... that, elsewhere, can only be embodied in different species.' Deleuze, *Bergsonism,* p. 106. More evidence of Deleuze's perspectivism, this time conceived in Fechnerian or Leibnizian terms, is his belief in classifications of 'the spiritual mechanisms of the monadic soul … from vertigo or dizziness to luminous life.' Deleuze, *The Fold,* p. 92. Here he is alluding to the experiences of the hierarchy of souls presented in Fechner's *Little Book*, which is perhaps also the origin of William James' idea of a 'mystical ladder' as well as his pluralistic world-view more generally. If we recall the young Fechner's interest in Oken, we can connect Deleuze's statement that 'man is capable of rediscovering all the levels ... that, elsewhere can only be embodied in different species' directly to Romantic *Naturphilosophie.* Oken held that the special significance of man is that he unites, in the highest level of development, all sensory organs which are seen in lower animals only in an uneven functional distribution. Bergson's insistence that intuition is adequate to 'the real metaphysics' that would, in turn, be the metaphysics that modern science requires, is no doubt the result of his uneasy relation with the rampant positivism of his time and his desire to give philosophy some sort of *scientific* credibility (he was, of course, first trained as a mathematician). But Deleuze had no such relation with science or positivism generally. He states very clearly that art, philosophy, and science are equal in their abilities to think the infinite speed of the plane of immanence; each offers, its is own way, different *points of view*, different slices of the chaosmos. Indeed, modern physics — for example, Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, Schrödinger's cat, Everett's many-worlds interpretation of quantum mechanics — seems to concur with Deleuze that science itself can never have a totalizing, or perfectly true, view of reality.

[70] Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, p. 33

[71] Bergson, 'Introduction to Metaphysics' in *The Creative Mind*, p. 156

[72] Bergson, 'Introduction to Metaphysics' in *The Creative Mind,* p. 155, translation modified. Indeed Michaux said of his experiments with mescaline: 'Time similarly affected / duration now elastic, abnormally drawn out / all dimensions now afloat, indistinct.' Henri Michaux, *Emergences/Resurgences*, trans. Richard Sieburth (New York: The Drawing Center, 2000), p. 66

[73] Bergson, 'Philosophical Intuition' in *The Creative Mind*, p. 106. Bergson, 'Perception of Change' in *The Creative Mind,* p. 111

immobile and frozen in our perception is warmed and set in motion.'[74] This is the sense in which we must understand Bergson's claim that to intuit, to reach the real metaphysics, requires going beyond the human condition.

An extension of the faculty of perception is not just a fantastic philosophical theory; Bergson argues that artists and seers continually remind us that intuition is indeed possible and that we should take inspiration from them. In short, they ground our *belief* in the possibility of perceiving other durations.[75] It is from this perspective that we should approach a poem like Michaux's 'By Surprise,' which evokes beyond any controllable frame of mind a Bergsonian vision of time massively enlarged, beyond its merely human tempos, to include all the strata of a 'contrary evolution.'[76] The poem begins with a violent paroxysm induced by ingesting mescaline: 'Having swallowed the drug – more or less to get rid of it – *I have set the wheel of time in motion*.'[77] Henceforth solid objects loose their density, images are outpaced by their sheer, infinite movement as he gradually emerges from the 'physical' and opens onto the 'metaphysical world — but a real, lived, suffered, experimental metaphysical world dealt with directly, not drawn from any bookish learning.'[78] The most unsettling aspect of Michaux's perception of this 'metaphysical world' is his experience of being disconnected from the comfort of recognizable chronological markers; the discrepancy between the measurements of wrist-watch time and the duration he inhabits under the influence of mescaline is almost unbearable. 'I am weary of waiting for the time by my watch to begin moving forward again in accordance with the time which I inhabit and in which I travel at a different pace; but in fact my watch seems to be slowing down, to be going wrong, to be unconscionably slow, and not to be ample enough to contain my wanderings, for it eats up a few little minutes whilst I am living through an adventure lasting hours … disoriented.'[79] Bergson suggests that the experience of living at another speed of consciousness, another duration, would be felt 'like

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[74] Bergson, 'Perception of Change' in *The Creative Mind,* pp. 131-132. Of course Bergson uses the Latinized *durationis* here to signify *the* duration in his very special sense and not in Spinoza's sense of a limited, or partial viewpoint. Although Spinoza makes it clear that all beings other than God are irrevocably bound to the condition of *natura naturata*, in the fifth book of his *Ethics*, he claims that humans are, through the capacity of a honed intellect, capable of being in the world *sub specie æternitatis*, that is, from the viewpoint of eternity. For Bergson, *the* duration is not a dead or frozen eternity, but rather the real as an infinite mobility. 'Not a conceptual eternity, which is an eternity of death, but an eternity of life. It would be a living and consequently still moving eternity where our own duration would find itself like the vibrations in light, and which would be the concretion of all Duration.' Bergson, 'Introduction to Metaphysics' in *The Creative Mind,* p. 158

[75] 'If we accept and admire artists, it is because we had already perceived something of what they show us. But we had perceived without seeing. It was, for us, a brilliant and vanishing vision, lost in the crowd of those visions, equally brilliant and equally vanishing, which become overcast in our ordinary experience like 'dissolving views' and which constitute, by their reciprocal interference, the pale and colorless vision of things that is habitually ours.' Bergson, 'Perception of Change' in *The Creative Mind,* p. 112. Like Bergson, Schelling makes creative genius — in his apotheosis of the artist in *The System of Transcendental Idealism,* which is often seen as the culmination of the Romantic aesthetic — into the organon of intuition.

[76] 'These levels and regions he discovers … are they not the seemingly endless strata of a contrary evolution through which he regresses? — not only his but that of the human race in him; thrown back, in several respects, into what is prior … with functions correspondingly imperfect, naked, primitive. And what he acquired in passing through the ages is its wealth of corresponding perceptions.' Henri Michaux, 'By Surprise' in *Spaced, Displaced*, trans. David and Helen Constantine (Newcastle: Bloodaxe, 1992), p. 157

[77] Henri Michaux, 'By Surprise' in *Spaced, Displaced,* p. 133

[78] Henri Michaux, 'By Surprise' in *Spaced, Displaced,* p. 149

[79] Henri Michaux, 'By Surprise' in *Spaced, Displaced*, p. 151

shivers through an immense body … fatiguing perhaps to your imagination.'[80] Invoking an almost Leibnizian sensibility, he concurs with Michaux that it may indeed throw one into a state of disorientation: 'Before the spectacle of this universal mobility there may be some who will be seized with dizziness. They are accustomed to *terra firma*.'[81] We shall turn to Leibnizian sensibility in the next section, but first we must understand the ways in which Deleuze goes beyond Bergson in his shift from the movement-image to the time-image.

For Deleuze, Bergsonian intuition is a philosophical method for going beyond Kantianism and the phenomenological turn of experience. It is not 'an appeal to the ineffable' — it is decidedly not the 'intellectual intuition' of the Early Romantics — but rather a way 'to determine the conditions of problems,'[82] the transcendental conditions not of possible experience, but of *real* experience. This is how Deleuze resolves the fundamental dualism inherent to Kant's aesthetics.[83] Bergsonian intuition is the first step towards a transcendental empiricism whose goal is to re-construct an *aesthetics without judgment* and to create a hallucinatory image of thought 'corresponding to the new lines, openings, traces, leaps, dynamisms, discovered by a molecular biology of the brain.'[84] However, to the extent that Bergson suggests that intuition could or should become completely equivalent to a pure perception of *the* duration, his thought must undergo a Nietzschian operation in order to remove any remaining traces of 'truth,' a philosophical category to which he seems to subscribe when he claims that intuition is a 'true empiricism' adequate to 'the real metaphysics.'[85] The most important philosophical difference between the theses of *Cinema 1* and *Cinema 2* is precisely the attempt to resolve this issue *beyond* Bergson. Against the dream of a supposed true World, Deleuze posits the concept of a disjunctive 'chaosmos' modeled in part on a virtual Leibnizian universe in which all incompossible worlds coexist. However, Nietzsche is Deleuze's closest ally in this conceptualization: 'Once we leave the shores of judgment, we also repudiate the [Apollonian] dream in favor of a [Dionysian] intoxication, like a tide sweeping over us. What we seek in states of intoxication — drugs, drink, ecstasies — is an antidote to both the dream and judgment.'[86] By way of a Nietzschian conception of the 'power of the false,' Deleuze equates intuition with Bergson's theory of fabulation rather than the pure perception of the

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[80] Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, p. 208

[81] Bergson, 'Perception of Change' in *The Creative Mind*, p. 125

[82] Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, p. 115

[83] In the 'Transcendental Aesthetic' of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant describes how the conditions of *possible* experience — the *a priori* forms of space and time — determine how *objective* elements of sensation are presented in our intuition. However, the *Critique of Judgment* shows how the *subjective* elements of sensation — the feelings of pleasure and pain — are reflections on, or more precisely, judgments of *real* experience. In contrast to this problematic split in Kant's theory of sensibility, Deleuze proposes a 'transcendental empiricism' modeled after Bergson's intuition in which we 'must look for the conditions not of possible experience, but of real experience. It is here that we find the lived reality of a sub-representative domain.' Transcendental empiricism is how Deleuze avoids Kant's subject-object duality and offers a transcendental aesthetic in which the conditions of experience are precisely the *genetic conditions of real experience*. See Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 69

[84] Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, p. 117

[85] Bergson, 'Introduction to Metaphysics' in *The Creative Mind*, p. 147. Or again: 'I believe in the mutability of *reality* rather than that of truth.' Bergson, 'Letter to William James' in *Key Writings*, p. 362

[86] Deleuze, 'To Have Done with Judgment' in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 130

real.[87] He thus unhinges us from the World and offers a theory of *aisthesis* without any grounding in truth.

[87] Despite the fact that Deleuze praises the theory of pure perception as the only real moment of immanence in Bergson's entire work (Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* pp. 48-49) it alone is not sufficient to understand the type of perception adequate for a transcendental empiricism.

2.3 Leibnizian *petites perceptions*

Deleuze's engagement with Leibniz is more complicated — in the fullest sense of the word — than his virtual identification with Bergson. If Leibniz appears in Deleuze's *Logic of Sense* as the conceptual persona against whom the later creates the concepts of diverging series and disjunctive synthesis, he reappears in Deleuze's *The Fold* as an ally insofar as we are offered, in this text, a virtual Leibniz. Here we have 'a transcendental Leibnizian philosophy'[1] transfigured by Deleuze's investment in Bergson, Maimon, and Whitehead and informed by Deleuze's own theory of singularities, which in a certain sense resolves the problem Leibniz calls the 'labyrinth of the continuum.' It is as if Deleuze's theory of singularities bridges the seemingly irreconcilable gap that existed between the two philosophers' worlds and thus allows them to coexist on the *virtual* plane that they both helped to conceptualize. In this section, we will analyze the Deleuzo-Leibnizian theory of the imperceptible that goes beyond, in certain ways, Deleuze's investment in Bergson. In short, the differential genesis of the faculties that results from encounters with signs has a micro-structure rooted in a post-Kantian reading of Leibniz' calculus. Deleuze argues that the conditions of real, rather than merely possible, perception are not given *a priori*, but are determined by the differential relations of consciousness itself. Furthermore, there are no external objects of perception, properly speaking, in the world of Deleuze-Leibniz since objects are produced genetically by these differentials of consciousness. At the limit, the trajectory of a transcendental Leibnizian logic pushes Deleuze to exclaim that 'every perception is hallucinatory because perception has no object.'[2]

Bergson argues that intuition — on which Deleuze's transcendental perception is in part modelled — requires a violent reversal of our habitual cognitive tendencies. Additionally, in a

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[1] Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, trans. Tom Conley (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), p. 122. Deleuze turns to Leibniz in order to redefine the Kantian transcendental field but in the process he creates a transcendental, or virtual, Leibniz: 'Doing this means returning to Leibniz, but on bases other than Leibniz's. All the elements to create a genesis such as the post-Kantians demanded it, all the elements are virtually in Leibniz.' Gilles Deleuze, 'Les Cours de Gilles Deleuze: Leibniz 20/05/1980' online at http://www.webdeleuze.com/php/texte.php?cle=130&groupe=Leibniz&langue=2

[2] Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 93. This is reminiscent of Hippolyte Taine's provocative suggestion that 'external perception is a true hallucination.' Hippolyte Taine, *On Intelligence*, trans. T.D. Haye (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1998), p. 222. However, there is a fundamental difference in the meanings of these two statements. Taine was merely summing up the late-19th century position amongst experimental psychologists who, since Goethe, more and more conceived of vision as a purely ungrounded subjective experience that no longer represented or referred to objects in the world. 'The "real world" that the camera obscura had stabilized for two centuries was no longer, to paraphrase Nietzsche, the most useful or valuable world. The modernity enveloping Turner, Fechner, and their heirs had no need of its kind of truth and immutable identities.' Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992),* p. 149. When Deleuze talks about perception having no object, he is not to be understood as an Idealist or phenomenologist. Rather, we should read him quite literally: the elements of perception are not recognizable 'objects' but are composed from what Leibniz calls *petites perceptions* and what Deleuze calls 'percepts.' For an interesting discussion relating Goethe, Fechner, and Turner, see *ibid.*, pp. 137-145. For a comparison between Deleuze and Turner, see James Williams 'Deleuze on J.M.W. Turner: Catastrophism in Philosophy,' in *Deleuze and Philosophy: The Difference Engineer*, ed. Keith Ansell Pearson (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 233-246.

somewhat bizarre statement, Bergson claims that 'the most powerful method of investigation known to the mind, infinitesimal calculus, was born of that very reversal. Modern mathematics is precisely an effort to substitute for the *ready-made* what is in process of *becoming*, to follow the growth of magnitudes, to seize movement no longer from the outside and in its manifest result, but from within and in its tendency towards change, in short, to adopt the mobile continuity of the pattern of things.'[3] Deleuze picks up this line of thinking and bases his theory of *Leibnizian* transcendental perception not on a Kantian model of the movement of the faculties in sublime experience but rather on an 'esoteric' formulation of calculus which, Deleuze argues, is nothing other than a 'mathematical-psychological mechanism,' in which the psychic 'I' is engendered through differential relations.[4]

Leibniz's principle of sufficient reason states that what is predicated of a monad is the totality of events that are in one way or another related to it, including all the causes and effects of each of these events. Leibniz pushes this first principle as far as he can — stretching causes and effects to infinity such that, at the limit, each monad can be said to contain the totality of the world — creating an entire philosophy born of 'genius and delirium.'[5] But Leibniz allows for neither a universal mind nor a single substance; there are only an infinite number of individual monads, each expressing the totality of the same world, albeit from a different 'point of view.' Furthermore, for Leibniz, the world does not exist outside the different points of view that express it. There is no world *in itself*. Each monad's point of view constitutes the perspective on the world that is perceived/expressed by it clearly; points of view are extremely attenuated visions that provide windows of clear perception on a small portion of the world. But since the principle of sufficient reason stipulates that the entirety of the world *is* in fact perceived by every monad, Leibniz argues that the regions of the world that are outside a particular monad's point of view must be perceived 'obscurely and unconsciously.'

> At every moment there is in us an infinity of perceptions, unaccompanied by awareness or reflection; that is, of alterations of the soul itself, of which we are unaware because these impressions are either too minute and too numerous, or else too unvarying, so that they are not sufficiently distinct on their own … they involve the infinite; that connection that each being has with all the rest of the universe. It can be said that by virtue of these minute

[3] Henry Bergson, 'Introduction to Metaphysics,' in *The Creative Mind,* trans. Mabelle Andison (New York: Dover, 2007), p. 161

[4] Gilles Deleuze, 'Les Cours de Gilles Deleuze: Leibniz 29/04/1980' online at http://www.webdeleuze.com/php/texte.php?cle=55&groupe=Leibniz&langue=2

[5] Deleuze, 'Les Cours de Gilles Deleuze: Leibniz 20/05/1980'

> perceptions … eyes as piercing as God's could read in the lowliest substance the universe's whole sequence of events.[6]

Despite being a rationalist philosophy, Leibniz's monadology comes down more or less to his theory of perception: 'A simple substance … [exists] in some state: and that is nothing else but its perception.'[7] The perception of such a simple substance, a 'naked monad,' is reminiscent of Bergson's frenzied vibrations of pure matter; because the perception of naked monads is nothing but a confused murmur and is not punctuated by 'heightened,' or conscious, moments it expresses only a sort of universal dizziness.[8] What makes a monad conscious is its ability to apperceive, to have distinct albeit attenuated perceptions, which are themselves determined by an infinite number of minute perceptions that are the confused murmur of the world. Although each conscious monad expresses or contains the entirely of the world, which is indeed infinite, it is unable to express it completely within its finite consciousness; instead, the infinity of the world is expressed in conscious monads confusedly, by minute or *unconscious* perceptions.[9] As Deleuze notes, 'the infinite is taken here only as the presence of an unconscious in finite understanding, of something that cannot be contained in finite thought.'[10] It is the calculus which allows us to think the infinite within the finite and thus the relationship between conscious and unconscious perceptions.

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[6] Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *New Essays on Human Understanding*, ed. and trans. Peter Remnant and Jonathan Bennett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 53-55. See also his 'Discourse on Metaphysics' §33 in *Philosophical Texts*, ed. and trans. R.S. Woolhouse and Richard Francks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 85. Psychophysics relies heavily upon Leibniz's theory of *petites perceptions* and especially the *limen* that separates them from conscious perception. In fact, Fechner subscribed to these ideas as early as his *Little Book*: 'That which goes out visibly and perceptibly from man during his lifetime is not the only thing that emanates from him. However small and fine the vibration or impulse may be by which a conscious emotion is carried to our minds, yet the whole play of conscious emotions is borne by an inward mental action, it cannot die without producing effects of its kind in us and at last beyond us; only we cannot follow them into life outside. As little as can the lute keep its playing to itself, it is borne out beyond it, so little can our minds.... The physicist, however, recognizes and follows only the action of the lower exterior order, and does not concern himself with the finer, which he does not perceive. But even if he does not perceive it, yet knowing the principle, does he dare deny the result?' Gustav Fechner, *Little Book of Life After Death,* trans. Mary Wadsworth (New York: Pantheon, 1943), pp. 58-59

[7] Leibniz, 'Monadology' §21 in *Philosophical Texts*, p. 270

[8] See Leibniz, 'Monadology' §24 in *Philosophical Texts*. Deleuze's description of Leibniz's world of pure matter is indeed very reminiscent of Bergson: 'Dividing endlessly, the parts of matter form little vortices in a maelstrom, and in these are found even more vortices, even smaller, and even more are spinning in the concave intervals of the whirls that touch one another. Matter thus offers an infinitely porous, spongy, or cavernous texture without emptiness, caverns endlessly contained in other caverns: no matter how small, each body contains a world pierced with irregular passages, surrounded and penetrated by an increasingly vaporous fluid, the totality of the universe resembling a pond of matter in which there exist different flows and waves.' Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 5. Furthermore, 'from a psychic point of view, this chaos would be a universal giddiness.' *Ibid.*, p. 77

[9] The entirety 'of the universe could be seen in each individual soul, if we could only unfold all that is enfolded in it.… But just as each of the soul's distinct perceptions involves an infinity of confused perceptions which encapsulate the entire universe, so the soul itself doesn't know the things of which it has a perception except in so far as it has a perception which is distinct and revealed.' Leibniz, 'Principles of Nature and Grace' §13 in *Philosophical Texts*, p. 264

[10] Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 89. From *Difference and Repetition* to *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze develops a theory of the unconscious which is entirely on the side of Leibniz: 'The unconscious is differential, involving little perceptions, and as such it is different in kind from consciousness. It concerns problems and questions which can never be reduced to the great oppositions [as in Freud's conception] or the overall effects that are felt in consciousness.' Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 108. 'And in contrast to Lautréamont's song that rises up around the paranoiac-Oedipal-narcissistic pole – '*O rigorous mathematics. . . . Arithmetic! Algebra! Geometry! Imposing trinity! Luminous triangle!*' – there is another song: O schizophrenic mathematics, uncontrollable and mad desiring-machines!' Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen Lane (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), pp. 371-372

Monads express most of the world in a confused manner, as if it were a mere background noise, as an infinite number of infinitely small unconscious perceptions. The part of the world these monads express clearly and distinctly — that is, consciously — is that portion that affects their bodies and corresponds to what Leibniz calls their point of view. Ultimately, however, every monad expresses the totality of the world and thus 'knows infinity, knows everything, but confusedly.'[11] If all this follows from pushing the principle of sufficient reason as far as possible, towards an almost hallucinatory conceptualization of the world, Deleuze shows that Leibniz still falls back onto the concepts of representation and identity. Leibniz argues that every monad is different, individual and yet each expresses or represents the infinity of predicates of one and the same world; he maintains both these views logically by merely rendering representation infinite and subordinating difference to identity. 'Infinite representation includes precisely an infinity of representations — either by ensuring the convergence of all points of view on the same object or the same world … it maintains a unique center which gathers and represents all the others.'[12] Beyond Leibniz, however, Deleuze argues that underlying the principle of sufficient reason is a theory of sub-representational Ideas which, in their infinity, are 'not attained by merely multiplying representations and points of view. On the contrary, each composing representation must be distorted, diverted and torn from its center. Each point of view must itself be the object.… The object must therefore be in no way identical, but torn asunder in a difference in which the identity of the object as seen by a seeing subject vanishes. Difference must become the element, the ultimate unity; it must therefore refer to other differences which never identify it but rather differentiate it.'[13] Deleuze refuses to harness the 'delirium and genius' of Leibniz's principle of sufficient reason back onto the rather sober pre-established harmony of a merely possible world, even if this world is deemed by God to be the best. Instead, he offers us a 'properly chaotic world without identity … a chaosmos'[14] composed not by the immediacy of the given, which would be mere objects of representation, but rather by the differential relations of Ideas, or 'singularities,' which are the genetic conditions of the given. These pre-individual and discontinuous singularities[15] are not identical to the empirical givens of a possible world; they define 'the *real* transcendental field'[16] that determines differentially these empirical givens.

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[11] Leibniz, 'Principles of Nature and Grace' §13 in *Philosophical Texts*, p. 264

[12] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 56

[13] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 56

[14] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 57

[15] Deleuze defines the singular (what Leibniz calls remarkable or notable) in a very special way that draws more from mathematics than from philosophy. Thus for him it is opposed to the ordinary rather than the universal. The singular is what is discontinuous, or what is opposed to the rule. For example, a square is composed of an infinite number of ordinary points but only four singular points that define its corners. The singular is the point at which something in a series changes; it is the point at which the equation that defines a line changes function and thus its curve. Singular points define the whole line since they determine the trajectory of the series of ordinary points that extend from them. 'The singular point's characteristic is to prolong itself into the whole series of ordinary points that depend on it.' This extension of a singular onto an ordinary series is what Deleuze calls the continuous. Therefore a continuity is what is determined by the discontinuous: 'It's very bizarre since, in order to reach this definition of the continuous, I used what apparently introduces a discontinuity, a singularity in which something changes.' Gilles Deleuze, 'Les cours de Gilles Deleuze: Leibniz 29/04/80'

[16] Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, ed. Constantin Boundas, trans. Mark Lester and Charles Stivale (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), p. 109

There is neither identity in the world nor in the monad. Since each monad is open to the infinity of predicates of the world, it can have no center, no identity as a self; and since the world does not exist except as a continuous alteration of partial expressions of its infinite curve, it also has no fixed center or identity. Ultimately there is only an infinite number of individual monads, each of which is composed of an infinity of pre-individual and discontinuous singularities; there is only a chaosmos that continuously differs from itself. This is where Deleuze moves from Leibniz to Whitehead. For the former, 'monads' being-for the world'[17] is submitted to a condition of identity and closure determined by a divine harmony while discords or 'incompossibilities' are relegated to borders between discontinuous worlds. For the latter, it is kept open 'as if by a pair of pliers'[18] by all the discontinuous singularities that now 'belong to the same motley world.'[19] From the harmonic closure of Leibniz's monadology, Deleuze opens to the chaosmic 'nomadololgy' of Whitehead's process philosophy. God is no longer the legislator of a pre-established harmony but becomes a pure process that allows all virtualities to pass into existence, forming an infinite web of endlessly bifurcating series of convergent *and* divergent lines, a chaosmos consisting in 'a polyphony of polyphonies.'[20] In order to understand more completely the differential mechanisms of perception at work in this nomadology, we will now look at what Deleuze calls the 'esoteric' tradition of calculus.

In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze writes that the relation between an empirical thing and the singular Ideas of which it is composed is like that between x and dx in calculus, where the latter is an element of a differential relation, an infinitely small or 'vanishing' quantity: 'dx is strictly nothing in relation to x … in short, dx is the Idea.'[21] Not only are the elements of a differential relation infinitely small, these infinitely small quantities are also completely undetermined in themselves; they are neither real — in the sense of a real number, like '3' — nor imaginary — as in an algebraic variable, like 'z,' which is unspecified but still has a determined value. The terms of a differential relation, like dx or dy, have no determined value themselves but are only determined within the relation itself. 'Under this form of infinitesimal calculus is discovered a domain where the relations no longer depend on their terms.'[22] Deleuze writes 'this form' because he is referring to an esoteric, or even 'barbaric,' trajectory

[17] Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 81
[18] Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 137
[19] Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 81
[20] Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 82. Compare this to James' disjunctive world of pure experience: 'If you should liken the universe of absolute idealism to an aquarium, a crystal globe in which goldfish are swimming, you would have to compare the empiricist universe to something more like one of those dried human heads with which the Dyaks of Borneo deck their lodges. The skull forms the solid nucleus; but innumerable feathers, leaves, strings, beads, and loose appendices of every description float and dangle from it, and save that they terminate in it, seem to have nothing to do with one another.' William James, *Essays in Radical Empiricism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), p. 24
[21] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 171
[22] Gilles Deleuze, 'Les Cours de Gilles Deleuze: Spinoza 17/02/1981,' online at http://www.webdeleuze.com/php/texte.php?cle=38&groupe=Spinoza&langue=2

within the history of calculus that actually took differential elements, *dx* and *dy*, seriously.[23] This trajectory includes Salomon Maimon and Jozef Hoene-Wronski, who were post-Kantians who returned to Leibniz in order to show how empirical objects were not simply given but engendered by the differential relations of infinitesimal elements. Wronski, for his part, made a transcendental distinction between the finite *x* and the infinitesimal *dx*. He argued that 'finite quantities bear upon the objects of our knowledge, and infinitesimal quantities on the very generation of this knowledge; such that each of these two classes of knowledge must have laws proper to them, and it is in the distinction between these laws that the major thesis of the metaphysics of infinitesimal quantities is to be found.'[24] Furthermore, we should not confuse 'the objective laws of finite quantities with the purely subjective laws of infinitesimal quantities.'[25]

It is these subjective laws of infinitesimal quantities that Maimon calls the 'differentials of consciousness.'[26] Against Kant, Maimon argued that it is the reciprocal determination of these differentials that determine genetically both 'objects' of perception as well as the form of space-time

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[23] Deleuze's use of 'esoteric' calculus in *Difference and Repetition* and *The Fold* should be understood within the context of his desire to provide modern science with 'the metaphysics it needs.' Gilles Deleuze, 'Responses to a Series of Questions,' *Collapse* III (November 2007), p. 41. However, it must also be kept in mind that this metaphysics is itself 'philosophy as science fiction,' in which one speaks about science in a manner which is ultimately not scientific. 'Esoteric' should be understood, in the first place, within the context of Deleuze's explanations of 'nomad science' and, perhaps secondarily, within the context of the history of esotericism itself. In the category of the latter, we can include his early interest in an esoteric *mathesis,* indicated by his introduction — while still a student — to a new edition of the 19th century occult treatise *Études sur la mathèse ou anarchie et hiérarchie de la science* by Johann Malfatti de Montereggio (Gilles Deleuze, 'Mathesis, Science, and Philosophy,' *Collapse* III, November 2007, pp. 141-155), as well as his use in *Difference and Repetition* of Jozef Hoene-Wronski's mathematical system whose own purpose was to support a larger esoteric metaphysics. Indeed, Wronski's synthesis of Leibnizian calculus and post-Kantian Idealism played a fundamental role in the mid-19th century revival of Western esotericism, which has been attested to by the 'Father' of modern French occultism, Eliphas Lévi. See Christopher McIntosh*, Eliphas Lévi and the French Occult Revival* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2011). Both Malfatti and Wronski were, to varying degrees, adherents of *Naturphilosophie* and their searches for absolute knowledge can be put within the context of the early Schelling's conception of intellectual intuition, in which absolute knowledge is ultimately characterized as indemonstrable and, indeed, 'esoteric.' This context must be highlighted when we also recall that Schelling — who maintained an interest in the mysticism of Swedenborg and Böhme throughout his life — held mathematics to be the standard of knowledge during this period. For more on Deleuze's relation with western esotericism and occultism see Christian Kerslake, *Deleuze and the Unconscious* (London: Continuum, 2007). To be done once and for all with the criticisms from the guardians of State science and the so-called 'science wars' in general, at least in Deleuze's case, one only need to re-read his position *vis-à-vis* speaking in the name of science: 'Of course, we realize the dangers of citing scientific propositions outside their own sphere. It is the danger of arbitrary metaphor or of forced application. But perhaps these dangers are averted if we restrict ourselves to taking from scientific operators a particular conceptualizable character which itself refers to non-scientific areas, and converges with science without applying it or making it a metaphor.' Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), p. 129

[24] Hoene-Wronski quoted in Michael Blay, *Reasoning with the Infinite: From the Closed World to the Mathematical Universe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 158

[25] Hoene-Wronski quoted in *Reasoning with the Infinite*, p. 158.

[26] Interestingly, Deleuze calls the mechanism of these differentials the 'psychic automatism of perception' which derive a clear perception from minute, unconscious perceptions. Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 89. This might help us to understand the otherwise enigmatic figure of the 'spiritual automaton' in his cinema books.

that conditions the perception of these objects within a 'subject.'[27] Rather than the sensible being a quality related to a recognizable object that it presupposes, as in Kant, Deleuze-Maimon suggests that it is a subjective quantity, indeed a vanishing quantity, a minute perception; the differentials of consciousness genetically determine objects that emerge, more or less, out of oblivion, that do not exist until they enter into a differential relation within the subject. Beyond the Kantian a priori conditioning of perception, we have 'an internal subjective method of genesis…. The physical object and mathematical space both refer to a [properly] transcendental (differential and genetic) psychology of perception.'[28] Furthermore, contrary to Bergson, for whom perception is a subtraction from the whole, the relation between conscious and unconscious perceptions for Deleuze-Maimon is not one of parts to a whole, but rather one between what is ordinary to what is singular.[29] However, for both Bergson and Deleuze-Maimon, but in very different ways, the real is not a given whole but rather an open process whose mechanisms are only revealed with a transcendental perception.

With this conception, we have a rather strange, almost alchemical universe in which objects slowly emerge from a distant haze.[30] Indeed when Deleuze describes how sensible objects are derived from the differential Ideas of consciousness, he uses language that is reminiscent of alchemical texts: 'the Idea of fire subsumes fire in the form of a single continuous mass capable of increase. The Idea of silver subsumes its object in the form of a liquid continuity of fine metal.'[31] Here he concurs with Wronski that there is a transcendental distinction between representations, or the objects of perception,

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[27] It is important to remember that both Maimon and Wronski were attempting to resolve some technical problems in Kantian philosophy by returning to Leibniz. Maimon in particular was heralded by both Kant and Fichte for understanding — and proposing new solutions to — the problems of transcendental Idealism better than any of his contemporaries. See Immanuel Kant, *Correspondence,* ed. and trans. Arnulf Zweig (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 311-312 and Johann Fichte, *Early Philosophical Writings*, ed. and trans. Daniel Breazeale (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), pp. 383-384. Therefore, their language is steeped in the Idealism of their time, especially with regard to the problem of the transcendental subject. Deleuze, however, proposes his own post-Kantian trajectory by arguing that there is no *given* transcendental subject, no pure *a priori* forms. The logic provided by Maimon and Wronski allows him to show how both the object *and* the subject are genetically determined by differentials of consciousness, where consciousness is to be understood in the strictly Bergsonian sense of a vibratory, self-illumined matter. It should also be noted that the real importance of the calculus is that it provides a new *model* for thought; even the late Maimon waivers on the issue of whether his theory of infinitesimals is simply a useful, that is, pragmatic tool for analysis — what he calls a creative 'fiction' — or instead points to a genuine metaphysical reality. Samuel Atlas, *From Critical to Speculative Idealism: The Philosophy of Solomon Maimon* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1964), p. 110. It will become clear in the next chapter that Deleuze believes metaphysics is only possible if we allow for such fictions or fabulations to proliferate. Again, we can hear him in the background, silently repeating his axiom that philosophy is a kind of science fiction.

[28] Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 89

[29] Deleuze notes that Leibniz sometimes uses the language of parts *vs.* whole when he talks about the relationship between minute and conscious perception. However 'when he really wants to explain things, he says something else, he says that conscious perception is *derived* from minute perceptions. It's not the same thing, 'is composed of' and 'is derived from.' In one case, you have the Whole-Parts relationship, in the other you have a relationship of a completely different nature. What different nature? The relation of derivation, what we call a derivative. That also brings us back to infinitesimal calculus: conscious perception derives from the infinity of minute perceptions.' Deleuze, 'Les Cours de Gilles Deleuze: Leibniz 29/04/1980'

[30] 'In the beginning, there is light, but it is not yet perceived. It is instead a pure transparency, invisible, colorless, unformed, untouchable. It is the Idea … extended throughout the Open…. This light is the opening that creates space … and what comes to occupy this space is haze, solar haze.' Gilles Deleuze, 'The Shame and the Glory: T.E. Lawrence,' in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel Smith and Michael Greco (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), p. 115

[31] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 171. However, the mysterious fluxes and integrations of the differential mechanisms of perception are no more 'alchemical' than the rather curious behavior of quantum particles.

and their genetic elements; the function of the faculty of perception is to derive a clear representation of silver (*s*) from a cosmic soup of molten metal (*dx, dy, dz, …*). The genetic elements prior to representation within the faculty of perception are imperceptible to this faculty. They can only be perceived by a properly *transcendental* perception that has been pushed to its limits beyond the laws of recognition.[32] In transcendental perception, perception ceases to be representative and becomes adequate to the real, that is, to the realm of differential Ideas.

It is interesting that, when discussing transcendental perception, Deleuze often invokes not only alchemy, but also the romantic imagery of drug use in Michaux and de Quincey as well as revolt in the desert, which of course is a smooth, nomadic space beyond the structured confines of the city-state. Commenting on the perception of the desert depicted in T.E. Lawrence's *Seven Pillars*, Deleuze writes: 'The rebellion itself is a gas, a vapor. Haze is the first state of nascent perception; it creates mirages in which things rise and fall, as if under the action of a piston, and men levitate, as if hung by a rope. To see through the haze is to have blurred vision — the rough outlines of a hallucinatory perception, a cosmic gray.'[33] In addition to Lawrence, this rather poetic description of the transcendental conditions of perception draws its inspiration from the final scene of de Quincey's *Revolt of the Tartars*. Through the eyes of the Chinese emperor — who is lazily enjoying the morning sun in his pavilion at the edge of the Gobi desert — the oncoming tartars are glimpsed indistinctly through voluminous masses of sand and vapor:

> Suddenly to the westwards there arose a vast cloudy vapor, which by degrees expanded, mounted, and seemed to be slowly diffusing itself over the whole face of the heavens. By and by this vast sheet of mist began to thicken towards the horizon, and to roll forward in billowy volumes…. Through the next hour, during which the gentle morning breeze has a little freshened, the dusty vapor had developed itself far and wide into the appearance of huge aerial draperies, hanging in mighty volumes from the sky to the earth; and at particular points, where the eddies of the breeze acted upon the pendulous skirts of these aerial curtains, rents were perceived, sometimes taking the form of regular arches, portals, and windows, through which began dimly to gleam the heads of camels 'indorsed' with human beings — and at intervals the moving of men and horses in tumultuous array — and then through other openings or vistas at far distant points the flashing of polished arms. But sometimes as the wind slackened or died away, all those openings, or whatever form, in the cloudy pall, would slowly close, and for a time the whole pageant was shut up from view; although the growing din, the clamors, shrieks, and groans, ascending from infuriated

[32] The genetic elements of perception are 'simultaneously the imperceptible and that which can only be perceived.' Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 230. Deleuze criticizes Kant for tracing the transcendental from the empirical mechanisms of psychological recognition, which assumes an *a priori* accord of all the faculties under the legislation of a single faculty in relation to the form of a presupposed object that is taken to be the same for each. Deleuze shows that a properly transcendental perception would be the 'nth power' of the faculty of perception, a faculty pushed to its own limits — beyond any external legislation — such that it encounters that which can *only* be perceived and not, as supposed by the recognition model, an object accessible to the other faculties.

[33] Deleuze, 'The Shame and the Glory,' in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 115

> myriads, reported, in a language not to be misunderstood, what was going on behind the cloudy screen.[34]

However romantic this vision may be, and however indebted to it Deleuze is for his *poetic* formulation of transcendental perception, we should remember that Leibniz, the inventor of calculus, was also heavily influenced by alchemy, occult visions, and Chinese philosophy.[35]

Leibniz observes that we necessarily perceive things of which we have no conscious awareness. He therefore makes a distinction between apperception (conscious or molar perception) and minute perception (unconscious or molecular perception), and shows that the later are not related to recognizable objects as parts to a whole. Rather, the relation is one between that which is singular and that which is ordinary such that apperception is derived from singular minute perceptions. That is, 'singular' and 'ordinary' are to be understood here in the strict mathematical sense: a conscious perception emerges when at least two *heterogeneous* minute perceptions enter into a differential relation. Deleuze uses the example of the perception of a color — for example green — to help make the point clear. Both yellow and blue can be normally perceived, but when they enter into a differential relation — $dy/db = g$ — the difference between them vanishes as the values *dy* and *db* approach zero such that they can no longer be individually detected and the differential relation between them determines the perception of the color green. Furthermore, both 'yellow or blue, each on its own account, is determined by a differential relation of two colors that we cannot detect, or two degrees of

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[34] Thomas de Quincey, 'Revolt of the Tartars,' in *The Works of Thomas de Quincey, vol. IX,* ed. Grevel Lindop (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2001), pp. 201-202, partially quoted in Deleuze, *The Fold,* p. 94. Albert Goldman has noted that 'this extraordinary vision, the most celebrated piece of bravura description to be found in all of de Quincey's writings … exhibits his favorite metaphor of columns of sand which, drawn up by the desert winds, assume a variety of impressive forms and then mysteriously dissolve and vanish.' Albert Goldman, *The Mine and the Mint: Sources for the Writings of Thomas de Quincey* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1965), p. 125. De Quincey notes that the 'sublime' experience of opium itself elicits 'the feeling of a vast march — of infinite cavalcades filing off — and the tread of innumerable armies.' Thomas de Quincey, 'Confessions of an English Opium-Eater,' in *Confessions of an English Opium Eater and Other Writings*, ed. Barry Milligan (London: Penguin, 2003), p. 85. He also claims that opium is 'the magnificent apparatus which forces the infinite into the chambers of the human brain.' De Quincey, 'Suspiria de Profundis,' in *Ibid.*, p. 90. Compare de Quincey's vision of revolt in the desert to Lawrence's various depictions, for example: 'we were ... a thing intangible, without front or back, drifting about like a gas ... a vapor, blowing where we listed.' T.E. Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (London: Penguin, 2000), p. 198

[35] See, for example, A.P. Coudert, R.H. Popkin, and G.M. Weiner, eds., *Leibniz, Mysticism, and Religion*, ed. (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1998)

chiaroscuro.'[36] This mechanism can be followed *ad infinitum,* completely annulling the possibility of the existence of external objects of perception, since the infinitely small, heterogeneous elements of these differential relations are undetermined in themselves. This is how Deleuze is able to push Leibniz's logic to the point at which he is able to say: '*Every perception is hallucinatory because perception has no object*. Conscious perception has no object and … refers only to the exclusively physical mechanism of differential relations among unconscious perceptions that are comprising it within the monad. And unconscious perceptions have no object and do not refer to physical things. They are only related to the cosmological and metaphysical mechanism according to which the world does not exist outside of the monads that are conveying it.'[37]

Neither the infinite multiplicity of infinitely minute elements (*dx, dy*) nor the 'objects' of apperception that they inform (*z*) preexist the differential relations (*dx*/*dy*) — the pure force of differentiation itself — which transcendentally and immanently conditions them both.[38] What Deleuze means by the virtual is first and foremost a Bergsonian conception of transcendental time, defined as the force of movement, the chaosmic flux; it is 'time as a *force*, time itself, time in its purest form.'[39] This is how we are able to make sense of both Deleuze's insistence that calculus discloses a properly transcendental domain 'where the relations no longer depend on their terms'[40] as well as Bergson's statement that it is able to show us the distinction between the given or '*ready-made* and what is in

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[36] Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 88. Deleuze's use of the term chiaroscuro — literally 'light-dark' — and his example of blue and yellow are clear indications that he has Goethe in mind here. In his theory of colors, the latter claims: 'White that becomes darker inclines to yellow; black, as it becomes lighter, inclines to blue.' Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Theory of Colors,* trans. Charles Eastlake (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1970), p. 206. Goethe, against Newton's spectral description of color, regarded color as resulting from the interaction of light and darkness. This theory was important for the Romantic, Symbolist, and Neo-impressionist painters, particularly Turner and Kandinsky. It was also important for Fechner, who actually verified Goethe's claims in his experiments with what is now called 'Fechner color,' in which color is seen to emerge from rapidly moving black and white lines. Michaux's mescaline drawings are works of black ink on paper which very rarely depict glimpses of color emerging from the movement of 'countless lines ... animated by a life all their own, zigzagging like mad ... cinematographically.' Henry Michaux, *Emergences/Resurgences*, trans. Richard Sieburth (New York: The Drawing Center, 2000), p. 64. Evoking again the 'cosmic gray' of Lawrence's vision in the desert, Deleuze writes, 'The Arab world is painted in black and white. But these are still only the conditions of perception, which will be fully actualized when colors appear, that is, when white darkens into yellow and black lightens into blue: sand and sky, whose intensification produces a blinding crimson in which the world burns, and eyesight is replaced by suffering.' Deleuze, 'The Shame and the Glory,' in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 116. Deleuze's commitment to the nomad sciences of Goethe's color theory and 'esoteric' interpretations of calculus should be understood as a concerted affront to the State science of Isaac Newton.

[37] Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 93

[38] The elements of a differential relation are determined *within* and not simply *by* it.

[39] Gilles Deleuze, 'Occupy without Counting: Boulez, Proust and Time,' in *Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews 1975-1995*, ed. David Lapoujade, trans. Ames Hodges and Mike Taormina (New York: Semiotexte, 2006), p. 298. Elsewhere, Deleuze argues that the genetic elements of sensation (singularities, Ideas) are not primary since they 'merely cut a slice in the continuous stream' of the chaosmos. Deleuze, 'Immanence: A Life,' in *Ibid.,* p. 384

[40] Deleuze, 'Les cours de Gilles Deleuze: Spinoza 17/02/1981'. In the end, and despite all the humor involved with equating metaphysics with science fiction, Deleuze's use of (esoteric) calculus supplies the context for another of his rather obscure remarks: 'Empiricism is a mysticism and a mathematicism of concepts.' The differential movements symbolized by calculus give metaphysical weight to his non-vitalist claims of 'machinic' or 'inorganic' life for which consciousness and ontogenesis are one and the same thing. The point of convergence for all of these associations is Francisco Varela's theory of autopoiesis, which defines a machine as 'the set of interrelations of its components independent of the components themselves.' Francisco Varela, *Principles of Biological Autonomy* quoted in Félix Guattari, *Chaosmosis: An Ethico-Aesthetic Paradigm*, trans. Paul Bains and Julian Pefanis (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), p. 39.

process of *becoming* … the mobile continuity of the pattern of things.'[41] This theory of micro-perception is based on both a metaphysical cause, which maintains that every monad expresses the totality of the world, a world that does not exist outside of these expressions, as well as a psychological cause, which states that conscious perceptions necessarily imply an infinity of unconscious perceptions. Each monad has a unique point of view, which corresponds to the zone of the world it is able to perceive consciously and clearly; the portions of the world outside of this zone are expressed unconsciously or obscurely. The Idea of the world is ultimately a 'system of differential relations, of which each monad only actualizes a partial solution'[42] by virtue of its point of view or zone of finite clarity upon the world. But this is not the whole picture since each monad indeed expresses the entire world — albeit obscurely — as minute perceptions, which are dimly perceptible as a confused 'lapping of waves, a rumor, a fog, or a mass of dancing particles of dust … little folds that unravels in every direction.'[43]

Perhaps invoking Bergson's intuition, which involves a reversal of the habits of normal cognition, Deleuze argues that it is possible — in a visionary moment of becoming-imperceptible, becoming adequate to the imperceptible, minute perceptions of Leibniz' strange world — to 'undo' or 'unveil' the mechanism that both limits us to an attenuated point of view and acts as a screen that protects us from the 'unfathomable depths of tiny and moving folds that waft me along at excessive

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[41] Bergson, 'Introduction to Metaphysics,' in *The Creative Mind*, p. 161. Deleuze's use of infinitesimal calculus to describe the mechanism of perception makes possible a post-Bergsonian conception of psychophysics. By *symbolically* relating the elements of sensation (*dx, dy*) — which he also calls percepts — to differentials of consciousness (*dx/dy*) — the pure forces of affect — Deleuze gets around Bergson's critique of Fechner to a certain extent. Ultimately, Deleuze reduces the world to a swirl of impersonal forces such that stimulus and sensation are not different in kind. While Deleuze sides with Bergson in recognizing two types of multiplicity, he parts with the early Bergson of *Time and Free Will*, who still conceives of the material world in purely quantitative, extensive terms. In this text, Bergson claims that the 'mistake which Fechner made ... was that he believed in an interval between two successive sensations S and S', when there is simply a *passing* from one to the other and not a *difference* in the arithmetical sense.' Fechner merely assumed that sensations were quantifiable in the same manner as space when in fact, 'there is no point of contact between the unextended and the extended, between quality and quantity.' Henry Bergson, *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness*, trans. F.L. Pogson (New York: Dover, 2001), pp. 67-70. However, once we see the world as a flux of tendencies rather than as a collection of solid objects, and once we admit that calculus is a tool for mapping this flux, we begin to understand the middle ground Deleuze is setting up between Bergson and Fechner. Infinitesimal calculus — 'the most powerful method of investigation known to the mind,' according to the later Bergson — is nothing other than a method for mathematizing movement without breaking it into discrete parts. Therefore, it is theoretically suitable for measuring the movement, or *passing,* of sensation as well. With the calculus, sensation — like an object in the world — no longer has to be quantified with elementary arithmetic in order to apply a mathematical function to it. Indeed, Fechner ultimately expressed his Law as a differential equation. Deleuze does not go so far as establish a proper mathematical formula, but rather relies upon the logic and symbolism of infinitesimal calculus to make a philosophical point: both objects and sensations are composed of unrecognizable fluxes or vibrations of force, the former are called tendencies and the latter psychophysical affects. In *The Fold,* Deleuze alludes to this common ground between Fechner and Bergson: 'Fechner's psychophysics is developed' on the presumption that a 'conscious perception resembles vibrations contracted by the body.... Bergson will rediscover this idea of a resemblance between a perceived quality of consciousness and tiny movements 'contracted' by a receptive organ in the conclusion of *Matter and Memory*.' Deleuze, *The Fold*, pp. 97, 156, translation modified

[42] Alberto Gualandi, *Deleuze* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1998), p. 49

[43] Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 86. The confused and confusing perception of fog is more or less the type of primary sensation Deleuze takes from the neurologist Erwin Strauss and employs in his *Logic of Sensation*. Strauss describes the experience of primary sensation thus: 'In twilight, darkness, or fog I am still in the landscape. I can still move. But I no longer know *where* I am, I can no longer determine my position in a panoramic whole; we are off the path, we feel lost.' Erwin Straus, *The Primary World of the Senses*, trans. Jacob Needleman (New York: Free Press, 1963), p. 319

speeds in the operation of vertigo."[44] Furthermore, through the reversal of these differential mechanisms we are, as in Bergson's intuition, able to return to a vision of the universal giddiness of naked monads:

> If the differential mechanisms of our clear perceptions are checked, then the minute perceptions force selection and invade consciousness, as in drowsiness or in giddiness. A dust of colored perceptions falls on a black backdrop; yet, if we look closely, these are not atoms, but miniscule folds that are endlessly unfurling and bending on the edges of juxtaposed areas, like a mist or fog that makes their surface sparkle, at speeds that no one of our thresholds of consciousness could sustain in a normal state.[45]

It is crucial to clarify that minute perceptions 'invade consciousness' not as representations or conscious perceptions, since the differential mechanisms of the faculty of perception are suspended. Rather, unconscious perceptions affect consciousness *directly,* causing consciousness itself to be extended. Minute perceptions invade consciousness in their pure, unactualized state; they are not perceived but intuited directly and thus affect a shock to thought. 'It's not that that these minute perceptions stop being unconscious, but it's me who ceases being conscious. I live them, there is an unconscious lived experience. I do not represent them, I do not perceive them, but they are there, they swarm in these cases. I receive a huge blow on the head: dizziness is an example that recurs constantly in Leibniz's work. I get dizzy, I faint, and a flow of minute unconscious perceptions arrives: a buzz in my head … consciousness very strangely becomes an infinitely minute consciousness of minute unconscious perceptions.'[46] Of course, as Deleuze notes, the rather innocent Leibnizian example of becoming-imperceptible is the dizziness invoked 'when you turn round continually in the same direction several times together.'[47] But it is certainly no accident that Deleuze names de Quincey and Michaux as the exemplary persona who reveal the mechanisms of hallucinatory apperception. Conscious perception is already hallucinatory for Deleuze-Leibniz, since the differential relations from which it derives point to vanishing quantities rather than external objects. We are always perceiving 'through the haze of dust without objects that the figures themselves raise up from the depths, and that falls back down again, but with time enough to be seen for an instant.'[48]

Michaux and de Quincey show that drugs can suspend the differential mechanisms of perception to reveal not what Gestalt theory describes when it speaks of 'hallucinations' against the 'proper forms' of normal perception; rather, they disclose the hallucinatory reality of 'normal' perception itself. By experimenting with substances that make it possible to intuit the hallucinatory swarm of unconscious perceptions directly within consciousness, they confirm for Deleuze that true hallucinations are only the lived experience of the transcendental mechanisms of perception. But Deleuze only makes tangential allusions to the drug experience in this text. He invokes Michaux and de Quincey, yes, but the only thing that comes close to an explicit association between drugs and transcendental perception

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[44] Straus, *The Primary World of the Senses*, p. 93
[45] Straus, *The Primary World of the Senses*, p. 93
[46] Deleuze, 'Les Cours de Gilles Deleuze: Leibniz 29/04/1980'
[47] Leibniz, 'Monadology' §21 in *Philosophical Texts*, p. 271
[48] Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 194

is found in a footnote: 'Leibnizian themes are frequent in Michaux: fog and giddiness, Lilliputian hallucinations, speeding minute perceptions.'[49] The reader must look elsewhere to clarify what here can only remain speculative. The following section, however, will attempt to fill in the gaps. For now, here is a long quote from the first pages of Michaux's *Major Ordeals of the Mind* that cannot but confirm his 'Leibnizian themes.' Here Michaux, against the belief in a purely 'contemplative' intuition,[50] also argues that it takes more than speculative metaphysics to open onto a transcendental perception which, in its turn, has extra-philosophical consequences:

> Not until insidious derangement by a drug had brought the [normal] mechanism of the mind to a halt did I at last, quite late in life, realize experimentally its vital, almost omnipresent a function, whose incessant action had just ceased. This sudden revelation of everyday unconsciousness was so confounding that I would never be able to forget it again.… Cognition, the micro-phenomenon in the fullest sense of the term, its numerous meshings, its many silent micro-operations of dislocation, of alignment, of parallelism, of displacement, of substitution (before achieving a macro-thought, a panoramic thought) escapes consciousness and must escape it. It can be followed only exceptionally, under the microscope of a desperate attention, when the mind — monstrously excited, for example, from the effect of large doses of mescaline, its field of vision altered — sees its thoughts as particles appearing and disappearing at stupendous speeds, has an intense awareness of 'that' which leaves no more than quite imperceptible vestiges.… The drug discovers, unmasks mental operations, injecting consciousness where it had never been, and at the same time dislodging it from places where is had always been. *Conscious or not, they must surely be there, those micro-investigations, micro-manipulations, micro-stages, the very texture and fabric of the mind*.… More than the all too excellent mental skills of the metaphysicians, it is the dementias, the backwardnesses, the deliriums, the ecstasies and agonies, the breakdowns in mental skills which are really suited to 'reveal' us to ourselves.[51]

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[49] Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 155

[50] Any interpretation of intuition that relegates it to a mere contemplative impotence has seriously misunderstood both Deleuze and Bergson. One has only to understand Bergson's position on mysticism to realize that intuition has everything to do with virtual action and an engagement with the world. But to say that the virtual is 'out of this world' or outside the scope of political action is to miss Deleuze's most profound and intricate ontological thesis: The virtual is a *transcendental* realm entirely continuous (in Deleuze's special sense) with the actual. And intuition entails not a solipsistic contemplation but a *co*-creation — naturing nature — that redefines politics as a 'micro-politics' which must bear some relation, yet to be drawn out of Deleuze's *oeuvre*, to the infinitesimal movements of Leibniz's monads. Curiously, Deleuze is first able to ask the question 'How is this [*micro-*]*politics* … to be attained?' in the twenty-second series of his *Logic of Sense*, which analyses the intoxications of Fitzgerald and Lowry. Later, with Guattari, he speaks of a 'molecular revolution specific to drugs.' Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), p. 282. Guattari's expression 'molecular revolution,' coined in 1977, was perhaps inspired by the title of one of the sections — 'The Molecular Revolution' — in Timothy Leary's *Politics of Ecstasy* (1968). Deleuze and Guattari both spend a significant amount of energy discussing the theme of drugs in their individual work. Deleuze's engagement will be considered at length in the next section of this chapter. For Guattari, see in particular 'Socially Significant Drugs,' trans. Mark Roberts in *High Culture: Reflections on Addiction and Modernity*, ed. Anna Alexander and Mark Roberts (Albany: SUNY Press, 2003), pp. 199-208 and 'Machinic Junkies,' in *Soft Subversions: Texts and Interviews 1977–1985*, ed. Sylvère Lotringer, trans. Chet Wiener and Emily Wittman (New York: Semiotexte, 2009), pp. 158-161. He also claims that, in order to gain insight into his concept of the machinic unconscious, 'it is still to the works of Henri Michaux ... that it is advisable to turn to today if we wish to access a minimum amount of information on these questions.' Félix Guattari, *The Machinic Unconscious*, trans. Taylor Adkins (New York: Semiotexte, 2011), pp. 231-232. Finally, Gary Genosko has illuminated Guattari's personal encounters with drugs. See his 'Daddy's Little Helper: Félix Guattari and Gamma OH' in *Parallax* 18.1 (2012), pp. 47–61

[51] Henri Michaux, *The Major Ordeals of the Mind and Countless Minor Ones,* trans. Richard Howard (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1974), pp. 4-7, my emphasis

2.4 Michaux's visionary drawings

In 1968, Deleuze sent Henri Michaux a copy of his newly published *Logic of Sense* with the following dedication: 'To HM: Amongst so many other things, you knew how to speak about schizophrenia much better than anyone else…. Admiration for all of your work.'[1] Therefore, from the becoming-schizo of Deleuze's earliest work to Michaux's more overt appearance in *What is Philosophy?* as *the* exemplary personae who is able to think along the thin line that separates art from philosophy — a line that is itself located at the brink of an unthinkable chaos — Michaux is an important point of reference for understanding Deleuze's thought in its entirety.[2] Regardless, Michaux's name is invoked only twice in Deleuze's *The Fold,* the text in which he discusses at length Leibnizian perception. First, as one of the heroes — along with Boulez and Hantaï — of the modern Baroque.[3] Second, and more importantly, in the chapter on 'Perception in the Folds.' Here Deleuze suggests that it is possible to 'undo' the mental mechanisms that act as a screen that protects us from the 'unfathomable depths of tiny and moving folds that waft me along at excessive speeds in the operation of vertigo, like [Michaux's] crazed charioteer's whiplash.'[4] By somehow reversing the normal habits of thought we are, as in Bergsonian intuition, able to return to a vision of the universal giddiness of pure matter:

> If the differential mechanisms of our clear perceptions are checked, then the minute perceptions force selection and invade consciousness, as in drowsiness or in giddiness. A dust of colored perceptions falls on a black backdrop; yet, if we look closely, these are not atoms, but miniscule folds that are endlessly unfurling and bending on the edges of juxtaposed areas, like a mist or fog that makes their surface sparkle, at speeds that no one of our thresholds of consciousness could sustain in a normal state.[5]

These 'minute perceptions' — the elements of the Leibniz unconscious, which are imperceptible to the Kantian coordinates of space-time — are able to invade consciousness without being actualized as representations because the normal mechanisms of apperception are temporarily suspended. They affect the mind *directly,* causing consciousness itself to be extended in precisely the same way that virtual images are added, without themselves being actualized, to actual images in the formation of a

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[1] Cited by Raymond Bellour, 'Chronologie,' in Henri Michaux, *Oeuvres Complètes III,* ed. Raymond Bellour (Paris: Gallimard, 2004), p. xxxix

[2] Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?,* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 41

[3] Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, trans. Tom Conley (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), p. 33

[4] Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 33. The quote by Michaux can be found in Henri Michaux, *Miserable Miracle*, trans. Louise Varèse and Anna Moschovakis (New York: New York Review Books, 2002), p. 126. Raymond Bellour argues that this invocation of Michaux is the 'turning point' of the entire chapter 'Perception in the Folds' in Deleuze's book on Leibniz. Raymond Bellour, 'The Image of Thought: Art or Philosophy, or Beyond?' trans. Alina Opreanu in D.N. Rodowick, ed., *Afterimages of Gilles Deleuze's Film Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), p. 12 n. 20

[5] Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 93. If a Deleuzo-Leibnizian intuition has to do with the perception of microperceptions, a Deleuzo-Bergsonian intuition has to do with expanding duration such that all the 'frenzies' of the virtual Whole are apprehended. See Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Zone Books, 1991), p. 106

crystal image. Minute perceptions invade consciousness in their pure, unactualized state; that is, they are not perceived but intuited directly and thus affect a shock to thought. 'It's not that that these minute perceptions stop being unconscious, but it's me who ceases being conscious. I live them, there is an unconscious lived experience. I do not represent them, I do not perceive them, but they are there, they swarm in these cases. I receive a huge blow on the head: dizziness is an example that recurs constantly in Leibniz's work. I get dizzy, I faint, and a flow of minute unconscious perceptions arrives: a buzz in my head … consciousness very strangely becomes an infinitely minute consciousness of minute unconscious perceptions.'[6] Of course, as Deleuze notes, Leibniz's own example is the dizziness invoked 'when you turn round continually in the same direction several times together.'[7] But it is certainly no accident that Deleuze names Michaux as the exemplary personae who reveals, for him, the mechanisms of this hallucinatory micro-perception.[8] Again and again in his writings, Michaux shows that certain substances affect the microbiology of the brain in a way that makes it possible to intuit a hallucinatory swarm of imperceptible perceptions directly within consciousness. However, Deleuze only makes tangential allusions to the drug experience in this text. It is true that he invokes not only Michaux but also the Romantic opium-eater Thomas de Quincey, but the connections remain suggestive. The reader must look elsewhere to clarify what here can only remain speculative.

In *The Fold*, Deleuze writes that 'from a psychic point of view, chaos would be a universal giddiness, the sum of all possible perceptions being infinitesimal or infinitely minute; but a screen would extract differentials that could be integrated in ordered perceptions. If chaos does not exist, it is because it is merely the bottom side of the great screen, and because the latter composes infinite series of wholes and parts, which appear chaotic to us only because we are incapable of following them, or because of the insufficiency of our own screens.'[9] He is responding here to Leibniz's claim that 'chaos' is only the necessarily limited and confused perception by a finite mind of the infinity of things and

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[6] Deleuze, 'Les Cours de Gilles Deleuze: Leibniz 29/04/1980' online at http://www.webdeleuze.com/php/texte.php?cle=55&groupe=Leibniz&langue=2

[7] Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, 'Monadology' §21 in *Philosophical Texts* ed. and trans. R.S. Woolhouse and Richard Francks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 271

[8] 'Leibnizian themes are frequent in Michaux: fog and giddiness, Lilliputian hallucinations, speeding minute perceptions.' Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 155. This long quote from Michaux's *Major Ordeals of the Mind* makes this assertion absolutely clear. 'Not until insidious derangement by a drug had brought the [normal] mechanism of the mind to a halt did I at last, quite late in life, realize experimentally its vital, almost omnipresent a function, whose incessant action had just ceased. This sudden revelation of everyday unconsciousness was so confounding that I would never be able to forget it again.… Cognition, the micro-phenomenon in the fullest sense of the term, its numerous meshings, its many silent micro-operations of dislocation, of alignment, of parallelism, of displacement, of substitution (before achieving a macro-thought, a panoramic thought) escapes consciousness and must escape it. It can be followed only exceptionally, under the microscope of a desperate attention, when the mind — monstrously excited, for example, from the effect of large doses of mescaline, its field of vision altered — sees its thoughts as particles appearing and disappearing at stupendous speeds, has an intense awareness of 'that' which leaves no more than quite imperceptible vestiges.… The drug discovers, unmasks mental operations, injecting consciousness where it had never been, and at the same time dislodging it from places where is had always been. *Conscious or not, they must surely be there, those micro-investigations, micro-manipulations, micro-stages, the very texture and fabric of the mind*…. More than the all too excellent mental skills of the metaphysicians, it is the dementias, the backwardnesses, the deliriums, the ecstasies and agonies, the breakdowns in mental skills which are really suited to "reveal" us to ourselves.' Henry Michaux, *The Major Ordeals of the Mind & the Countless Minor Ones*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1974), pp. 4-7

[9] Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 77

that if there were a mind sensitive enough to perceive the infinite subdivisions of things, it would realize that everything is, in fact, harmoniously organized.[10] Deleuze parts with Leibniz to the extent that he agrees with Bergson about the possibility of intuiting through a screen that is adequate to infinity, and to the extent that he sides with Whitehead about the nature of this infinity as an open polyphony of polyphonies rather than a closed harmony. The concept of the screen, Deleuze adds elsewhere, is intertwined with 'molecular biology, the biology of the brain. Thought is molecular. We are slow beings, constituted by certain molecular speeds. Michaux says: 'Man is a slow being, made possible only through fantastic speeds."[11] And of course the screen also has to do with the cinema, which for Deleuze has the ability to show the coexistence of multiple durations. However, despite all the attention and hope Deleuze places on the cinema, early in *Cinema 1* he claims that, in a sense, it ultimately fails in achieving a properly transcendental perception which would be the genetic condition of all perception, a perception capable of intuiting all the infinite micro-perceptions of the chaosmos before they are integrated onto the screen of human consciousness. But then Deleuze asks, perhaps half-jokingly, perhaps not: 'Might the answer be: drugs … ?'[12]

Deleuze and Guattari note that the vocation of the artist consists in his confrontations with chaos and his capacity to create a composition that retains a sense of its infinity, that reveals and restores us, at least in part, to the infinite.[13] Different artists achieve this in different ways. For example D.H. Lawrence, in his essay 'Chaos in Poetry,' describes the poet's task as making small tears in the screens that ordinary men use to protect them from 'the everlasting whirl … of wild chaos.... and lo!

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[10] See Leibniz's letter to Bourguet, March 1714, cited in Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 153. Michaux concurs with Leibniz that there is only 'an *apparent* chaos.' Henry Michaux, 'By Surprise' in *Spaced/Displaced*, trans. David and Helen Constantine (Newcastle: Bloodaxe, 1992), p. 133

[11] Gilles Deleuze, 'The Brain is the Screen,' in *Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews 1975-1995*, ed. David Lapoujade, trans. Ames Hodges and Mike Taormina (New York: Semiotexte, 2006), p. 283. The quote by Michaux can be found in his *Major Ordeals of the Mind*, p. 23. What Deleuze is alluding to in his citation of this text, is that the brain-as-screen can be adjusted to other 'speeds' that are perhaps adequate to the infinite, and that this adjustment happens at the level of the molecular biology of the brain. But there is no allusion in Michaux, just the pure brutality of fact: 'Ah! What dupes we are, dupes to infinity. Mescaline is useful at least for bringing this out.' Henry Michaux, *Light through Darkness*, trans. Haakon Chevalier (New York: Orion Press, 1963), p. 56. Again: 'Sense of the infinite, of the presence of the infinite … of the penetration of the infinite endlessly passing through the finite. An infinite on the march, with an even step which will never stop, which can never stop. The cessation of the finite, of the illusory conviction that anything finite, concluded terminated, arrested exists. The finite, whether prolonged or broken up, taken off guard by a crossing, overflowing, magnificent infinite, annulling and dissipating everything that is circumscribed.' *Ibid*., p. 14

[12] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), p. 85. In a sort of transcendental Leibnizianism, we could say that *THE* plane of immanence, *THE* chaosmos, doesn't exist in itself since it consists only in the multiplicity of 'planes of immanence' that express it. The point here is that, for Deleuze, cinema does not achieve a plane of immanence adequate to infinity, but at best hovers somewhere at the edges of representation. On the other hand he claims that drugs, despite all the dangers inherent to their misuse, are able to affect a transcendental perception and force one to construct such a plane of immanence.

[13] See Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* p. 197. Bergson argues that it is precisely the artist's ability to access the infinite and present a vision of it in their works that attests to fact that the expansion of human perception in intuition is not impossible. Interestingly, he does so using language reminiscent of Leibniz: 'If we accept and admire them, it is because we had already perceived something of what they show us. But we had perceived without seeing. It was, for us, a brilliant and vanishing vision, lost in the crowd of those visions, equally brilliant and equally vanishing, which become overcast in our ordinary experience like "dissolving views" and which constitute, by their reciprocal interference, the pale and colorless vision of things that is habitually ours.… Art would suffice to show us that an extension of the faculties of perceiving is possible.' Henry Bergson, 'Perception of Change' in *The Creative Mind,* trans. Mabelle Andison (New York: Dover, 2007), pp. 112-113

the glimpse of chaos is a vision.'[14] And the surrealists attempted to create a delirious world, composed of an unending series of dream-like associations, in direct opposition to the world of habitual perception and thinking. But unlike Lawrence's poet —'who must have a more or less continuous sense of his own identity'[15] on *this* side of infinity in order to slit the screens of ordinary men just enough to grant them a glimpse of chaos — and unlike the surrealists — whose distaste for *this* world created an urgent immediacy to invent another one in dialectical opposition to it — the work of Henri Michaux, in its endless struggles *from chaos to form*, has always testified to the fact that 'he inhabits the world the Surrealists merely longed for.'[16] His entire *oeuvre*, not unlike that of Antonin Artaud, can be seen as a series of attempts to create a means of expression adequate to his unstable position at the edge of chaos.[17] The invention of numerous pseudo-autobiographical and other-worldly beings — whether in verse, ink, or paint — during the early years of his career attests to this. However, it is not until the decade of his incisive experimentation with mescaline — the period from 1956 to 1966 that roughly coincided with the rise of his international reputation as one of the most disturbing contemporary visual artists — that Michaux begins to find idioms and techniques capable of transmitting directly his world of terrifying and disjunctive mobility, a world to which he was only able to allude through fantasy. Deleuze no doubt recognized this. And if Michaux is an exemplary figure for a Deleuzian practical philosophy, it is precisely because the expressions of his experiments with mescaline[18] — in both words and ink — come perhaps closer than any other artists' work in offering us a real plane of immanence.

What Deleuze and Guattari call a plane of immanence is a pre-philosophical image of thought that is both the ground of what it means to think as well as a screen — a 'section of chaos that acts like

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[14] D.H. Lawrence, *Selected Critical Writings,* ed. Michael Herbert (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 234. *Cf.* Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?,* p. 203

[15] Malcolm Bowie, *Henri Michaux: A Study of his Literary Works* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 172

[16] Bowie, *Henri Michaux*, p. 24

[17] 'There is not one self. There are not ten selves, there is no self. Me is only a position of equilibrium (one among a thousand others which are continually possible and always ready). An average of 'me,' a crowd movement.' Henri Michaux, 'Plume' in *Darkness Moves: An Henri Michaux Anthology,* ed. and trans. David Ball (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), p. 78. Contrary to the claims of Idealism and Husserlian phenomenology, there is no transcendental subject. Rather, *je est un autre*, to use a phrase from Rimbaud which is taken up by both Sartre and Deleuze. For the latter, the transcendental form of *Time* displaces the subject by inserting an fundamental fissure between a passive self and a fractured I. Gilles Deleuze, 'On Four Formulas that might Summarize the Kantian Philosophy' in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel Smith and Michael Greco (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), p. 29

[18] Of course Deleuze refers to Michaux's entire *oeuvre*, and is especially fond of the titles of his prose and poems. But more often than not, Michaux's name appears in Deleuze's texts in relation to hallucinogenic micro-perceptions; to the 'molecular biology of the brain,' its different speeds, its uncharted channels and foldings; to the 'outside,' which functions like the occult movements of a pineal gland, always opening onto new visions at the edge of chaos. It is interesting to note the other artists and thinkers, whose use of mescaline was of particular importance for the development of their work, Deleuze admires: James, Artaud, Sartre, Benjamin, Castaneda.

a sieve' — that protects us from the infinite depths of the world.[19] To be sure, the plane of immanence is still a screen, but a screen more or less adequate to the movements of chaos. It is neither simply given nor simply created; it always already constructs itself only insofar as it *will have been* constructed diagrammatically by an artist capable of giving consistency to chaos 'without losing anything of the infinite.' The construction of this plane depends first of all upon a transcendental vision that is able to intuit directly the infinite vanishing views of micro-perceptions before they are integrated into the relatively solid forms of human apperception.[20] The artist accedes to this almost unbearable vision that

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[19] The plane of immanence has a philosophical pedigree in both the early Sartre as well as the late James. Deleuze states that 'the transcendental field could be defined as a pure plane of immanence, because it escapes all transcendence both of the subject and of the object.' Deleuze, 'Immanence: A Life,' in *Two Regimes of Madness*, p. 385. Compare this to James: 'The instant field of the present is at all times what I call the 'pure' experience. It is virtually or potentially either object or subject as yet. For the time being, it is plain, unqualified actuality or existence, a simple *that*.... There is no self-splitting ... into consciousness and what the consciousness is "of."' William James, *Essays in Radical Empiricism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), p. 13. Deleuze also directly alludes to the connection with James: 'When immanence is no longer immanent to something other than itself it is possible to speak of a plane of immanence. Such a plane is, perhaps, a radical empiricism.' Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* p. 46. David Lapoujade — whose essay 'Le flux intensif de la conscience chez William James' Deleuze cites on this point — also makes the James-Deleuze connection explicit. Specifically, he conflates radical empiricism with transcendental empiricism and pure experience with the plane of immanence: 'Radical empiricism would therefore be an operation which consists in liberating immanence, returning it to its own movement. Deleuze refers to this operation as transcendental empiricism, whereby one establishes a plane of immanence, when the plane of immanence is determined as a transcendental field.... If James at first calls himself a radical empiricist, rather than an empiricist, this is because his interest is not in experience as such but rather in *pure* experience. This is the name William James gives to the plane of immanence.' David Lapoujade 'From Transcendental Empiricism to Worker Nomadism,' trans. Alberto Toscano in *Pli* 9 (2000), p. 190. Furthermore, like Deleuze and Bergson, James admits this pure experience is available only to certain privileged, *impersonal* subjects. It is 'the immediate flux of life which furnishes the material to our later reflection with its conceptual categories. Only new-born babes, or men in semi-coma from sleep, drugs, illnesses, or blows, may be assumed to have an experience pure in the literal sense of a *that* which is not yet any definite *what*.' James, *Essays in Radical Empiricism*, p. 46. Finally, 'pure' should not be confused with 'true,' unless we understand truth strictly in the pragmatic sense. Deleuze also relates the plane of immanence to Sartre's egoless consciousness, against which Sartre contrasts the Kantian and Husserlian transcendental subjects, for which 'pure' signifies something entirely different. With both the pure Kantian *a priori* forms as well as the 'pure — and, so to speak, still dumb — psychological experience' which remains after Husserl's bracketing (Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, trans. Dorion Cairns (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1960, p. 38)), everything happens as if the transcendental were merely a *purified* psychology, where the transcendental I is modeled on the psychic 'I'. Deleuze reiterates countless times that the transcendental cannot be modeled on the empirical which it conditions, *e.g.* Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 135. In *The Transcendence of the Ego*, Sartre also attempts to grapple with this problem and, in particular, he wants to subtract phenomenology from its Kantian orientation by replacing the transcendental I with an egoless conception of intentionality and a conception of the transcendental field as an impersonal, absolute consciousness. In a certain way, he might agree with James that the transcendental does not need to be unified in an ego since absolute consciousness itself provides this unity. However, his conception of intentionality merely displaces the *transcendence* of the ego onto absolute consciousness. Furthermore, the unification of consciousness in intentionality still presupposes a *cogito* form, albeit a pre-reflective *cogito* quite distinct from the Cartesian one: 'Through intentionality consciousness transcends itself, it unifies itself by going outside itself.' Jean-Paul Sartre, *The Transcendence of the Ego,* trans. Andrew Brown (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 3. The philosophical effect of this self-transcendence of consciousness is concretized in the dualist ontology of *Being and Nothingness* — with the antithetical concepts of *pour-soi* and *en-soi* — ultimately removing any trace of immanence that might remain from his earlier writings. For Deleuze, the possibility of liberating the transcendental field from transcendence is contingent upon overcoming this unification of consciousness in a *cogito*. As we have seen, his own solution depends upon a *radically* immanent transcendental field of impersonal 'consciousness' — the Bergsonian eye in matter — whose differential movements genetically determine both the 'objects' of perception as well as the form of space-time that conditions the 'subject' itself. And he does this without relying on the givens of a pure *cogito* or a pure psychological experience.

[20] 'The grandiose Leibnizian or Bergsonian perspective that every philosophy depends upon an intuition … is justified if intuition is thought of as the envelopment of infinite movements that constantly pass through the plane of immanence.' Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* p. 40

'shatters lived perceptions into … a sort of simultaneism of harsh or crepuscular light,'[21] and then returns with 'bloodshot eyes' in order to compose a plane, or diagram, that is adequate to this vision of chaos. He rides a fine line at the edge of chaos — 'Yes, this line's deadly, too violent and fast, carrying us into breathless regions' — but succeeds only to the extent that he is not overwhelmed by its infinite movements.[22] His vision 'is not a private' hallucination but rather a transcendental perception of the universal 'delirium as *process*.'[23] He succeeds in his task only if he is able to give this vision consistency — in a work of art — without falling into a *clinical* delirium or catatonia, which would arrest all movement and creativity.

In the realm of art, the plane of immanence is synonymous with what Deleuze calls a 'diagram,' which lays out the ground for a work by erasing and replacing ready-made opinions that already exist on the blank canvas — the fashionable ideas and presuppositions that inform the art world — with

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[21] Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* p. 171

[22] The quote continues: 'It destroys all thinking, like the drugs Michaux had to stop using. It's nothing but *délire* and madness … but we need to cross this line, and make it endurable…. We have to manage to fold the line and establish an endurable zone in which to install ourselves, confront things, take hold, breathe — in short, think. Bending the line so we manage to live upon it, with it: a matter of life and death.' Gilles Deleuze, 'Portrait of Foucault,' in *Negotiations*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), p. 110. This line of the outside is 'a terrible line that shuffles all the diagrams.' Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, trans. Sean Hand (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), p. 123. It is conflated with the infinite movements of the plane of immanence in Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 59. In an essay called 'He Stuttered' Deleuze argues that the visions expressed in Michaux's drawings constitute an 'ultimate aim, an outside.' Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 113

[23] Deleuze, 'Preface,' in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. lv. Of course personal 'hallucinations' (in the usual sense of the word) are possible but they are only produced by minds, such as Artaud's, that are open onto chaos but unable to negotiate it. 'They can be explained by the sluggishness of our brain … and by our not being able to tolerate infinite movements or master the infinite speeds that crush us.' Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?,* p. 49. Michaux argued again and again that his mescaline visions — and the drawings that attempted nothing but the accurate reconstruction of them — were *not* such hallucinations but rather disclosed 'a basic phenomenon that was bound to be discovered one day. Here it was glaring and unconcealed, here it was exceptional in a state of exception … a primeval and general phenomenon that underlies even the most placid consciousness … perhaps vaguely felt, but non seen, passing by unperceived behind other perceptions that are of greater interest. I believe then that I am showing the flow that, without interruption, even for one single second, passes through man from the very first moment of his life up to the last.' Henry Michaux, *Peace in the Breaking Flood*, trans. Michael Fineberg (Consigny: Embers, 1976), no pagination. Or again: 'The phenomena of the visual — always multitudinous … whose impact consisted of a presence stronger than hallucinations, more pervasive…. Matter without materiality, space without limits…. Where stability had once reigned there was now only flux, a flux indiscriminately traversing both the firmest and most supple of substances, a flux not unlike those cosmic particles which traverse the earth without cease, without even slowing down.' Henry Michaux, *Emergences/Resurgences*, trans. Richard Sieburth (New York: The Drawing Center, 2000), pp. 64-65

irrational, involuntary, non-narrative marks and lines.[24] The act of painting proper only comes after this preparatory work, *après-coup* so to speak; the laying out of this diagram 'is like the emergence of another world, for these marks ... are traits of sensation (the confused sensations, as Cézanne said, that we bring with us at birth). And above all, they are manual traits … as if the hand began to be guided by other forces … as if in a catastrophe, a chaos.'[25] This diagram is indeed a chaos in relation to both the formal givens of art-making as well as the formal givens of normal apperception; artists have a transcendental vision of a non-figurative chaos, they 'pass through the catastrophe themselves, embrace the chaos, and attempt to emerge from it.'[26] Again, different artists have different techniques of giving form to this chaos. Most interesting for this paper are the techniques of abstract expressionism, or *art informel*, for which clear and distinct figures never emerge from the canvas. Here sensation remains in a confused state, expressed as so many gestures and marks that suggest the perpetual movement and decomposition of matter. Michaux has described his own process this way:

> I have nothing to make, everything to unmake. To rid myself of a world of troubled and contradictory things. Taking a pen, in a rage of erasure I scar the surfaces to wreak havoc on them, like the havoc I had gone through all day and which had turned my whole being in to an open wound. Let this paper also wear its wound![27]

There is no *après-coup*, no 'coming to' after the dizzying confrontation with chaos; the painting hovers in an unresolved delirium such that it 'becomes a catastrophe-painting and a diagram-painting at one and the same time.'[28] Deleuze and Francis Bacon agree that it was Henri Michaux's drawings that pushed this trajectory the furthest giving us the most incredible diagrammatic works 'that have ever been

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[24] For Deleuze and Guattari, the word 'artist' always refers to one who constructs an *oeuvre d'art* rather than simply repeats the fashionable techniques and forms of the day. They do not throw the term around lightly and, in a sense, their artist is a kind of qualified genius. For them, the task of the artist is not to represent given forms but rather to capture virtual forces and elements of sensation that directly act upon the nervous system. Reading Kant through Bergson, Deleuze says that 'in genius, the creative intuition is an intuition of *another* nature…. The genius creates another nature adequate to Ideas.' He 'makes us think' because his work forces us to extend our cognitive abilities beyond their habitual patterns. Thus 'genius vitalizes. It gives life.' Gilles Deleuze, 'The Idea of Genesis in Kant's Aesthetics' in *Desert Islands and Other Texts*, ed. David Lapoujade, trans. Michael Taormina (New York: Semiotexte, 2004), pp. 67-68. Genius 'creates the intuition of a nature other than that which is given to us: another nature whose phenomena would be true spiritual events.' Gilles Deleuze, *Kant's Critical Philosophy,* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), p. 56. He relates the artist-genius specifically to one whose creation is adequate to *naturing nature*. Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, p. 111. However, the Deleuzian genius is decidedly *not* of the Romantic sort. He claims that 'one has to disappear, to become unknown.… This is the opposite of the romanticism of *les poètes maudits*.' Deleuze and Parnet, *Dialogues II*, p. 45-46. Or again: 'What was fundamental for what we can call, generally, our modernity, was a kind of bankruptcy of Romanticism. Hölderlin and Novalis no longer work for us and only work for us within the framework of new coordinates. We are finished taking ourselves for heroes.' Gilles Deleuze, 'Les Cours de Gilles Deleuze: Leibniz 20/05/1980' online at http://www.webdeleuze.com/php/texte.php?cle=130&groupe=Leibniz&langue=2

[25] Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, trans. Daniel Smith (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), p. 82

[26] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 84

[27] Michaux, *Emergences/Resurgences*, p. 23

[28] Michaux, *Emergences/Resurgences*, p. 86

made.'[29] But as Michaux himself points out, it was not until his experimentation with mescaline and the corresponding 'mescaline drawings' that his artistic vision was fully realized. I quote him at length here to give a sense of his sober brilliancy of expression, despite the awe-inspiring spectacle with which he was confronted.

> If ever there was a spectacle to appear to a painter, this was it…. I was overwhelmed, overflooded … a phenomenal gathering of distinct colors — keen, exuberant — all crowding into each other, point by point, without ever blurring, without their endless zigzag movements ever slackening, without one's being able to discern the scale of magnitude, be it microscopic, or 'metropolis,' or cosmic, or perhaps even located in another world…. An irritation purely made up of brilliances, of luminous bubblings, pinholes, an awesome infinity of photons caught up in a Brownian movement.… Without ever losing sight of the ultimate truth into which I was sinking ever deeper, hypnotically caught up, drawn, dragged into a … repetition of the indefinitely differentiated.… A construction of the Infinite…. I often began these drawings only to see them decompose, divide, redivide ad infinitum. They were given the name 'drawings of disaggregation.' Despite the analogy, they are rather drawings of reaggregation … drawings of the essential indeterminateness of it all…. More than ever before, there are collisions, ascents, transversals, tumblings down … which thereby transform space into something different, a space scattered and unknown, a space made up of spaces, of perspectives superimposed, interpolated, polyphonic, spaces which (as much as forms) I had for a long time hoped to one day see disclosed, devastated, divided, ripped to shreds, rising up, intoxicating.[30]

But Deleuze is ambiguous about the efficacy of drug use; in his last collaboration with Guattari, he offers only a 'general answer'[31] — which amounts to nothing but a refusal to answer — to the question that asks whether drugs can really help the artist open onto a transcendental vision. It is to this question that we shall now turn, even if we are ultimately unable to clarify Deleuze's ambiguity.[32]

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[29] Francis Bacon quoted in Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 161. For his part, Bacon makes absolutely clear the necessity of 'preventing the diagram from proliferating … a Figure, should emerge from the diagram and make the sensation clear and precise. To emerge from catastrophe.' *Ibid*., p. 89. Deleuze also insists again and again, and in many different ways, that we must give consistency to chaos without remaining submerged in it completely and irrevocably. This was precisely Artaud's problem. Concerning Deleuze's interest in Michaux's drawings as diagrams, and 'the drawings ... of great writers' generally (Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 113), note that Deleuze himself liked to sketch. His pencil drawings can be seen in his books on Foucault and Leibniz, precisely the books in which his interest in Michaux is made more explicit.

[30] Michaux, *Emergences/Resurgences*, pp. 68-75. Elsewhere, Michaux admits that he was always concerned with developing a sort of 'cinematic drawing' that adequately expressed the 'sinuous strand that unwinds indefinitely and is intimately present in each inner and outer event. I wanted to draw the consciousness of existing and the flow of time.' But until his mescaline drawings, he was only capable of producing 'scarcely more than one or two or three lines meeting up here and there with a few others … (indeed my early pages were actually presented as pages of signs, that is to say movement that had been stabilized, stopped, interrupted.)' Henri Michaux, 'To Draw the Flow of Time' in *Untitled Passages*, ed. Catherine de Zegher (New York: Drawing Center, 2000), pp. 7-8

[31] Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* p. 165

[32] His ambiguity is more like a sort of secrecy, an abstention from complete disclosure, for seemingly political reasons on the one hand, and because of the real dangers and impasses of addiction on the other: 'What do you know of me, given that I believe in secrecy, that is, in the power of falsity, rather than representing things in a way that manifests a lamentable faith in accuracy and truth…. What's to stop me from talking about drugs without being an addict, if I talk about them like a little bird?' Deleuze, 'Letter to a Harsh Critic' in *Negotiations*, p. 11. 'Well then, are we to speak always about Fitzgerald's and Lowry's alcoholism.… Or should we go a short way further to see for ourselves, be a little alcoholic, a little crazy, a little suicidal, a little of a guerilla — just enough to extend the crack, but not enough to deepen it irremediably.' Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, ed. Constantin Boundas, trans. Mark Lester and Charles Stivale (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), p. 157. 'We cannot give up the hope that the effects of drugs and alcohol (their 'revelations') will be able to be relived and recovered for their own sake at the surface of the world, independently of the abuse of those substances, provided the techniques of social alienation which determine this abuse are reversed into revolutionary means of exploration … Oh psychedelia.' *Ibid*., p. 161

Deleuze argues that drugs are important because — despite all the narcissistic impasses of addiction — with them 'desire directly invests'[33] the perception-consciousness system, which then 'changes its speed' to the extent that perception becomes molecular and the imperceptible is perceived.[34] As I have already suggested, the imperceptible is that which can *only* be perceived by a faculty of perception pushed to its own limits beyond the laws of recognition; the imperceptible is what a Bergsonian intuition or a transcendental Leibnizian dizziness would apprehend. In short, the argument is that drugs are a means for scrambling the planes of duration to discover its 'frenzies,' of unfolding a Leibnizian unconscious to disclose the chaosmos, since they necessarily open onto 'superhuman or subhuman times … and micro-perceptions.'[35] Michaux attests to this again and again: 'To change one's tempo, to lose it suddenly, to find another in its place, an unknown, terribly fast tempo that one does not know how to handle, that makes everything different, unrecognizable … infinitesimal, and which vibrates, shudders, and zig-zags, caught up in a Brownian movement.… Torn from one's tempo, in the storm of frenzied waves, or in the hell of equally sudden, spasmodic, and insane impulses, one cannot imagine the inhuman speed ever ceasing.'[36]

Deleuze argues that the efficacy of drug experimentation is wholly dependent upon the extent to which it remains a vital 'line of flight' in which the drug 'grabs you, takes control of you,' continues to open you more and more onto a health infinitely bigger than the self-destruction of narcissistic

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[33] Deleuze, 'Two Questions on Drugs' in *Two Regimes of Madness*, p. 152

[34] 'Important' would be an understatement if we understand that the imperceptible is the 'immanent end' of his ethics, 'its cosmic formula.' Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari*, A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), p. 279

[35] Deleuze, 'Two Questions on Drugs,' in *Two Regimes of Madness*, p. 152. The idea that drugs open us to other speeds of consciousness was first proposed — by a modern *philosopher* giving a first-hand account — in an early article by William James, in which he also famously claimed that under the effects of nitrous oxide he 'understands better than ever before both the strength and the weakness of Hegel's philosophy.' William James, 'Subjective Effects of Nitrous Oxide' in *Mind* 7 (1882), p. 186. In *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, published ten years later, James gives a fuller account of his various experiments with psychoactive intoxicants: 'normal waking consciousness, rational consciousness as we call it, is but one special type of consciousness, whilst all about it, parted from it by the filmiest of screens, there lie potential forms o consciousness entirely different. We may go throughout life without suspecting their existence; but apply the requisite stimulus, and at a touch they are there in all their completeness, definite types of mentality which probably somewhere have their field of application and adaptation. No account of the universe in its totality can be final which leaves these other forms of consciousness quite disregarded. How to regard them is the question, for they are so discontinuous with ordinary consciousness.' William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985)*,* p. 307. Of course, Deleuze gets the idea of opening to other durations of consciousness directly from Bergson and superimposes the drug experience onto it. Compare their language on this point: 'Man is capable of rediscovering all the levels, all the degrees of expansion and contraction that coexist in the virtual Whole. As if he were capable of all the frenzies and bringing about in himself successively everything that, elsewhere, can only be embodied in different species … durations that are inferior or superior to him are still internal to him.' Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, p 107. Similarly, Bergson spoke about intuition opening us to other durations 'both inferior and superior to us, though nevertheless in a certain sense interior to us.' Bergson, 'Introduction to Metaphysics' in *The Creative Mind,* p. 155. Although Bergson is not specifically talking about the drug experience here, he did acknowledge, with James and others, that 'toxic drugs' induce abnormal states of consciousness and, more specifically, reproduce 'all the phenomena of madness' experimentally. See, for example, his reference in *Matter and Memory* (p. 174) to Jacques-Joseph Moreau's study of the effects of hashish on the central nervous system. It is noteworthy that, in *Du Hachisch et de l'aliénation mentale*, Moreau uses as his medical case-studies Charles Baudelaire, Théophile Gautier, Gérard de Nerval, and Eugène Delacroix, along with other Parisian artists and writers of the infamous *Club des Hashischins* of the mid-19th century.

[36] Michaux, 'To Draw the Flow of Time' in *Untitled Passages*, p. 8

pleasure.[37] Addiction and pleasure involve a repetition that closes in upon itself, that is not conducive to an ever changing, ever opening line of experimentation. With them, rather than active and vital connection, we have solipsistic and inactive disconnection such that the 'lines roll up, start to turn into black holes'[38] that make 'erroneous perceptions' — that is, personal hallucinations — inevitable. 'You will be on a plane of consistency, in a body without organs, but at a pace where you will always botch them, empty them, undo what they do, motionless rags…. The immanent molecular and perceptive causality of desire fails in the drug assemblage [when] drug *addicts* continually fall back into what they wanted to escape,'[39] when they 'reterritorialize' onto a repetitive regime of addiction. Michaux always claimed that he was seeking 'knowledge' rather than pleasure in his experiments with mescaline; indeed for him the experience, however luminous, was always treacherous.[40] His startling sobriety and almost scientific clarity, given the violent waves of force that pulsed and seized his entire being, attest to this. This is why, more than Artaud, Deleuze acknowledges that Michaux is able to negotiate the wild zig-zagging line of the 'crazed charioteer,' the fine line between the perception of a universal delirium and the clinical state of catatonia in which one can experience personal hallucinations. With Michaux on mescaline, 'the imperceptible is finally perceived.… A whole rhizomatic labor of perception, the moment when desire and perception meld.'[41]

When Deleuze and Guattari talk about desire directly investing perception in the drug experience, they mean precisely that the imperceptible elements of the Leibnizian unconscious invade the system of apperception. Deleuze developed a theory of the unconscious on the side of Leibniz rather than Freud. For the latter, desire invests a system of unconscious mnemonic traces that can never be directly

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[37] Deleuze, 'Two Questions on Drugs' in *Two Regimes of Madness*, p. 153. Isabelle Stengers reminds us that, for Deleuze, the line of flight is traversed by a 'witch,' who is interesting because 'her broom has no motor. It was flying because of forces that she was able to invoke and convoke, but not define as her own, as her property. If the witch is not cautious, is she thinks that what makes her fly belongs to her, if she ignores or forgets the required protection formulas, she will be swept away.' Isabelle Stengers, 'Deleuze's Last Message' online at http://www.recalcitrance.com/deleuzelast.htm

[38] Deleuze, 'Two Questions on Drugs' in *Two Regimes of Madness*, p. 153

[39] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 285. My emphasis. In all of his writings on drugs, Deleuze argues that the dangers and impasses of the 'drug assemblage' result only from their misuse, and that successful experimentation with them necessarily involves an 'art of doses.' Hence his citation of the 'Postscript' to *Miserable Miracle* where Michaux declares vehemently not to be an addict: 'I am more the water-drinking type…. I can take or abstain. Particularly, abstain.' Michaux, *Miserable Miracle*, p. 159. What is curious about Michaux's declaration of abstention is that despite listing all the substances he abstains from — 'No excitants, and for years no coffee, tobacco, or tea … twenty-five years ago, or more, I tried ether seven or eight times, once laudanum, and twice the most unspeakable of all, alcohol' (*ibid.*) — he never mentions mescaline, hashish, or psilocybin, the drugs that occupied his thought, writing, and art for an entire decade of continual, albeit carefully dosed, experimentation! Perhaps Michaux's 'abstention,' his mere water drinking, reveals something about Deleuze's own desire to get 'drunk, but on pure water. To succeed in getting high, but by abstention.' Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 286. But again, given Deleuze's 'secrecy,' we are only left with a big question mark. Both remarks seem to be tongue-in-cheek references to Baudelaire's declaration that 'A man who drinks only water has a secret to keep from his peers.' Charles Baudelaire, *Artificial Paradises*, trans. Stacy Diamond (New York: Citadel Press, 1996), p. 9

[40] 'Should one speak of pleasure? It was unpleasant.' Michaux, *Miserable Miracle*, p. 7. Or again: 'Drugs weary us with their paradises. Let them enlighten us a little instead. Ours is not a century of paradises.' Michaux, *Light Through Darkness*, p. 3. Again, Michaux's use of the term 'paradises' is an obvious allusion to Baudelaire and, by extension, the entire Romantic tradition of experimentation with drugs amongst artists and poets. However, his negation of Baudelaire's metaphor distances himself from this tradition even as it uneasily aligns him with it.

[41] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 283. Despite Michaux's own claims of momentarily slipping into the 'center of the cyclone,' Deleuze again in the last paragraph of his *Foucault*, praises Michaux for being able to construct a plane of consistency amidst his confrontations with the mad speeds of chaos. See Deleuze, *Foucault*, pp. 122-123

apprehended in themselves, but must always be inferred or 'concluded from something else … [since they are completely] concealed from the system of perception.'[42] Freud's unconscious is, by definition, opposed to the perception-consciousness system. Of course Deleuze's unconscious is different in nature from consciousness, but only to the extent that the two are degrees of difference on the same plane; his unconscious is composed of the differential and genetic elements that are integrated in consciousness. Deleuze explains that the Freudian conflicts between the unconscious and consciousness 'are the result of more subtle differential mechanisms…. The unconscious is differential, involving little perceptions, and as such it is different in kind from consciousness. It concerns problems and questions which can never be reduced to the great oppositions or the overall effects that are felt in consciousness.'[43] For Freud, not only is the unconscious in 'molar opposition' to consciousness, desire is transcendent to both since it exists on the plane of biology.[44] But in Deleuze's system, there is neither a conscious-unconscious dualism nor a transcendent desire; there are only apperceptions — which are differentially informed by minute, unconscious perceptions — and the appetitions, or desires, that relate with these minute perceptions immanently. These desires are 'vectors corresponding to minute perceptions;'[45] they are precisely the differential relations — that is, the virtual forces of the process of differentiation, the pure movements of the chaosmos itself — that both transcendentally determine the minute elements of perception as well as integrate the recognizable 'objects' of apperception.[46]

If this Deleuzo-Leibnizian unconscious is composed only of 'minute appetitions that invest minute perceptions,'[47] we can understand Deleuze's claim — 'with drugs … desire *directly invests the system of perception*'[48] — to mean that in the drug assemblage, unconscious forces (and elements) directly invade consciousness. 'Directly' refers to an intuition in which the mechanisms — impersonal forces, affects — and elements — impersonal beings of sensation, percepts — of this unconscious invade

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[42] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 284

[43] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, pp. 106-108. 'There is a relationship between consciousness and the unconscious, a relation of difference to vanishing differences, whereas for Freud, there is a relation of the opposition of forces.' Deleuze, 'Les Cours de Gilles Deleuze: Leibniz 29/04/1980'

[44] Freud argues that the source of desire exists outside the scope of psychoanalysis and that ultimately it remains something of an enigma, completely unknowable to his theory. See Sigmund Freud, 'Instincts and their Vicissitudes,' in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, vol. 14,* ed. and trans. James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1957), pp. 111-140

[45] Deleuze, 'Les Cours de Gilles Deleuze: Leibniz 29/04/1980'

[46] In Deleuzian terminology, the determination of the elements of sensation happens via the virtual process of differentiation while the integration of these minute elements into recognizable objects occurs via differenciation. Again and again, we can read in incredible detail Michaux's great relief of coming to normal apperception after hours of experiencing the world from the point of view of micro-perceptions and micro-appetitions: 'Morning came at last, the dawn … the various landmarks which were reappearing with the nascent light were signs of renascent reality. They still have very little density, but that little I appreciated as a connoisseur with grateful 'recognition." Michaux, *Miserable Miracle*, p. 139. Compare this with Deleuze's description of reemerging from the experience of universal giddiness: 'When clear perceptions are reformed, they draw yet another fold that not separates the conscious from the unconscious, that joins the tiny edges of a surface to a great area, that moderates the different speeds, and rejects all kinds of minute perceptions in order to make from all the others a solid fabric of apperception: dust falls, and I see the great fold of figures just as the background is unfurling its tiny folds.' Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 93

[47] Deleuze, 'Les Cours de Gilles Deleuze: Leibniz 29/04/1980'

[48] Deleuze, 'Two Questions on Drugs' in *Two Regimes of Madness*, p. 152

consciousness *unintegrated* and *unactualized*.[49] The unconscious is not simply represented to consciousness; drugs invoke a shock to thought,[50] a *cosmic* emotion[51] which is only felt as a disorientation — 'What happened?' — that 'forces us to think a pure perception identical to the whole of matter.'[52] Thus minute and impersonal percepts flood consciousness: '*a herd or army approaches*, under our hallucinated gaze.'[53] 'Images as skin-pricks … uninvited presences … the advance guard of a large and impatient crowd on the march towards me or towards the page or towards the location of the drawing.'[54] Because drugs directly disclose the Leibnizian unconscious, Deleuze and Guattari are able to claim that they 'give the unconscious the immanence and plane that psychoanalysis botched (perhaps the famous cocaine episode marked a turning point that forced Freud to renounce a direct approach to the unconscious.)'[55]

Drugs force us to ride the treacherous line of the Outside — the increasingly imperceptible 'fold separating the conscious from the unconscious'[56] — on which the brain-as-screen directly confronts the unbearable depths of chaos. As Michaux says, we come upon 'the meeting place of the outside and the inside. A balance that one must be able to keep with the outside, which one must approach neither too eagerly nor too reluctantly, for fear of finding that everything has become unrecognizable.'[57] Michaux was able to harness the forces of the chaosmos, and render them visible in his art, *only* because he understood the art of doses and because he was able to maintain a relatively calculated

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[49] Again, this is an intuition *qua* transcendental perception — pushed beyond the laws of recognition — that discloses directly 'what is normally disguised and unperceived … the raw material of any ordinary brain, carnivalesque, free, independent.' Michaux, *Light through Darkness*, p. 177

[50] 'Consciousness very strangely becomes an infinitely minute consciousness of minute unconscious perceptions.… I express a global outcome of thousands of minute perceptions … and minute appetitions that crisscross me.' Deleuze, 'Les Cours de Gilles Deleuze: Leibniz 29/04/1980.' This shock constitutes the violence that is necessarily committed to the habitual cognitive functions in transcendental perception: 'To grasp intuitively … [the mind] must do itself violence, reverse the direction of the operation by which it ordinarily thinks, continually upsetting its categories, or rather, recasting them.' Bergson, 'Introduction to Metaphysics,' in *The Creative Mind*, p. 160. 'When there is a great multiplicity of small perceptions … we are overcome … with dizziness.' Leibniz, 'Monadology' §21 in *Philosophical Texts*, p. 270. 'And with the most appalling jolts. The metaphysical taken over by the mechanical.' Michaux, *Miserable Miracle*, p. 127. On the encounters that invoke a shock to thought see also Deleuze's *Proust and Signs*.

[51] 'A cosmic Memory that actualizes all the levels at the same time, that liberates man from the plane or the level that is proper to him, in order to make him a creator, adequate to the whole movement of creation.' Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, p. 111

[52] Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, p. 29

[53] Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 94

[54] Michaux, *Emergences/Resurgences*, p. 60

[55] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 284

[56] Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 93

[57] Michaux, *Light through Darkness,* p. 152

sobriety during his ten year experimentation with mescaline.[58] Admittedly, Michaux came dangerously close to plunging irrevocably into chaos, and his mescaline drawings reveal this; they *almost* depict 'nothing but a scribble effacing all lines … a resonance chamber well on the way to forming a black hole.'[59] But they don't. They magnificently and meticulously express the frenzied and imperceptible world disclosed to the artist.[60] And this testifies to the fact that he has constructed some of the most successful diagrammatic drawings: artefacts that offer us a glimpse onto the perpetual self-construction of the chaosmos.[61] At the speed of mescaline, Michaux was able to become-*voyant* rather than simply plunge into a catatonic dead end. His artistic vision was adequate to naturing nature and was thus able to '*trace out* an open direction that is able to express a whole that itself open.'[62] Invoking a Bergso-Leibnizian intuition, he became *homo metaphysicus,* 'a true metaphysical man … infiltrated by the infinite … who, having become a being of a new species, set out in search of a *new land*…. He lives with the doors open, a thousand doors open where an incredible number of grains, dots, vectors of

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[58] 'Sobriety, sobriety: that is the common prerequisite for the deterritorialization of matters, the molecularization of material, and the cosmicization of forces.' Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 344. In the end, drugs have a very specific and short-lived use for Deleuze. They can affect a radical *aisthesis* and an experimentation that goes beyond mere addiction and pleasure, and ultimately beyond drug use itself. With them we must 'reach the point where 'to get high or not to get high' is no longer the question, but rather whether drugs have sufficiently changed the general conditions of space and time perception so that nonusers can succeed in passing through the holes in the world and follow the lines of flight at the very place where means other than drugs become necessary.' Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 286. This statement is consistent with Derrida's (otherwise very different) take on drugs: 'This experience (one to which artists and thinkers occasionally devote themselves, but which is by no means the unique privilege of those who claim or in whom we recognize such a status), this experience may be sought with or without "drugs," at least without any "narcotic" "classified" as such by the law. We will always have unclassified and unclassifiable supplements of drugs or narcotics.' Jacques Derrida, 'The Rhetoric of Drugs,' trans. Michael Israel in Anna Alexander and Mark Roberts, eds., *High Culture: Reflections on Addiction and Modernity* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2003), p. 33

[59] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 344

[60] Indeed, the infinite 'ornamentogenesis' depicted in his drawings corresponds precisely to what Deleuze claims is seen in a Leibnizian intuition: 'If we look closely, these are not atoms, but minuscule folds that are endlessly unfurling and bending on the edges of juxtaposed areas, like a mist or fog that makes their surface sparkle, at speeds that no one of our thresholds of consciousness could sustain in a normal state.' Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 93. In a more literal reading of Michaux's drawings, we could say that they express an interminable movement of lines. 'Lines, more and more lines.… Really enormous the amplitude of the sinuosities, and so very fine the lines, which could nevertheless step over houses.' Michaux, *Miserable Miracle*, p. 113. Given Deleuze's cartography of lines, clearly Michaux's mescaline drawings depict the most abstract *lines of flight* that not only mark a qualitative rupture from 'molecular crackings,' but also completely efface 'molar segments' and histories in a movement towards becoming-imperceptible where 'my territories are out of grasp, not because they are imaginary, but the opposite: because I am in the *process* of drawing them.' Deleuze and Guattari*, A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 200

[61] If as Guattari says, 'the real is the artificial — and not (as Lacan says) the impossible' (Félix Guattari, *The Anti-Oedipus Papers,* ed. Stéphane Nadaud, trans. Kélina Gotman (New York: Semiotexte, 2006), p. 149; *cf.* Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, p. 34), it is because it must be continually reconstructed or re-*fabulated* by naturing nature since it is not simply given as an object of recognition. And if the *voyant* is capable of expressing this real, it is because his transcendental vision has become adequate to naturing nature itself, that is, adequate to constructing a plane of immanence. Again, invoking a transcendental Leibnizianism or alternatively a Jamesean pluralistic universe, there is no *THE* chaosmos outside the multiplicity of planes that express it. Deleuze's Bergson-inspired monism can only be called such insofar as it defines the *coexistence* of an infinity of planes *as* a multiplicity. These planes always already construct themselves only insofar as they *will have been* constructed by a transcendental expression adequate to the movements of infinity. Thus, for the *voyant*, everything takes place between the impersonal mechanisms of perception and the plane of immanence that is constructed. 'Now the latter does not come before, being neither intentional nor preconceived … but neither does it come afterward, although the awareness of it is formed progressively and often suddenly appears afterward.' Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?,* p. 196

[62] Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, p. 106, my emphasis

consciousness burst through.'[63] This idea that radical *aisthesis* leads to the construction a new land is echoed in Deleuze's own words — 'Desire directly investing perception is something very surprising, very beautiful, a sort of *unknown land*.'[64] Both he and Michaux also refer to this specifically as the emergence of 'Another World,' which incidentally is also the title of a short science fiction story by J.H. Rosny.[65] The *fabulation* of another world — which utilizes all the resources of radical empiricism — is the subject of the next chapter.

[63] Michaux, *Light through Darkness*, p. 174

[64] Deleuze, 'Two Questions on Drugs' in *Two Regimes of Madness*, p. 154

[65] See Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 82 and Michaux, *Emergences/Resurgences*, pp. 68, 82. Or again: 'I had been given the great gift of another world [un autre monde]. I had landed there, it had enfolded and included me. *Terra incognita*. A land whose boundaries are easily lost: they melt away.' This world is comparable to 'another point of view' taken from 'the seemingly endless strata of a contrary evolution.' Michaux, *Spaced, Displaced,* pp. 155-157. Rosny's book was originally published as *Un Autre Monde* in 1895.

3 Cinematic *poiesis* and the power of the false

We have shown how the line that connects *phusis*, *aisthesis*, and *poiesis* can be refracted, at the level of the nature of the cinematic, into perception-image, affection-image, and action-image. With the cinematic encounter, there is a compounded refraction through both of these levels such that the shock of this encounter compels thought to move, in sequence, through what Deleuze calls the moments of *sentendium*, *memorandum*, and *cogitandum*. This is the basis of his transcendental, or radical, empiricism in which a being of the sensible opens thought onto new durations and then forces it to create the new. Now, at the level of creation — or *poiesis* — there is a further refraction of these concepts. Within the domain of the cinematic without film, this creation happens through the successive stages of what we have referred to as frame, plan, and composition. A crucial aspect of Deleuze's conception of *poiesis* is that creation is only a series of broken continuities and false movements. In fact, we could retrospectively say that such false movements underlie the entire cinematic line. That is, the movements of and between the concepts of *phusis*, *aisthesis*, and *poiesis* are fundamentally false in the sense that they neither make claims to truth nor are they ever resolved in a transcendent or organic Whole; rather, they can only (dis)continuously refract each other in a non-teleological circuit. The movements of nature are inorganic and perpetually differentiated, human perception is hallucinatory, and our creative capacity involves Tourette-like gestures. This is our post-Romantic predicament. Nonetheless, the cinematic circuit is still moving and we believe that our false creations still, in their own ways, reconnect us to our broken selves and to a nature that is itself broken.

3.1 From *poiesis* to *techne* in Heidegger and Deleuze

The late Martin Heidegger develops a conception of *poiesis* that goes beyond the traditional Aristotelian notion towards a more authentic idea of production that takes into consideration a broader understanding of what constitutes 'Greek ontology.' Although this later idea of *poiesis* is developed most extensively in his 1953 lecture 'The Question Concerning Technology,' there are many important philosophical developments leading up to it that begin in the early 1930s. These developments of Heidegger's thought are worth noting because they reveal the gradual influence of the pre-Socratics on his understanding of *poiesis* and of Greek ontology as a whole. This influence is mediated by Heidegger's increasing interest in Nietzsche and Hölderlin, both of whom will also be important for Gilles Deleuze's own idea of *poiesis*. An important and often overlooked point is that Heidegger's early and late conceptions of *poiesis* are clearly linked to, indeed fundamentally grounded upon, a notion of *phusis* or Nature. This paper will argue that the important difference between these two conceptions of *poiesis* ultimately rests on the fact that Heidegger's notion of *phusis* was transformed by his introduction to pre-Socratic thought. Likewise, Deleuze builds upon this Heideggerian schema for his own construction of artistic *poiesis*, which indeed differs from Heidegger's to the extent that Deleuze develops a radically non-phenomenological and non-Romantic idea of the encounter with *phusis*.

In *The Basic Problems of of Phenomenology* — published in 1927, the same year as *Being and Time* — the concept of *poiesis* lies at the center of Heidegger's critique of the tradition of metaphysics. Here, he argues that the history of metaphysics has given unwarranted privilege to only one mode of Being: a static and 'present-at-hand,' or *Vorhandenheit*. Heidegger's German neologism is an exact linguistic equivalent to the Greek *procheiron* (literally 'before-the-hand'), which Aristotle uses in Book Alpha of his *Metaphysics* to describe the first objects of philosophical wonder. Heidegger promotes a destruction of this one-sided tradition of metaphysics, beginning with the conception *Vorhandenheit,* and argues that such a destruction requires a genealogy of the concept of *poiesis*. This is because Being *qua* the present-at-hand, as it originates in 'Greek ontology,' is oriented 'with a view to production.'[1] Heidegger unravels this genealogy through a criticism of the Scholastic discussion of Being for which both existence and essence are crucial to the constitution of every being. This technical discussion is interesting for our purposes only insofar that it shows Heidegger attempting to relate *poiesis* to a discussion of Aristotle's *Physics*. For example, he suggests that the ontological concept of *actualitas* — the Scholastic sense of existence, which translates the Aristotelian *energeia* and *entelecheia* — refers 'back to an acting on the part

[1] Martin Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), p. 106. Note that at this stage, in contrast to the work that began again after 1930, Heidegger included the pre-Socratics within in the umbrella phrase 'Greek ontology.'

of some indefinite subject or, if we start from our own terminology, that the extant [*das Vorhandene*] is somehow referred by its sense to something for which, as it were, it comes to be before the hand.' It therefore denotes 'a relationship to our Dasein, as an acting Dasein or, to speak more precisely, as a creative, *productive* Dasein.'[2]

But what does it mean to say that the main notions of Greek ontology are modeled upon a conception of production? At this stage, Heidegger largely follows the Aristotelian model of hylomorphism. The idea of a thing — its *eidos* or 'look' — is genetically prior to its *morphe,* or existential form. In production, the artist first imagines a thing and subsequently works to create it from this image. That is, the product becomes an imitation of the projected image. The ultimate aim of this process is that the work is gradually liberated from the artist's vision and finally becomes an independent being, present to itself. 'In the intentional structure of production there is an implicit reference to something, by which this something is understood as not bound or dependent on the subject but, inversely, as released and independent.'[3] In Aristotle's metaphysics, as Heidegger appropriates it, the production of presence is fundamentally visual and theoretical. But this distantiated gesture towards a produced object is ultimately 'naive.'[4] Aristotle needs his model of production to transcend mere everydayness — in order to construct a meta-physics — but he ultimately extracts this model from the quite *mundane* activity of artistic creation. Heidegger explicitly understands and articulates the impasses of this line of thought, but appropriates it anyway without yet attempting to conceive of another model.[5] Nonetheless this gap in his philosophy — at this moment of its development — points to the possibility that there might be a more adequate understanding of *poiesis,* beyond the everyday notion of production, than Heidegger is able to express at this time.

In *Being and Time*, although the word *poiesis* is never mentioned, its concept implicitly underlies Heidegger's conception of Dasein's Being-in-the-world. Jacques Taminiaux has demonstrated that the 'Dasein Analytic' of this book is a direct but coded reading of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. His argument basically states that Heidegger ontologizes Aristotle's conception of *poiesis* in order to

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[2] Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, p. 101. He also goes on to say that essence, or *ousia,* 'must be made intelligible from this horizon of productive behavior.' *Ibid.* p. 102. Heidegger admits that this technical discussion through the etymologies of terms becomes a bit confusing if not contradictory: 'These interpretations are only very meagre and rough ... [and perhaps are] derived merely from the literal meanings' of these words. *Ibid.* This confusion points to the heart of a problem that Heidegger will only solve with the help of the pre-Socratics. However, at this point he is not able to unambiguously and directly relate *phusis* to *poiesis* — even if there seems to be an unexpressed and, as yet, philosophically unsupported desire to do so — because he is still caught within the horizon of Aristotle's thinking. For example, in his 1931 lecture course on Aristotle, it is expressly *dunamis* (*potentia*, potency) and therefore not *energeia* which is responsible for both the movements of *poiesis* as well as the mode of Being associated with *phusis*. This makes sense since, as we shall see, until around this time Heidegger follows Aristotle by privileging *praxis* over *poiesis*. However, Heidegger's remark here, relating production (*poiesis*) and *energeia,* is inconsistent with his fidelity to Aristotle and suggests a lacuna in his thought that has yet to be worked out properly.

[3] Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, p. 114

[4] Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, p. 110. Later, Heidegger suggests an original kinship between *poiesis* and *noein* when he says that 'poetry is of the *same order* as philosophical thinking, although thinking and poetry are not identical.' More specifically, he claims that the thinking of the pre-Socratics was poetic and the poetry of Sophocles was thoughtful. Martin Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), pp. 28, 176. My emphasis.

[5] Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, p. 116

support the notion of Dasein's everyday Being-in-the-world, in which there is no true disclosure of Being. Taminiaux writes that the 'activity of making or producing (*Herstellen*) is the comportment within which the Greek philosophers understood the Being of beings and imposed upon the tradition of metaphysics the notion of Being as *Vorhandenheit*.'[6] However, he then shows that the Heidegger of *Being and Time* attempts to reverse this situation by implying that the Aristotelian model of production reveals only one mode of being — that of *Zuhandenheit,* or 'ready-to-hand' — in which objects are mere tools to be utilized rather than contemplated. The transcendent look, or *eidos*, has become a 'circumspective' look, or *Umsicht*, where the artist remains absorbed in the equipment rather than holding the image of the final product in mind. That is, the ontological formulation of *poiesis* during this period reveals that production is not the site of an original disclosure of truth and the same problematic relation with Aristotle persists. Heidegger seems to be unable to move beyond this notion of production because he still dogmatically adopts Aristotle's privileging of *praxis* over *poiesis*.

We have already hinted to the fact that, after his turning, Heidegger develops a conception of *poiesis* that goes beyond the traditional Aristotelian notion towards a more 'authentic' idea of production that takes into consideration a broader understanding of what constitutes Greek ontology. Robert Bernasconi claims that

> in his [later] reflections on *poiesis*, Heidegger developed another relation to Greek thinking to that found in the Marburg period.... So, for example, he draws attention to the breadth of the Greek conception of *poiesis*. Furthermore, he emphasizes that the translation 'making' is inadequate to the Greek understanding of *poiesis*, which means something more like 'bringing forth.' And yet nowhere does ... Heidegger mention *praxis*.[7]

Bernasconi argues that this new conception is developed most extensively in the 1953 lecture 'The Question Concerning Technology.' Although this is no doubt the case, there are many important philosophical developments leading up to this new conception of *poiesis* that begin in the early 1930s.

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[6] Jacques Taminiaux, 'The Reappropriation of the Nicomachean Ethics: *Poiesis* and *Praxis* in the Articulation of Fundamental Ontology' in *Heidegger and the Project of Fundamental Ontology*, trans. Michael Gendre (Albany: SUNY Press, 1991), p. 119. In this essay, Taminaux draws primarily on Heidegger's 1924 lecture course *Plato's Sophist*, where *poiesis* is explicitly related to the 'Dasein Analytic.' *The Sophist* is the Dialogue in which Plato introduces the concepts of mimesis and simulacrum.

[7] Robert Bernasconi, 'The Fate of the Distinction between *Praxis* and *Poiesis*' in *Heidegger Studies* 2 (1986), p. 121. Graham Harman has objected to the position of the 'Aristotelo-Heideggerians' — by which he means first and foremost Robert Bernasconi and Jacques Taminiaux — who assert 'a strong link between Heidegger's tool-analysis and Aristotle's *poiesis/praxis* distinction.' Harman's motivation for this objection is based upon his own 'guerilla metaphysics' — a highly unorthodox mixture of Heidegger's and Whitehead's theories of objects — that privileges tool-being in itself, subtracted from any theory of human production or practice: 'To interpret tool-being as practical production, and to look for the saving power of *praxis* only in human Dasein, is simply to follow Heidegger at his weakest — namely, in his rather traditional split between intraworldly entities and human *access* to these entities.' Graham Harman, *Tool-Being: Heidegger and the Metaphysics of Objects* (Chicago: Open Court, 2002), pp. 104, 114. Although we respect the role of Harman's interpretation of Heidegger in developing his *own* 'speculative realism,' we would side with Bernasconi and Taminiaux in their attempt to understand the Fundamental Ontology through the lens of Heidegger's encounter with Aristotle. Having said that, we would object to the *overemphasis* of this connection between Heidegger and Aristotle, but for a slightly different reason. In particular, fetishizing this relation risks obscuring the intricate twistings and turnings of the development of Heidegger's reading of Greek philosophy in general, especially after the turning, but also including hints of an intuitive urge to push Aristotle in directions that only pre-Socratic thought would allow, even in the moments in which Heidegger seems most devoted to him. In the end, we argue, not for a metaphysics of 'objects' (as we have seen, the formation of objects is already dependent upon a subject) but rather a metaphysics of Bergsonian *phusis* subtracted from *any* conception of either subjectivity or *praxis*.

These developments of Heidegger's thought are worth noting because they reveal the gradual influence of the pre-Socratics on his understanding of Greek ontology. Furthermore, this influence is mediated by Heidegger's increasing interest in Nietzsche and Hölderlin, both of whom will also be important for Gilles Deleuze's own conception of *poiesis*. Finally, what Bernasconi doesn't mention here is that both Heidegger's early and late conceptions of *poiesis* are clearly linked to, indeed fundamentally grounded upon, a notion of *phusis*. We will now show that the important difference between these two conceptions of *poiesis* ultimately rests on the fact that Heidegger's notion of *phusis* was transformed by his introduction to pre-Socratic thought.

In *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology,* Heidegger attempts to relate *poiesis* to *phusis* and, more specifically, he describes the latter as an essence which is oriented toward the horizon of production: 'What makes products or the produced product possible (produceable) is again the look [*eidos*] of what the product is supposed to become and be. The actual thing aries out of *phusis*, the nature of the thing.'[8] However, as early as Heidegger's 1931 lecture course on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, we see the beginnings of a more nuanced relation to Greek ontology inspired by Nietzsche. Here, Heidegger cites a passage from Nietzsche's *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks* in which he describes Parmenides's doctrine of Being, a doctrine as 'un-Greek as no other in the two centuries of the Tragic Age.'[9] Nietzsche's text discusses at length several of the pre-Socratic philosophers and makes a clear distinction between them and the tradition of philosophy beginning with Plato, claiming that the transition from the former to the latter marked a decadence in thinking. Of course, this is a view Heidegger will explicitly endorse in his *Introduction to Metaphysics* four years later even, if it has not yet fully contaminated his reading of Aristotle. The important point is that, around this time, Nietzsche introduced Heidegger to an expanded picture of Greek philosophy that gave precedence to the pre-Socratic thinkers over Plato and Aristotle. Following Nietzsche's lead, Heidegger turns to the pre-Socratics — most notably Parmenides and Heraclitus — to reconsider, amongst other things, the concept of *phusis*, which in turn would ground a new understanding of *poiesis*.

For Aristotle and the early, *phusis* refers to modes of being that have an internal principle of movement, or *kinesis*. As perpetually moving towards an end that fundamentally defines their nature, these modes are essentially incomplete. *Phusis,* in this sense, only names a very limited aspect of Being: 'Aristotle conceives of *phusis* as the beingness (*ousia*) of a particular (and in itself limited) region of beings.'[10] But Heidegger discovers through Nietzsche a more 'original' notion of *phusis*, which is not limited but rather names a kind of Being-in-process.

> In the great beginning of Greek philosophy, the first beginning of Western philosophy ... being was thought as *phusis*, such that the *phusis* that Aristotle conceptualized can only be a late derivative of

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[8] Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, p. 107

[9] Martin Heidegger, *Aristotle's Metaphysics Θ 1-3: On the Essence and Actuality of Force*, trans. Walter Brogan and Peter Warnek (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), p. 15. The quote can be found in Friedrich Nietzsche, *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*, trans. Marianne Cowan (Washington: Gateway Editions, 1962), p. 69

[10] Martin Heidegger, 'On the Essence and Concept of *Phusis* in Aristotle's *Physics* (1939)', trans. Thomas Sheehan in *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 228

> originary *phusis* ... a much weaker, much harder-to-hear echo of the original *phusis* that was projected as ... the being of beings as such as a whole.[11]

Heidegger then refers directly to Heraclitus's famous phrase 'Nature loves to hide [*phusis kruptesthai philei*].' While this phrase is usually taken to mean that nature is difficult to grasp, Heidegger suggests a deeper meaning, that the essence of Being as *phusis* 'is to unconceal itself, to emerge, to come out into the unhidden.'[12] *Phusis,* for the later Heidegger, names the disclosure of Being to Dasein, which Heraclitus refers to as a *polemos*, as a struggle between concealment and unconcealment.[13] This struggle cannot be resolved since an absence always remains within Being as *phusis*, denying the possibility of a pure metaphysics of presence. According to the Heidegger of the *Introduction to Metaphysics*, *phusis* designates Being as such and is no longer the name for one limited mode of Being. He claims that

> Given this more adequate grasp of how the Greeks understood Being ... Being essentially unfolds as *phusis*. The emerging sway is an appearing. As such, it makes manifest. This already implies that Being, appearing, is a letting-step-forth from concealment. Insofar as a being as such *is*, it places itself into and stands in *unconcealment*, *aletheia*.[14]

Heidegger argues that the Platonic *idea* signifies the invariant structure of Being, which eventually replaces the pre-Socratic understanding of *phusis* within Greek thought.[15] 'Only with the Sophists and Plato was appearance explained as, and thus reduced to, mere appearance. At the same time, Being as *idea* was elevated to a supersensory realm. The chasm, *khorismos*, was torn open between the merely apparent beings here below and the real Being somewhere up there.'[16] But just as appearance becomes a mere copy of the *idea* in Plato, works of art become shallow reflections of an envisioned ideal. That

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[11] Heidegger, 'On the Essence and Concept of *Phusis* in Aristotle's *Physics*' in *Pathmarks*, p. 229

[12] Heidegger, 'On the Essence and Concept of *Phusis* in Aristotle's *Physics*' in *Pathmarks*, p. 230

[13] Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 65

[14] Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 107. This understanding of *phusis* as the event of the disclosure of Being to Dasein — as a violent shock to thought, as we shall see — has its roots in Heraclitus, the first philosopher to use this word. However, there is an even more 'original' use of *phusis*, the very first documented usage, in Homer's *Odyssey*. In the famous epic, Hermes gives a magical plant called 'moly' to Odysseus in order to protect him from being bewitched by Circe. After uprooting this *pharmakon* from the earth, Hermes proceeds to reveal its *phusis* to hero: *kai moi phusin autou edeixe* (10.303). Scholars continue to debate the precise meaning of *phusis* in this passage. It could refer to 'the realization of a becoming of a thing with all its properties.' Gerard Nadaff, *The Greek Concept of Nature* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2005), p. 14. Or, '*phusis* would thus mean the hidden power within the plant.' Alfred Heubeck and Arie Hoekstra, *A Commentary on Homer's Odyssey,* volume II (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 60. Aside from these linguistic difficulties, another *speculative* aspect of this story — albeit interesting, considering our treatment of Michaux-on-mescaline in the last chapter — is that moly has been identified as the plant Syrian Rue. Philippe Champault, *Phéniciens et Grecs en Italie d'après l'Odyssée* (Paris: Éditions E. Leroux, 1906), p. 512. And Syrian Rue, which contains the psychedelic substance Harmaline, has also been identified as the sacred entheogenic Haoma/Soma of early Indo-Iranian cultures as well as the subsequent Vedic and Zoroastrian religions. David Flattery and Martin Schwartz, *Haoma and Harmaline* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989). This corroborates with the fact that 'the name of the plant is an example of the so-called "language of the gods."' Heubeck and Hoekstra, *A Commentary on Homer's Odyssey*, p. 60. Interestingly, Heidegger, under the influence of Hölderlin, increasingly used the word 'holy' to describe the unfathomable aspect of *phusis* in the event of the disclosure of Being. Furthermore, it has also been suggested that Heidegger's turning to this *Ereignis*-thinking may have been, at least in part, precipitated by his own encounter with psychedelic drugs: 'After World War II, Martin Heidegger is rumored to have taken LSD with Ernst Jünger, and postwar essays like 'The Question Concerning Technology' (1953), with its emphasis on *aletheia* ("revealing"), hint at a mystical revelation that is psychedelic to the core, whether triggered by drugs or by art.' Marcus Boon, *The Road of Excess: A History of Writers on Drugs* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), p. 237. It is claimed in this text that all drugs are, in the strict Heideggerian sense, technologies: 'that which belong to *techne*.' *Ibid*., p. 171

[15] Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, pp. 192-193

[16] Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 111. Translation modified.

is, the ontological transformation of *phusis* into the *idea* somehow underwrites the conception of *poiesis* as mimesis. What Heidegger realizes in his discovery of the pre-Socratics is that their 'more original' conception of *phusis* might therefore serve as the philosophical linchpin for reconsidering *poiesis* in a way that goes beyond Dasein's *everyday* Being-in-the-world. His Aristotelian understanding of *phusis* — which can be roughly framed between his 1924 course on Plato's *Sophist* and his 1931 course on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* — has been challenged by his encounter with Nietzsche, whose history of how the division between 'real and apparent worlds' became a fable convinces Heidegger return to the 'great beginning of Greek philosophy.' Now a new conception of *phusis* takes hold in his thought which, in turn, grounds a new notion of *poiesis*.

If it is Heidegger's summer 1931 university seminar on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* in which we get the first hints concerning a new conception of *phusis*, it is the very next seminar, of winter 1931-1932, on Plato's cave allegory that we get the first taste of a new conception of *poiesis*. Here Heidegger directly, if briefly, relates the production of art to *aletheia,* the unconcealing movement of *phusis*. Art therefore obtains the power of real ontological disclosure: '*Art* and in particular *poetry* ... bring[s] out the inner possibilities of beings.' It therefore points to 'the question concerning the nature of *aletheia*.'[17] However, it is not until his *Introduction to Metaphysics* — and, of course, a bit later in 'The Origin of the Work of Art' — that Heidegger develops this theme in any detail.

Heidegger claims that Nietzsche, by 'redisclosing what is authentically Greek' about the pre-Socratic notion of *phusis*, was able to 'reconceive the great age of the inception of Dasein in its entirely.' However, he also claims that Hölderlin went far beyond Nietzsche in this rethinking of the nature of Dasein because the latter 'fell prey to the commonplace and untrue opposition of Parmenides to Heraclitus.'[18] Keeping in mind his new concept of *phusis*, Heidegger next finds a 'more original' sense of *poiesis* in Sophocles's *Antigone*. It cannot be overemphasized that Heidegger's reading of Sophocles was mediated through his understanding of Hölderlin, who himself translated both *Oedipus Rex* and *Antigone* into German. Moreover, Heidegger often held Hölderlin and Sophocles in the same esteemed light, as poets of the highest order, that is, as *the* poets of 'humankind.'[19] Heidegger discovers in the first chorus of *Antigone* a notion of *poiesis* that is adequate to the pre-Socratic conception of *phusis*. In Heidegger's reading, Sophocles's depiction of the human condition as *to deinotaton* means that it is 'the uncanniest of the uncanny [*unheimlich*].'[20] He claims that *deinon* names the

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[17] Martin Heidegger, *The Essence of Truth: On Plato's Parable of the Cave Allegory and Theaetetus*, trans. Ted Sadler (London: Continuum, 2002), pp. 46-47

[18] Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 133. Heidegger himself ultimately reduces the doctrine of Heraclitus to that of Parmenides, thereby reducing becoming once again to a mere 'restriction' of Being. *Ibid*., pp. 98-103

[19] Martin Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymn 'The Ister,'* trans. William McNeill and Julia Davis (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), p. 56. It is also worth noting that, despite the fact that Hölderlin's name is rarely mentioned in the *Introduction to Metaphysics*, where he first offers this new connection between *phusis* and *poiesis*, Heidegger gave his first lecture course devoted exclusively to Hölderlin in the winter semester of 1934-1935, directly prior to the lecture course given in the sumer semester 1935, which would later be published as the *Introduction to Metaphysics*. Thus, Hölderlin would have been in the forefront of his mind. Furthermore, as we can gather from his various writings and lectures on Hölderlin, Heidegger's discussions of Sophocles were always and immediately connected to Hölderlin's understanding of the Greek tragedian.

[20] Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 159

'violent overpowering' of Dasein by the disclosure of Being, an event which throws it head first into the uncanny: 'The *deinon* is the terrible in the sense of the overwhelming sway, which induces panicked fear, true anxiety, as well as collected, inwardly reverberating, reticent awe.'[21] *Deinon* is the movement of *phusis* in the face of Dasein — here, dramatized thorough a reading of Sophocles's tragedy — that violently overpowers it with an awe-inspiring shock to thought, throwing it into an existential state of alienation. But, Heidegger continues, there is another sense of *deinon* revealed in *Antigone*; it also names the movement of Dasein's struggle to find home again, to overcome this violent power and create a world:

> Being as a whole, as the sway, is the overwhelming, *deinon* in the first sense. But humanity is *deinon*, first, inasmuch as it remains exposed to this overwhelming sway, because it essentially belongs to Being. However, humanity is also *deinon* because it is violence-doing.... It gathers what holds sway and lets it enter into an openness ... it uses violence against the overwhelming. Because it is doubly *deinon* in an originally united sense, it is *to deinotaton*, the most violent: violence-doing in the midst of the overwhelming.[22]

Still closely following Sophocles's text, Heidegger understands *techne* as the knowledge of Dasein's 'violence-doing' in the face of the overwhelming disclosure of Being. Therefore, *poiesis* would be the act of reciprocal violence-doing itself, the act of opening a *heimlich* world that reorients Dasein. While *phusis* is the violent and overwhelming event of Being's disclosure to Dasein, *techne* is the subsequent and reciprocal knowledge that compels Dasein to overcome this event by putting Being to work, that is, to bring forth a work of art:

> Knowing is the ability to set Being to work.... For this reason, the Greeks call authentic artwork and art *techne* in the emphatic sense, because art is what most immediately brings Being — that is, the appearing that stands there in itself — to stand in something present, in the work. The work of art is work not primarily because it is worked, made, but because it puts Being to work in a being. To put to work here means to bring into the work, a work within which the emerging power of *phusis* comes to appear.[23]

This putting-to-work is precisely the sense of *poiesis* that Heidegger extracts from Sophocles and the pre-Socratics more generally. It is not the mimesis of an envisioned ideal of stable presence, but a properly creative response to the violent concealing-revealing movement of *phusis*. Unlike Hegel's reading of *Antigone*, the resulting work is not to be understood as higher resolution of this *polemos*. Instead, 'the one who is *violence-doing*, the creative one, who sets out into the un-said, who breaks into the un-thought, who compels what has never happened, and makes appear what is un-seen,' 'unfolds the dangerousness of Being' and is thereby 'menaced by perdition.'[24]

Perdition is therefore the unreconciled condition of 'the creative one,' the authentic poet, who reciprocates a violence equal to that of the disclosure of Being, who counters the force of *phusis* with

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[21] Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 159

[22] Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 160. 'The basic trait of the *deinotaton* lies in the reciprocal relation of the two senses of *deinon*. The knower fares into the midst of fittingness, draws Being into beings (in the "rift") [*reißt (im "riß") das Sein in das Seiende*], and yet can never surmount the overwhelming.' *Ibid.*, p. 167. Although Heidegger does not yet explicate it here, this 'rift' names the site of the struggle between earth and world in the work of art. Martin Heidegger, 'The Origin of the Work of Art' in *Basic Writings*, ed. David Krell (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 188

[23] Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 170. Translation modified.

[24] Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 172

that of *techne*. In his reading of Sophocles — mediated through Hölderlin and grounded on the pre-Socratic notion of *phusis* he takes from Nietzsche — Heidegger is able to rethink *poiesis* as the 'original site' of a happening of truth, that is, as a site of Being's disclosure to Dasein. *Poiesis* is not a supplementary or everyday expression of subjectivity, but rather a fundamental aspect of Dasein's *authentic* Being-in-the-world. Ultimately, *phusis* and *techne* are the two sides of this late conception of Being-in-the-world and, as such, are both considered to be modes of *poiesis*. *Phusis* is understood as the creative bringing-forth of Being. Similarly, the *techne* involved in human production is understood as a creative response to this disclosure of Being to Dasein. This is the position Heidegger takes in 'The Question Concerning Technology.' In this lecture of 1953, we get his last statement on the significance of *poiesis*, which is more carefully and definitively articulated than before. This statement finally announces Heidegger's distantiation from the Aristotelian notion of *poiesis*, in which *poiesis* is subjugated to *praxis*:

> Not only handicraft manufacture, not only artistic and poetical bringing into appearance and concrete imagery, is a bringing forth, *poiesis*. *Phusis*, also, the rising of something from out of itself, is a bringing-forth. *Phusis* is indeed *poiesis* in the highest sense. For what presences by means of *phusis* has the irruption belonging to bringing-forth, e.g., the bursting of a blossom into bloom, in itself (*en heautoi*). In contrast, what is brought forth by the artisan or artist, e.g. the silver chalice, has the irruption belonging to bringing-forth, not in itself, but in another (*en alloi*), in the craftsman or artist.[25]

Here, against the Aristotelian conception, the sole condition of *poiesis* is that it should be a creative event of bringing-forth, no matter whether the end is internal or external to itself. *Phusis* is perhaps still the 'highest sense' of *poiesis* since it contains its own end, but the strict hierarchy between *poiesis* and *praxis* has been finally removed. In the last analysis, both *phusis* and *techne* are modes of *poiesis* and therefore both fall under the categories of movement, *kinesis*, and unconcealment, *aletheia*.

Despite the fact that Heidegger claims — roughly along Hegelian lines — that our age is fundamentally 'art-less,' in the final decades of his life he expressed a great and increasing appreciation for several artists including Klee, Braque, Cézanne, Rilke, Le Corbusier, Stravinsky and, above all, Hölderlin. Although these interests may have been deeply personal, philosophically he needed to maintain some semblance of hope that authentic Dasein was still possible. And, as we have seen, the gauge of authenticity has shifted — in the 1930s, with Heidegger's move from Aristotle to the pre-Socratics — from the *phronesis* of Being-towards-death to the *techne* of the bringing-forth of Being within an artwork. While we will not discuss in detail Heidegger's extensive analysis of Hölderlin as a poet, we should mention one important aspect of the latter's translations of Sophocles that directly relates to the conception of Being as *to deinotaton*. Scholars in Hölderlin's time saw these translations as definitive proof of his insanity. Against this, Heidegger claims that the translations attest to Hölderlin's status as a poet of the highest order. He argues that Hölderlin's process of translation itself was a kind of *polemos* that illustrates the struggle between the poet's being-thrown into the *unheimlich* and the attempt to re-establish a world through a creative act:

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[25] Martin Heidegger, 'The Question Concerning Technology' in *Basic Writings*, p. 317

> The resonance of the first stationary song from Sophocles' *Antigone* tragedy in Hölderlin's hymnal poetizing is a historical-poetic necessity within that history in which the being at home and being unhomely of Western humankind is decided.
>
> The pure fulfillment of this poetic necessity in the foreign land of the Greeks is a choral song in the *Antigone* tragedy by Sophocles. Hölderlin must have 'lived' in a constant dialogue with this choral song, such that the word of his hymnal poetizing speaks from out of this dialogue and articulates it. Indeed, he must have done so not only at the time of his hymnal poetizing, but also during the time that followed, when the everyday world had become foreign to him. To know something of this choral song therefore means to hear Hölderlin's hymnal poetizing rush from its source, if only from afar. The choral song of the Greek *Antigone* tragedy will disclose itself to us only by way of translation. Genuine translation is always an encounter.[26]

That is, Hölderlin's poetic translations of Sophocles themselves repeat, on the formal level, Dasein's existential struggle between *phusis* and *techne* as well as, Heidegger suggests, dramatize even further the struggle depicted in the narratives of these tragedies. We will come back to Hölderlin's Sophocles shortly, but first we will look at Deleuze's conceptions of *phusis* and *techne,* and the ways in which they seem to follow Heidegger's schema.

While Heidegger describes the event as an overwhelming encounter with *phusis*, invoking the language of the Kantian sublime, Deleuze reserves for the word event the movement of *phusis* itself. The Deleuzian encounter with *phusis* is then described as an all-too-human encounter with the transcendental form of time, time as the force of becoming released from Being; this is the *phusis* of Nietzsche's Heraclitus, subtracted once again from Parmenides.[27] The concept of Being for Nietzsche is nothing but one of 'the last wisps of smoke from evaporating reality.... Heraclitus will always be right

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[26] Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymn 'The Ister,'* pp. 56, 65. Hölderlin himself also spoke about translation as an encounter. In a letter to his friend Christian Neuffer (July 1974), who was translating Virgil at the time, Hölderlin wrote that translation is 'a salutary gymnastics' that was beneficial for one's native language. In translation, language — 'the organ of our minds, our hearts, the sign of our imaginings, our ideas' — becomes skillful and supple in the struggle with the beauty and grandeur of the foreign original. He also relates translation to 'foreign service' in which there is a danger of losing one's identity and mother tongue, and having no serviceable speech at one's disposal when returning home. Translation is therefore itself a *polemos*, a necessary journey abroad, for the sake of, but at the risk of losing one's homely identity. Friedrich Hölderlin, *Essays and Letters*, trans. Jeremy Adler (London: Penguin 2009), p. 26. *Cf.* Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymn 'The Ister,'* p. 136

[27] In his own *Introduction to Metaphysics*, Bergson strongly objects to any association between his philosophy and that of Heraclitus: 'How was it ever possible to compare this doctrine with the doctrine if Heraclitus?' Henri Bergson, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. T.E. Hulme (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007), p. 38. However counter-intuitive this statement sounds, its effect is to completely radicalize Heraclitus' philosophy in the *opposite* direction than Heidegger does, that is, away from Parmenides. It articulates Bergson's complete refusal of any attempt to essentialize and therefore fix movement; his is a purely immanent process philosophy, a 'metaphysics without Being.' John Mullarkey, 'The Very Life of Things: Thinking Objects and Reversing Thought in Bergsonian Metaphysics' in *Ibid*., p. xxx. Bergson clearly states that 'radical instability and absolute immutability are mere abstract views taken from outside of the continuity of real change, abstractions which the mind then hypostasizes into multiple *states* on the one hand, into *thing* or substance on the other. The difficulties raised by the ancients around the question of movement and by the moderns around the question of substance disappear, the former because movement and change are substantial, the latter because substance is movement and change.' Henri Bergson, 'The Perception of Change' in *The Creative Mind*, trans. Mabelle Andison (New York: Dover, 2007), p. 130. Furthermore, we cannot fix this continuity of real change in concepts that are themselves essentialized and therefore inflexible. *Ibid*., p 23. However, despite Bergson, Deleuze seems to suggest that the Heraclitus promoted in Nietzsche's *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks* is compatible with this type of radically immanent process philosophy: 'Among the pre-Socratics perhaps only Heraclitus knew that becoming is not "judged," that it cannot be and has not to be judged, that it does not receive its law from elsewhere.' Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), p. 28

in thinking that Being is an empty fiction.'[28] Although Deleuze never addressed the concept of *phusis* at length, there are hints in his work suggesting that he was immensely interested in the prospect of developing a philosophy of Nature. For example, in an interview with Arnaud Villani in 1981, we have the following brief exchange: 'AV: *Phusis* seems to play an important role in your work. GD: You're right. I believe that I turn around a certain idea of Nature, but I have not yet arrived at considering this notion directly.'[29] In another interview, seven years later, when asked what kind of projects were on the horizon, Deleuze replied: 'I want to write a book on "What is Philosophy?" as long as it's a short one. Also, Guattari and I want to get back to our joint work and produce a sort of philosophy of Nature, now that any distinction between nature and artifice is becoming blurred.'[30] Although it is debatable whether both of these desires were fulfilled simultaneously with publication of *What is Philosophy?* in 1991, there are hints that Deleuze and Guattari were at least moving in the direction of producing a 'sort of' philosophy of Nature in this text. For example, we have enigmatic statements like: 'When Heraclitus' thought becomes *polemos*, it is fire that retorts. It is a single speed on both sides: "The atom will traverse space with the speed of thought." The plane of immanence has two facets as Thought and as Nature, as *Nous* and as *Phusis*.'[31] As we have discussed in the last chapter, *What is Philosophy?* is concerned with the ways in which three domains of knowledge — philosophy, science, and art — set up planes of immanence through the construction of concepts, functions, and percepts, respectively. In all three cases, this construction should be understood as involving, simultaneously, creation and thought, *poiesis* and *nous*. Or to put the matter more simply, *nous* is always creative for Deleuze. 'The philosopher *invents* and *thinks* the concept.' 'Art thinks no less than philosophy, but it thinks through

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[28] Friedrich Nietzsche, 'Twilight of the Idols' §§2, 4 in *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, ed. Aaron Ridley and Judith Norman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 168. Or again: 'I generally feel warmer and in better spirits in Heraclitus' company than anywhere else. The affirmation of passing away *and destruction* that is crucial for a Dionysian philosophy, saying yes to opposition and war, *becoming* along with a radical rejection of the very concept of 'Being' — all these are more closely related to me than anything else people have thought so far.' Friedrich Nietzsche, 'Ecce Homo' §3 in *Ibid.* p. 110

[29] Gilles Deleuze 'Response to a Series of Questions' in *Collapse* III (November 2007), p. 39

[30] Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations: 1972-1990,* trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), p. 155. Of course, 'nature' refers to *phusis* while 'artifice' refers to *techne* in Heidegger's schema. Thus it could be argued that Deleuze is implicitly criticizing Heidegger's philosophy of art here. Blurring the distinction between these two terms is an idea Deleuze takes from the work of Gilbert Simondon.

[31] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 38. *Cf.* p. 44. Elsewhere, Deleuze understood Nietzsche's eternal return 'as a cosmological and physical doctrine' of forces. Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, pp. 47-52. And of course, for Nietzsche, 'the doctrine of the eternal return ... is Zarathustra's doctrine, but ultimately it is nothing Heraclitus couldn't have said too.' Nietzsche, 'Ecce Homo' §3, p. 110

affects and percepts.'[32] Likewise, science thinks through the creation of functions: 'a scientist is someone who invents or creates functions.'[33]

The construction of a plane of immanence creates section of chaos that acts like a screen that protects us from the depths of the world, a screen which remains, more or less, adequate to the infinite movements of the chaosmos. It is clear that the two aspects of the plane of immanence — *nous* and *phusis* — thus bear a striking resemblance, despite several important philosophical differences, to Heidegger's own dyad *techne* and *phusis*. Indeed, Deleuze seems to invite us to make this comparison: 'If nature is like art, this is always because it combines two living elements in every way: House and Universe, *Heimlich* and *Unheimlich*, territory and deterritorialization.'[34] The plane of immanence is the interface between an encounter with the chaosmos and the subsequent existential imperative to create concepts, functions, and percepts, which act as screens, mere slices of chaos. Similarly, the pre-Socratic sense of *poiesis,* in Heidegger's reading, is Dasein's creative attempt to overcome the violent concealing-revealing movement of *phusis*. 'We head for the horizon, on the plane of immanence, and we return with bloodshot eyes, yet they are the eyes of the mind' and are propelled into 'a groping experimentation.'[35] For Deleuze, this encounter with Nature produces a shock to thought which is a kind of psychophysical *aisthesis*, a shock that communicates *'vibrations to the cortex, touching the nervous and cerebral system directly.*'[36] That is, the force of *phusis* enters the brain. This is an encounter not with what Heidegger calls an *aistheton* — 'that which is perceptible by sensations in the senses belonging to sensibility'[37] but rather, as we have seen, an encounter with an imperceptible, affective *aistheteon.*

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[32] Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* pp. 3, 66. My emphasis. Heidegger too suggests an original kinship between *poiesis* and *noein* when he says that 'poetry is of the *same order* as philosophical thinking, although thinking and poetry are not identical.' Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 28. (Of course, it is significant that Heidegger uses *noein*, which in the strict Aristotelian sense, refers to the intellect as it is diametrically opposed to *aisthesis*. Deleuze's *nous* — literally 'mind' — seems to be intentionally more vague. For some of the pre-Socratics, Anaxagoras in particular, *nous* even named the force that created the world out of chaos.) Another major difference between Heidegger and Deleuze is that, for the former, scientific or 'calculative' thinking is a form of enframing that cannot be compared to philosophical and poetic thought, whose kinship lies in the fact that they both are able to open up a world and shape the way Dasein understands itself in that world. *Poiesis* and *noein* are analogous to two other words Heidegger later uses to distinguish the types of redemptive thinking: *Dichten,* 'poetic thinking' — or, appropriating the title of the Hölderlin poem he considered most closely, 'recollective thinking' [*Andenken*] — and *Denken* 'meditative thinking.' 'What is stated poetically and what is stated in thought are never identical; but there are times when they are the same — those times when the gulf separating poesy and thinking is clean and decisive cleft [*Riß*]. This can occur when when poesy is lofty, and thinking profound. Hölderlin understood the matter well.' Martin Heidegger, *What is Called Thinking?* trans. J.G. Gray (New York: Harper, 1976), p. 20. Derrida has explored this important *Riß* between *Dichten* and *Denken,* in his own particular way. Jacques Derrida, 'The *Retrait* of Metaphor' in *Psyche: Inventions of the Other, Volume I,* ed. Peggy Kamuf and Elizabeth Rottenberg (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), pp. 71-75

[33] Gilles Deleuze, 'What is the Creative Act?' in *Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews 1975-1995*, ed. David Lapoujade, trans. Ames Hodges and Mike Taormina (New York: Semiotexte, 2006), p. 314

[34] Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* p. 186. As we shall see in the balance of this chapter, the *Heimlich/Unheimlich* movement of world-disclosure in Heidegger is replaced with the territorializing/deterritorializing movement of chaosmos-construction.

[35] Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* p. 41

[36] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), p. 156

[37] Heidegger, 'The Origin of the Work of Art' in *Basic Writings*, p. 151. In this schema, according to Heidegger, an object or thing would be 'nothing but the unity of a manifold of what is given in the senses.' And remember, Deleuze's provocative statement 'I don't believe in things.' Gilles Deleuze, 'On Leibniz' in *Negotiations*, p. 160

'Something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but of a fundamental *encounter*.... It is not the given but that by which the given is given. It is therefore in a certain sense the imperceptible [*insensible*]. It is imperceptible precisely from the point of view of recognition — in other words, from the point of view of an empirical exercise of the senses.'[38] While Heidegger's ultimately calls this phenomenological encounter an event, *Ereignis*, for Deleuze it is simply the moment of affective *aisthesis* we discussed at length in the last chapter. Furthermore, and this is a critical difference between the two philosophers, the event for Deleuze names the continuous movement and self-regeneration of *phusis* itself — *eventum tantum* — utterly subtracted from the perspective of any subject. The encounter we have named *aisthesis* is one particular type of such movement. As we have seen, for Heidegger, *phusis* is the event of the disclosure of Being to Dasein. But for Deleuze, the event is pure becoming itself, the continuous unfolding of nature subtracted from both Being as well as from any configuration of the subject. That is, Deleuze describes the perpetual movements of *phusis* as

> an eternal return, as the most terrible labyrinth of which Borges spoke ... which is no longer that of individuals, persons, and worlds, but only of pure events which the instant, displaced over the line, goes on dividing into already past and yet to come. Nothing other than the Event subsists, the Event alone, *eventum tantum* for all contraries, which communicates with itself through its own distance and resonates across all of its disjuncts.[39]

Labeling this movement of events *phusis* is justified by the fact that Deleuze calls the eternal return 'a cosmological and physical doctrine.'[40]

Although Hölderlin doesn't figure prominently in Deleuze's work, it would be possible to argue that Deleuze's rendition of the violent encounter with *phusis* also leads back to Hölderlin's Sophocles, albeit in an entirely different way than it does for Heidegger. In a short essay on the legacy of Kantianism, Deleuze briefly relates a 'categorical turn' in the experience of Hölderlin's Oedipus to his own analysis of the encounter with the pure form of transcendental time — or 'time out of joint' — which, as we have seen, is defined as the force of movement, the chaosmic flux. In the moment of shock, Deleuze writes, the 'order of time has ceased to "rhyme."'[41] Hölderlin explains this moment of the encounter as one in which

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[38] Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 140

[39] Gilles Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, ed. Constantin Boundas, trans. Mark Lester and Charles Stivale (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), p. 176

[40] Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. 47

[41] Gilles Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel Smith and Michael Greco (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), p. 28. 'Time out of joint means demented time or time outside the curve which gave it a god, liberated from is overly simple circular figure ... in short, time presenting itself as an empty and pure form. Time itself unfolds (that is, apparently ceases to be a circle) instead of things unfolding within it (following the overly simple circular figure). It ceases to be cardinal and becomes ordinal, a pure *order* of time. Hölderlin said that it no longer "rhymed," because it was distributed unequally on both sides of a 'caesura,' as a result of which beginning and end no longer coincided. We may define the order of time as this purely formal distribution of the unequal in the function of a caesura. We can then distinguish a more or less extensive past and a future in inverse proportion, but the future and the past here are not empirical and dynamic determinations of time: they are formal and fixed characteristics which follow *a priori* from the order of time, as though they comprised a static synthesis of time.' Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, pp. 88-89

> man forgets himself and the god and, like a traitor but in a holy manner, he turns away. For, at the furthest limit of suffering, nothing else stands but the conditions of time and space. At that frontier, man forgets himself because he is wholly in the moment; and the god forgets himself because he is nothing but time; and both are unfaithful, time because in such a moment it is a categorical turn in which beginning and end no longer rhyme at all; and man because at that moment of categorical turning he must follow, but in what follows he cannot at all match what was there in the beginning.[42]

It must be said, however, that Deleuze's use of Hölderlin is entirely mediated through Jean Beaufret's *Heideggerian* analysis of Hölderlin's Sophocles. Here, Beaufret explains Hölderlin's conception of art as being initially opposed to nature but, again, through a return to one's homeland it is ultimately, albeit only in exceptional cases, able to surpass and therefore complete that which nature is unable to achieve on its own.[43] In these cases, art is able to bring-forth *aorgisch* nature, which 'does not refer to the merely lifeless but designates ... the unreflexive, unrepresented, disorganizing manifestation of nature.'[44] We will come back to the important distinction between organic and inorganic nature — which was also important for the early *Naturphilosophie* of Hölderlin's roommates at the Tübinger Stift: Hegel and Schelling — later in the chapter. What should be noted now is Hölderlin description of Oedipus's experience of a 'categorical turn' of time, which is somehow related to an existential forgetting. Here we should recall Bergson's account of *déjà-vu*, which Deleuze appropriates in his theory of transcendental perception.

For Bergson, intuition begins with a creative emotion. 'But what is this creative emotion if not precisely a cosmic Memory, that actualizes all the levels at the same time, that liberates man from the plane or the level that is proper to him, in order to make him a creator, adequate to the whole movement of creation.'[45] This cosmic, or virtual, memory presents itself as the otherwise hidden or forgotten aspect of the pure form of time. It is the pure past, the *being* of time that has never been lived. It is fundamentally different from the mere recollection of a former lived present and is thus a transcendental memory that works beyond the empirical or psychological experience of time; Bergson calls it 'virtual' precisely because it has no psychological existence. Whereas actual memory is able to recall only those things that have already been seen, heard, imagined, or thought, transcendental memory is able to grasp that which can *only* be recalled. It concerns not a memory contingent on the functions of the other faculties, but with the being of a pure past — the past of all time — and thus it reveals an ontology of the virtual that must be presupposed by any adequate theory of time. In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze criticizes Kant for tracing the transcendental from the given, empirical mechanisms of psychological consciousness. He shows that in a properly transcendental memory 'forgetting is no longer a contingent incapacity separating us from memory which is itself contingent: it exists within essential memory as though it were the "nth" power of memory with regard to its own

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[42] Friedrich Hölderlin, *Essays and Letters on Theory*, ed. and trans. Thomas Pfau (Albany: SUNY Press, 1988), p. 108. Translation modified.
[43] Jean Beaufret, *Hölderlin et Sophocle* (Brionne: Gerard Monfort, 1983)
[44] Thomas Pfau in Friedrich Hölderlin, *Essays and Letters on Theory*, p. 168 n. 3
[45] Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Zone Books, 1991), p. 111

limit or to that which can only be recalled.'[46] As we have seen, it is the virtual half of what Deleuze calls the transcendental structure of time — which is an indeterminate doubling of an actual moment with its virtual aspect — that is revealed in both a crystal-image as well as in the experience of *déjà-vu*.

In this conception of a fundamental doubling of the pure form of time, the 'overly simple circular figure' of empirical time is replaced by a more profound transcendental circling: 'metaphysics makes a circle of the physical or *phusis*.'[47] Furthermore, the experience of this splitting of time produces a fracture, or caesura, in the subject — as attested by Hölderlin's Oedipus — even as it signals the death of God. Deleuze again follows Beaufret in this line of argument:

> If the greatest initiative of transcendental philosophy was to introduce the form of time into thought as such, then this pure and empty form in turn signifies indissolubly the death of God, the fractured I and the passive self. It is true that Kant did not pursue this initiative: both God and the I underwent a practical resurrection..... In this sense, it is correct to claim that neither Fichte nor Hegel is the descendent of Kant — rather it is Hölderlin, who discovers the emptiness of pure time and, in this emptiness, simultaneously the continued diversion of the divine, the prolonged fracture of the I and the constitutive passion of the self. Hölderlin saw in this form of time both the essence of tragedy and the adventure of Oedipus.[48]

For all their differences, it is significant that both Deleuze and Heidegger are able to reduce the event that precedes the creation of art to a moment in Hölderlin. However, for Heidegger, this shock to thought seems to happen primarily at the level of the dislocation of the native language as exemplified by Hölderlin's 'hymnal poetizing' — that is, creative translation — of Sophocles. This is because, in the last analysis, Heidegger's position represents a version of linguistic Kantianism, which is clearly embodied in his often repeated phrase 'language is the house of being.'[49] While, for Kant, the transcendental horizon of what amounts to world-disclosure is determined by the categories — which are *in effect* hard-wired into the human brain — for Heidegger, world-disclosure is embodied in the much more malleable phenomenon of language, considered broadly as social practice. Furthermore, it remains frustratingly ambiguous in 'The Origin of the Work of Art' whether it is ultimately the artwork or language itself that actually creates a world. Despite Heidegger's emphasis on 'firstness' in the important passage on the Greek temple and his use of terms like 'origin' and 'beginning' to describe the ontology of the artwork, it is possible to understand the function of art as not creating but rather, in the language of *Being and Time*, merely rendering 'expressly visible' or 'thematizing' a world which is already in existence. Even at the end of the essay, this ambiguity is allowed to remain and is justified only by the privileging of poetry — that is, *Poesie,* the art *of* language — above all other artistic media:

> Poetry [*Dichtung*] is thought of here in so broad a sense and at the same time in such intimate essential unity with language and word, that we must leave open whether art in all its modes, from architecture to poesy [*Poesie*], exhausts the essence of poetry. Language itself is poetry in the

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[46] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 140

[47] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 292. Or again, 'In what form does reminiscence introduce time? It is a matter of physical time, of a periodic or circular time which is that of *phusis* and is subordinate to events which occur within it, to movements which it measures or to events which punctuate it. This time undoubtedly finds its ground in an in-itself — that is, in the pure past.' Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 88

[48] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 87

[49] For example, Martin Heidegger, 'What are Poets For?' in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper, 2001), p. 129

> essential sense. But since language is the happening in which beings first disclose themselves to man each time as beings, poesy — or poetry in the narrower sense — is the most original form of poetry in the essential sense. Language is not poetry [*Dichtung*] because it is the primal poesy [*Urpoesie*]; rather poesy propriates in language because language preserves the original essence of poetry. Building and plastic creation, on the other hand, always happen already, and happen only, in the open region of saying and naming. It is the open region that pervades and guides them. But for this very reason they remain their own ways and modes in which truth directs itself into work. They are an ever special poetizing within the clearing of beings which has already happened unnoticed in language.[50]

We will not attempt to resolve this ambiguity here. However, the privileging of language as *Urpoesie* — while simultaneously claiming that 'The essence of art is poetry. The essence of poetry, in turn, is the founding of truth' — has important consequences for Heidegger's rendition of the creative origin of art after an encounter with *phusis*. On this point, we can unequivocally distinguish Heidegger and Deleuze's philosophies of art. Deleuze acknowledges — in a way which vaguely evokes Hölderlin's account of the effect of a foreign language on the mother tongue — that one possible *effect* of such a shocking encounter for a writer-seer is that it may produce ruptures within language, creating new senses and syntaxes.[51] However, this is merely a trace of the more original experience of 'time out of joint,' which opens up the possibility of living other durations beyond the one Kant argued was hard-wired into our brains. Furthermore, one philosophical consequence of privileging language as social practice over the more fundamental, and indeed emancipatory, effect of opening time beyond its Kantian coordinates, is that we must accept the type of 'infinite deferral' or postponement of any realization as demanded by deconstruction. This is precisely the experience of Hölderlin's Oedipus. The caesura that separates the no-longer-rhyming beginning and end in his story, rather that being an emancipatory event, is rather 'the essence of tragedy' whereby Oedipus is condemned to a 'life of death in postponement.'[52] Deleuze's reading emphasizes the opening up of other durations through the disclosure of the pure form of time as well as the production of inorganic nature, which is inherently unorganized, that is, without judgment. He chooses to leave behind the Heideggerian reading of Hölderlin which focuses precisely on the *tragedy* of Oedipus whereby the fractured ego and the death of god cripples Oedipus and thus 'distills a "slow death," and continuously *defers the judgement of the law*.'[53]

> Oedipus, his name is atheos: he invents something worse than death or exile, he wanders and survives on a strangely positive line of separation or deterritorialization. Hölderlin and Heidegger see this as the birth of the double turning away the change of face, and also the birth of modern

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[50] Heidegger, 'The Origin of the Work of Art' in *Basic Writings*, p. 199

[51] 'We can see more clearly the effect of literature on language. As Proust says, it opens up a kind of foreign language within language, which is neither another language nor a rediscovered patois, but a becoming-other of language, a minorization of this major language, a delirium that carries it off.... Syntactic creation or style — this is the becoming of language ... which consists of Visions and Auditions that no longer belong to any language. They are not interruptions of the process, but breaks that form part of it, like am eternity that can only be revealed in a becoming, or a landscape that only appears in movement. They are not outside language, but the outside of language. The writer as seer and hearer, the aim of literature. ' Deleuze, 'Literature and Life' in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 5

[52] Beaufret, *Hölderlin et Sophocle*, p. 22

[53] Deleuze, 'On Four Poetic Formulas that Might Summarize the Kantian Philosophy' in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 33

> tragedy.... the outcome is no longer murder or sudden death but survival under reprieve, unlimited postponement.'[54]

Beaufret argues that the turning away of God and man in Oedipus's experience reflects a 'categorical turn' for Hölderlin precisely in the Kantian sense that the absence of the consideration of God in ethical judgments requires the deployment of a categorical imperative. For Deleuze, the categorical imperative implies that the Good derived from the Law is considered as a 'form that has no object, whether sensible or intelligible. It does not tell us what we must do, but what subjective rule we must obey no matter what our action,'[55] which functions in Kant *as if* it has the transcendent status of an Idea. That is, infinite postponement becomes a form of judgment that replaces the necessity of God. Although God and the Self underwent a resurrection in Kant as the necessary postulates of practical reason, Hölderlin's Oedipus makes this impossible even though Hölderlin himself ultimately betrays this fundamental insight. By focussing on the fracture within language that results from this double assassination, rather than philosophically examine the revolutionary moment in Hölderlin's explication of the epic — the moment in which both God and man 'forget' themselves in the face of the pure order of time — Heidegger, like Hölderlin, missed the chance to move beyond Kant and thus left in place the condition for a transcendent Judge: infinite postponement as the 'secret' of language.[56] 'It is not as if the judgment itself were postponed, put off until tomorrow, pushed back to infinity; on the contrary, it is the act of postponing, of carrying to infinity, that makes judgment possible. The condition of judgment lies in a supposed relation between existence and the infinite in the *order* of time.'[57] For Deleuze, a proper philosophical analysis of the direct presentation of time in Oedipus reveals precisely what Bergson's explanation of *déjà-vu* does: 'time is out of joint and presents itself in the pure state.' But we should not be distracted by this 'pure.' As we shall see in the next section, where we will consider Deleuze's distinctly non-Heideggerian reading of Nietzsche, it points only to 'movement as *false* movement, as aberrant movement which now depends upon time.'[58] This false movement disallows any recourse to the transcendent, to judgment, and replaces infinite deferral with what we will call, after Agamben, (dis)continuous gestation.

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[54] Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), p. 125

[55] Deleuze, 'On Four Poetic Formulas' in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 32

[56] The trope of the 'secret' in literature, which is grounded upon Heidegger's metaphysics of the disclosure of Being, and which is fundamentally connected to this idea of infinite deferral, has become one of the hallmarks of Heidegger's French followers.

[57] Deleuze, 'To Have Done with Judgment' in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 127

[58] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 271

3.2 Cinematic fabulation: Reframing Bergson and Nietzsche

Nietzsche, Bergson, and the critique of metaphysics

Heidegger not only discovers through Nietzsche a pre-Socratic conception of *phusis* that would ground his later ideas concerning artistic *poiesis*; after his encounter with Nietzsche, Heidegger begins to exhibit a hostility towards metaphysics. In the *Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche describes 'how the true world finally became a fable' and aims to completely devalue the highest philosophical ideals, namely, the Platonic *idea* in all its historic incarnations.[1] Nietzsche's thought represents for Heidegger the 'end of Western metaphysics' after which we must proceed to an 'entirely different question of the truth of Being.'[2] We must leave it for others to decide whether Heidegger *really* succeeded where Nietzsche supposedly failed in the 'overcoming' of metaphysics. Our concern here is to present another way out of this problem, through Bergson. Early in his career, Deleuze argued that Bergson participated, along with Nietzsche, in the critique of traditional metaphysics, a critique which pronounced the end of the philosophical division between the true and apparent worlds: 'At the end of the nineteenth century, philosophy was seen as a critique of metaphysics, with the goal of moving beyond metaphysics. For Nietzsche, this means the critique of the idea of a second world. Bergson also participates in the spirit of the times…. There is no world of Being that is different from that of becoming.'[3] But while Nietzsche merely 'inverts Platonism' in a parody of metaphysics, Bergson takes a different approach. Bergson's famous essay 'An Introduction to Metaphysics' attempts to redefine the coordinates of what counts as metaphysics in the first place. And it does this in a manner that is *completely consistent* with the two major ways in which metaphysics has been critiqued or dismissed. That is, Bergsonian metaphysics concerns neither the knowledge of transcendent ideas that lie outside the purview of experience — the Kantian or epistemological view of metaphysics — nor the atemporal realm of presence 'beyond physics' — the classical view. Rather, metaphysics for Bergson is completely physical and completely immanent to *this* world. Given the primacy of becoming over Being in his thought we could simply say, with John Mullarkey, that 'physics in process is [Bergsonian] metaphysics.'[4] Deleuze goes even further than Bergson and finds within his thought a Nietzschean moment that he pushes to the limit, removing

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[1] Friedrich Nietzsche, 'Twilight of the Idols' in *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, ed. and trans. Judith Norman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 171

[2] Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche 1: The Will to Power as Art*, trans. David Krell (New York: Harper, 1979), p. 10

[3] Gilles Deleuze, 'Lecture Course on Chapter Three of Bergson's *Creative Evolution,*' trans. Bryn Loban in *SubStance* 36.3 (2007), p. 80. Interestingly, in this lecture we also have an early statement of the guiding idea — which is simultaneously aesthetic *and* political — of Deleuze's entire *oeuvre*: 'Philosophy must overcome the human condition…. By what means? By taking a qualitative leap, by doing *violence* to the human condition in order to attain the principle of differences in kind…. Why? Because philosophy is a question of perception.' *Ibid*., p. 79

[4] John Mullarkey, 'The Very Life of Things: Thinking Objects and Reversing Thought in Bergsonian Metaphysics' in Henri Bergson, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, ed. John Mullarkey and Michael Kolkman, trans. T.E. Hulme (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007), p. xiii

any last inklings of 'truth' such that Bergsonian intuition becomes fabulation. And even further beyond Bergson, and towards Nietzsche, artistic creation becomes a power of the false.

From his early essay 'On Truth and Lying in a Non-moral Sense' to 'How the True World Finally Became a Fable' in *Twilight of the Idols*, the critique of truth has been a sustained endeavor throughout Nietzsche's writings. His most basic thesis about truth is that it consists of nothing but a massive collection of bad habits:

> What, then, is truth? A mobile array of metaphors, metonymies, anthropomorphisms, in short a sum of human relations which have been subjected to poetic and rhetorical intensification, translation, and decoration, and which, after they have been in use for a long time, strike a people as firmly established, canonical, and binding; truths are illusions of which we have forgotten that they are illusions, metaphors which have become worn by frequent use and have lost all sensuous vigor.[5]

He would concur with Bergson that these 'bad habits' ultimately have their basis in our biological needs as a species, such as our recognition of and action upon objects within the environment. Nietzsche argues that the human animal has more or less survived in the world by developing and amassing such habits, which have become 'basic errors' or 'erroneous articles of faith,' the most fundamental of which is the belief that there are enduring and stable objects in the world that are what we empirically recognize them to be. That is, like Bergson's account of *habitual* perception, these biologically determined errors first and foremost cloud our vision from the perpetual flux of things:

> All the higher functions, the perceptions of sense and generally every kind of sensation, worked with those basic errors that had been incorporated since time immemorial. Further, even in the realm of knowledge those propositions became the norms according to which one determined 'true' and 'untrue' — down to the most remote areas of pure logic. Thus the *strength* of knowledge lies not in its degree of truth, but in its age, its embeddedness, its character as a condition of life.[6]

He thus presents a proto-Bergsonian account of the origins and development of our most fundamental ways of being in the world. For example, the ability to see and think habitually in terms of the self-identity of objects is necessary for survival since it ensures that potentially dangerous objects in the environment can be quickly identified; to see only perpetual flux everywhere would be catastrophic for the evolution of any species. Interestingly, in elucidating this point, Nietzsche paints a picture of the world 'before man' that is remarkably close to Deleuze's chaosmic flux of movement-images:

> Innumerable beings who drew inferences in a way different from that in which we do have now perished; nonetheless, they might have been closer to the truth! He, for instance, who did not know how to find 'identity' often enough, both with regard to nourishment and to hostile animals — that is, he who subsumed too slowly and was too cautious in subsumption — had a slighter probability of survival than he who in all cases of similarity immediately guessed that they were identical…. It

[5] Friedrich Nietzsche, 'On Truth and Lying in a Non-moral Sense' in *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings,* ed. and trans. Ronald Speirs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 146

[6] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science,* trans. Josefine Nauckhoff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 111

> was necessary that for a long time changes in things not be seen, not be perceived; the beings who did not see things exactly had a head start over those who saw everything 'in a flux.'[7]

This is the starting point of Nietzsche's perspectivism. For him, the survival habits accumulated in the collective memory of humans helps to inform points of view on the world that are, at least functionally, *a priori* categories that determine our perspective. That is, Nietzsche's critique of truth still rests, despite all his efforts, upon a decidedly Kantian conception of the world split into *phenomena* and *noumena*:

> The human intellect cannot avoid seeing itself under its perspectival forms, and *solely* in these. We cannot look around our corner: it is a hopeless curiosity to want to know what other kinds of intellects and perspectives there *might* be; e.g. whether other beings might be able to experience time backwards, or alternately forwards and backwards (which would involve another direction of life and a different conception of cause and effect). But I think that today we are at least far away from the ridiculous immodesty of decreeing from our angle that perspectives are *permitted* only from this angle. Rather, the world has once again become infinite to us: insofar as we cannot reject the possibility *that it includes infinite interpretations*.[8]

It is clear that Nietzsche prefers this conception of the infinite — which necessarily confines us to the relative darkness of the *this* world — to a Romantic belief in the possibility of an 'intellectual

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[7] Nietzsche, *The Gay Science,* p. 112. The near equation between seeing everything 'in a flux' and being 'closer to the truth' in this quote reveals Nietzsche's ambiguous relation, in 1882, to his short-winded flirtation with science and renunciation of art four years earlier. In *Human, All Too Human* he emphatically withdrew, as a mere 'superstitious belief,' the conception of the artist as Romantic visionary that he upheld in *The Birth of Tragedy*. This belief 'ascribes to them, it seems, a direct view of the nature of the world, as it were a hole in the cloak of appearance, and believes that, by virtue of this miraculous seer's vision, they are able to communicate something conclusive and decisive about man and the world without the toil and rigorousness required by science.' Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human,* trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 87. The type of science he championed here as a remedy to the Romantic artist's vision can be epitomized by the work of physicist Roger Boscovich, who Nietzsche first encountered in 1872: 'While Copernicus convinced us to believe, contrary to all our senses, that the earth does *not* stand still, Boscovich taught us to renounce belief in the last bit of earth that *did* "stand still," the belief in "matter," in the "material,"' in the residual piece of earth and clump of an atom: it was the greatest triumph over the senses that the world had ever known.' Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, ed. and trans. Judith Norman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 14. Of course, such a dynamic vision of the universe would be worked out much more fully in Bergson's philosophy almost twenty years later.

[8] Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p. 239. Or again: 'Insects or birds perceive a quite different world from that of human beings, and the question as to which of these two perceptions of the world is the more correct is quite meaningless, since this would require them to be measured by the criterion of *correct perception*, i.e. by a *non-existent* criterion. But generally it seems to me that the correct perception — which would mean the full and adequate expression of an object in the subject — is something contradictory and impossible; for between two absolutely different spheres, such as subject and object are, there is no causality, no correctness, no expression, but at most an *aesthetic* way of relating, by which I mean an allusive transference, a stammering translation into a quite different language. For which purpose a middle sphere and mediating force is certainly required which can freely invent and freely create poetry. The word appearance (*Erscheinung*) contains many seductions, and for this reason I avoid using it as far as possible; for it is not true that the essence of things appears in the empirical world. A painter who has no hands and who wished to express in song the image hovering before him will still reveal more through this substitution of one sphere for another than the empirical world betrays of the essence of things.' Nietzsche, 'On Truth and Lying in a Non-moral Sense' On Truth and Lying, p. 148. This early quote clarifies that the proposition that certain species who see everything 'in a flux' might be 'closer to the truth' is meaningless since there can be no measure of 'correct perception.' Nonetheless, Nietzsche's wavering on this point only highlights that, even though he rejects the *word* appearance, he is unable to move beyond Kant. In any case, the *aesthetic* form of expression described here seems to be Nietzsche's first statement of an artistic power of the false that goes beyond the search for a 'correct perception' that would be equivalent to *noumena.*

intuition.'[9] But like the Romantics, albeit in an entirely different way, Nietzsche's perspectivism discloses just how indebted he remains to Kant, even as he dispenses with the concept of truth. Nietzsche's way out of the trap of the human view on the world is not a Bergsonian intuition *qua* expanded perception but rather the poetic invention of '*another kind* of art — a mocking, light, fleeting, divinely untroubled, divinely *artificial* art that, like a bright flame, blazes into an unclouded sky!'[10] Thus aesthetics for the late Nietzsche involves, first and foremost, not *aisthesis* but *poiesis*. For him, the category of art is relieved from the Romantic notion of the artist-hero in order to include all that participate in a creative 'will to power' of the false, including himself: 'as artists, too, we will know this.'[11] He says in *The Gay Science* that the thinker, like the artist, is one in whom the all-too-human drive for truth and the habitual behaviors of our species ultimately clash, since she quickly discovers that all knowledge is necessarily perspectival. He also says that this thinker is not free until she questions the foundations of both truths and habits. The struggle ends, for Nietzsche, not in an extended perception — a corrected or enlarged perspective — but rather in the creation of another art. We must therefore make a sharp distinction between Nietzsche's theory of *aisthesis* — a perspectivism that remains trapped within the Kantian moment in philosophy — and his theory of *poiesis* — his will to invent another, 'divinely artificial,' art — which is the way he proposes to rid himself of Kant. This theory of *poiesis* is also the way in which we must understand his imperative to create a new 'light earth' beyond the human. And, as we shall see, Deleuze appropriates Nietzsche on this point. However, Deleuze favors Bergson's theory of *aisthesis* over Nietzsche's precisely because its anti-representationalism is much more rigorously worked out beyond Kant. Following Bergson, Deleuze is able to conceive of a transcendental *aisthesis* without falling into the dual trap of Kantianism: on the one side we have a Nietzschian-style perspectivism and on the other an impossible perception of *noumena*.[12]

However, Deleuze needs Nietzsche's critique of truth, which makes possible an aesthetics *without judgment*, an aesthetics subtracted from the moral imperatives of reason or of ideas more generally. The belief in a 'true world' beyond our reach is exactly what leads to a world of gods in which, according to Deleuze, 'nothing is left but judgment ... and judgment prevents the emergence of

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[9] 'And as for our future, one will hardly find us again on the paths of those Egyptian youths [a clear reference to Schiller and Novalis who wrote 'Das Verschleierte Bild du Sais' and 'Die Lehrlinge zu Sais,' respectively] who … want by all means to unveil, uncover, and put into a bright light whatever is kept concealed. No, we have grown sick of this bad taste, this will to truth, to 'truth at any price', this youthful madness in the love of truth: we are too experienced, too serious, too jovial, too burned, too deep for that … how the theatrical cry of passion now hurts our ears; that whole Romantic uproar and tumult of the senses that is loved by the educated mob together with its aspirations towards the sublime, the elevated, the distorted, how foreign it has become to out taste!' Nietzsche, *The Gay Science,* pp. 7-8

[10] Nietzsche, *The Gay Science,* pp. 7-8

[11] Nietzsche, *The Gay Science,* pp. 7-8

[12] As we have already seen, Bergson is very clear that perception is mereological. It carves out an attenuated part of the 'real' rather than being a point of view that merely represents it. This is how he avoids falling into the impossible traps of Kantian philosophy. He would agree with Nietzsche that a theory of perception based on the Kantian model leads only to a perspectivism, an 'eternally unsatisfied desire to ... complete an always incomplete representation' by multiplying points of view to infinity. Henri Bergson, 'An Introduction to Metaphysics' in *The Creative Mind*, trans. Mabelle Andison (New York, Dover, 2007), p. 136

any new mode of existence.'[13] But also Deleuze finds a Nietzchean moment *within* Bergson in the latter's conception of fabulation, which Deleuze sutures to the theory of intuition. Additionally, Deleuze appropriates Nietzsche's conception of *another art*, a point we shall come back to in subsequent sections. Together Bergson and Nietzsche help Deleuze to define a robust, and fully anti-Kantian, aesthetics. Whereas Kant attempts to fill the lacuna between *phenomena* and *noumena* with a higher morality based on Reason, Nietzsche fills it with an aesthetic relation that expresses a higher creative power: a will to power of the false. But Nietzsche remains absolutely Kantian in his theory of perception even if he goes beyond Kant with his conception of artistic *poiesis*. Bergson also offers an aesthetic solution, albeit one that involves an extended *aisthesis*. This extended perception *qua* intuition is also a kind of higher aesthetic will to power: 'That an effort of this kind is not impossible is proved by the existence in man of an *aesthetic faculty* along with normal perception.'[14] In this way, Deleuze unhinges us from the world and offers a theory of aesthetics ungrounded from *any* idea of truth. Once we cease to believe in a true world, once 'we leave the shores of judgment, we also repudiate the [Apollonian] dream in favor of a [Dionysian] *intoxication*.' And we leave the shores of judgment by investing in Nietzsche's will to power of the false.[15] Ultimately, Deleuze's aesthetics includes not only an 'intoxicated' theory of Nietzschean *poiesis*; it offers a quite 'frenzied' theory of Bergsonian *aisthesis* that takes us beyond the shores of representation. Intuition, rather than an enlarged perspective, is an expanded perception in the sense that we change durations. With intuition we don't change our view on the world, our representation of it — we don't, in Nietzsche's terms, 'look around the corner' — first of all because Bergson's theory of perception is non-representational. But it is also important to remember that intuition is an expanded perception only in that it involves expanding the duration one inhabits. If we 'place ourselves in it [duration] by an effort of intuition, we have the feeling of a certain well-defined *tension*, whose very definiteness seems like a choice between an infinity of possible durations. Henceforth we can perceive any number of durations, all very different from one another.' This may be considered a perspectivism only if the empirical effort of intuition is 'reduced to concepts, that is, observed externally from two opposite points of view.'[16] This ethico-aesthetic effort is precisely the way in which we must understand the imperative to go beyond the human. 'It could be said that man is capable of rediscovering all the levels, all the degrees of expansion and contraction that coexist in the virtual Whole. As if he were capable of all the *frenzies* and brought about in himself successively everything that, elsewhere, can only be embodied in different species.... Man is capable of scrambling

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[13] Gilles Deleuze, 'To Have done with Judgment' in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel Smith and Michael Greco (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), p. 135

[14] Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, ed. Keith Ansell Pearson, trans. Arthur Mitchell (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007), p. 114

[15] This is a *puissance* — rather than *Pouvoir* — *du faux* and thus implies a 'superior' ethics of immanent creation rather than a Kantian-style morality legislated by a higher truth.

[16] Bergson, 'Introduction to Metaphysics' in *The Creative Mind*, p. 156. Translation modified.

the planes, of going beyond his own plane as his own condition.'[17] We will now show how Deleuze sutures Bergson's theory of expanded perception with the idea of fabulation before moving on to Nietzsche's power of the false.

The title of Bergson's profound little essay 'Introduction to Metaphysics' is deceiving because it is neither a defense of traditional metaphysics, nor is it simply another articulation — in the 'spirit of his time' — of its critique. Rather, through a 'violent reversal' of what we normally take the act of thinking to be, Bergson refigures both the method and scope of traditional metaphysics. He attempts to completely redefine it by bringing art, science, and philosophy into a new dialogue via an *empirical* method of intuition, whereby thought passes 'from things to concepts and not from concepts to things.'[18] This intuition should be understood as neither a bare instinct nor a vague empathy, but as a real intellectual *effort*, a reversal of the very movement of thought. Because Bergson remains firmly on empiricist ground, this intuition amounts to an expanded perception that entails thinking beyond the human condition. There is no Being beyond becoming, rather intuition is possible because it conceives of a time other than the one Kant was able to think. Bergson is able to reorient rather than completely devalue metaphysics because, *contra* Kant and Nietzsche, he believes that the pure becoming of duration is the transcendental form of time and that intuition is the expanded perception of other durations, as we have seen. This marks the difference between the impossible 'intellectual intuition' of the *Frühromantiks* and Bergson's intuition of duration. Bergsonian intuition is the violent effort to expand perception to the point of becoming adequate to another duration and, at the limit, 'to see all things *sub specie durationis*.'[19] It is decidedly *not* the intuition of a Platonic, or even Spinozist, Being; it is *not* the 'intellectual love of God' as the capacity to see all things *sub specie æternitatis*. Romantic intuition entails the impossible 'search for the eternal!'[20] But for Bergson, Romantic intuition ultimately fails because it poses a false problem and attempts the search for a transcendent Being or Idea rather than the search for new durations. The Romantics conceptualize intuition while they remain trapped within the Platonic idea of being as well as the Kantian idea of time. An interesting point of difference-in-repetition between the Romantics and Bergson is that, although the methods of the *visionary* artist inspire the latter's conception of philosophical thinking, in his view philosophy must ultimately go

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[17] Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Zone Books, 1991), pp. 106-107. As we have seen, this comes straight out of Bergson insofar as intuition is defined as a method that allows us to 'go beyond the human state' since it 'affirms the existence of objects both inferior and superior to us.' Bergson, 'Introduction to Metaphysics' in *The Creative Mind*, pp. 163, 155

[18] Mullarkey, 'The Very Life of Things' in Bergson, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. xxv

[19] Henri Bergson, 'Philosophical Intuition' in *The Creative Mind*, p. 106

[20] Bergson, *The Creative Mind,* p. 18

beyond art.[21] Duration is the transcendental form of time, as Deleuze and Bergson demonstrate, which is entirely continuous with the world of normal empirical time. Duration and empirical time only point to 'two directions [*sens*] and not two *worlds*: contraction and relaxation' of the faculty of perception.[22] But it takes the violent effort of an expanded perception, a 'transcendental' empiricism, to reach this duration. Bergson says this 'true empiricism' of duration is the 'real metaphysics' and Deleuze fully embraces Bergson on this point even as he distances himself from the language of truth. One of Deleuze's key insights here is that, if thinking *qua* the method of intuition is wholly a question of perception, we must conceive the effort of thinking as a matter of expanding, rather than 'correcting,' this perception. And, for him, art is philosophy's equal in its capacity to think in this way.

For the most part, Deleuze remains fully Bergsonian in his critique *qua* reversal of metaphysics. Thus when he says 'I am a pure metaphysician,' we should take this metaphysics to be precisely Bergson's version of metaphysics.[23] But Deleuze also agrees with Nietzsche's critique of truth and sees the latter's philosophy of the 'shortest shadow' as indispensable for his own critique of judgment. However, the mere comedic inversion of metaphysics ultimately invites the advent of nihilism and doesn't do enough to move beyond Kantianism. In short, Deleuze follows Bergson in the critique of metaphysics and Nietzsche in the critique of truth. He believes completely in Bergsonian intuition as a philosophical method for going beyond both Kantianism and the human condition, but he parts ways with Bergson to the extent that the later still uses or insinuates a notion of truth. Deleuze would say, *contra* Nietzsche, that intuition enables us to remove the 'veil' of normal, attenuated perception, but he would also say, *with* Nietzsche, that 'we can longer believe that truth remains truth when one pulls off this veil.'[24] Éric Alliez argues that the Bergsonism of Deleuze's *Cinema* books is one 'cleansed of any spiritualism of presence (presence, as Deleuze says, is too pious)'; as such it is a Bergsonism '*oltre Bergson, via Nietzsche.*'[25] As we have already seen, the first part of this statement is indubitable — despite the numerous references to *esprit* and *automate spirituel* in *Cinema 2* — to any rigorous reader of Deleuze. However, the operation Deleuze performs on Bergson is much more subtle than the second part of this statement allows, in that Deleuze finds a properly Nietzschean moment *within* Bergson himself. Furthermore, this philosophical operation already takes place in the early 1960s, twenty years before the

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[21] 'Art enables us, no doubt, to discover in things more qualities and more shades than we naturally perceive. It dilates our perception, but on the surface rather than in depth. It enriches our present, but it scarcely enables us to go beyond it. Through philosophy we can accustom ourselves never to isolate the present from the past which it pulls along with it. Thanks to philosophy, all things acquire depth, more than depth, something like a fourth dimension which permits anterior perceptions to remain bound up with present perceptions, and the immediate future itself to become partly outlined in the present. Reality no longer appears the in the static state, in its manner of being; it affirms itself dynamically, in the continuity and variability of its tendency.' Henry Bergson, 'Perception of Change' in *The Creative Mind*, p. 131. Of course, Deleuze's version of this story is that art and philosophy (as well as science) are capable of the highest form of thought.

[22] Deleuze, 'Lecture Course on Chapter Three of Bergson's *Creative Evolution'* in *SubStance*, p. 81

[23] Gilles Deleuze, 'Response to a Series of Questions' in *Collapse* III (2007), p. 42

[24] Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p. 8

[25] Éric Alliez, 'Midday, Midnight' in Gregory Flaxman, ed., *The Brain is the Screen* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), p. 297. David Rodowick also claims that while the thesis of *Cinema 1* is heavily indebted to Bergson, Nietzsche displaces him in *Cinema 2* as the more important ally for thinking the 'time-image.' See D.N. Rodowick, *Gilles Deleuze's Time Machine* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), pp. 121-138. While we would agree with the general thrust of these positions, they are grossly over-stated and fail to grasp the philosophical nuances of Deleuze's use of Bergson.

publication of the *Cinema* books, and even before his early works on Nietzsche and Bergson, as transcripts of an early lecture course on the third chapter of Bergson's *Creative Evolution* reveal.[26] Deleuze remains faithful to Bergson by finding in him a Nietzschean-style critique of metaphysics. And, ultimately, he presents a Bergsonism *oltre* Nietzsche by suggesting that we move beyond Nietzsche's perspectivism — which concedes too much to Kant — by suturing Bergson's concepts of intuition and fabulation.

Fabulation and the power of the false

Heidegger defines art as a 'happening of truth' which fundamentally means that it opens up, or discloses, a world. While this conception of art is intimately connected to his understanding of *poiesis* it remains undecided, and is indeed a point of contention amongst scholars, whether such disclosure involves real creation — the creation of the *new* — rather than simply a lifting of the veil. Unfortunately, we cannot hope to get a decisive answer *vis-à-vis* Heidegger's philosophy, but the very problem does shed some light upon Deleuze's rather obscure conception of the 'power of the false.' Of course, Deleuze's philosophy of difference is in line with Heidegger's rejection of the correspondence theory of truth, which depends upon an empirical relation between two or more self-identical objects within a fully disclosed world. But Deleuze, unlike his contemporary Alain Badiou, sees no use for *any* notion of truth and is not interested in reinventing the significance of the term. And while he doesn't directly attack Heidegger's concept of *aletheia*, he is particularly disgusted by the notion of the unveiling of a secret, the logic of which he attributes to a certain tendency in French literature *contra* the pure creation of 'lines of flight' in, for example, Beat literature.[27] So it is safe to say that the idea of truth as the disclosure of hitherto unknown realms would not appeal to him on at least two accounts. It seems that Deleuze's conception of the 'power of the false' — in addition to replacing the 'power of judgment' of Kantian aesthetics — also directly attempts to remove any trace of ambiguity in Heidegger's conception of *poiesis*. It is not mere disclosure but involves real creation; that is, the word 'false' emphasizes the process of *differentiation*, understood in Deleuze's specific sense. Creation cannot be the simple repetition of the same and should therefore be distinguished from both mimesis and habit; it is the power of the false precisely as the power to *not* correspond. Furthermore, 'bringing forth' is not enough unless this movement is clearly qualified as the creation of the new. Like Heidegger, Deleuze reserves the title of 'art' for a creative act (*poiesis*) that becomes more or less adequate to the force of *phusis*. But the movement of *phusis* for Deleuze necessarily involves a

[26] Deleuze, 'Lecture Course on Chapter Three of Bergson's *Creative Evolution*'

[27] On this theme, see Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, 'On the Superiority of Anglo-American Literature' in *Dialogues II*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), pp. 36-76; Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, 'Three Novellas, or "What Happened?"' in *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), pp. 192-207

continuous renewal, a continuous differentiation from itself: 'becoming is the power of the false.' Therefore, 'artistic becoming' is defined by a '*will* to power.'[28]

Deleuze's conception of the power of the false comes directly from Nietzsche's critique of truth, which is fundamentally grounded on the latter's opposition to Kant's *noumenal* world understood as 'another world, a world-beyond, the truthful world.'[29] In *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche writes:

> It is error that has made mankind so profound, tender, inventive as to produce such a flower as the arts and religions. Pure knowledge would have been incapable of it. Anyone who unveiled to us the nature of the world would produce for us the most unpleasant disappointment. It is not the world as thing in itself, it is the world as idea (as error) that is so full of significance.[30]

Deleuze takes this idea of the invention of errors and connects it to the late Nietzsche's conception of the will to power in order to give new significance to Nietzsche's privileging of the artist. Deleuze claims that the production of art raises this fabulatory function to the highest affirmative power. That is, art magnifies the world as error:

> The world is nether true nor real but living. And the living world is will to power, *will to falsehood*, which is actualized in many different powers. To actualize the will to falsehood under any power whatever, to actualize the will to power under any quality whatever, is always to evaluate. To live is to evaluate. there is no truth of the world as it is thought, no reality of the sensible world, all is evaluation, even and above all the sensible and the real. Being, truth, and reality are themselves only valid as evaluations, that is to say, lies.... Three fundamental points in Nietzsche's philosophy are borne in mind: not the true nor the real but evaluation; not affirmation as acceptance but as creation; not man but the Overman as a new form of life. Nietzsche attaches so much importance to art because art realizes the whole of this program: the highest power of the false, Dionysian affirmation and the genius of the superhuman.'[31]

Deleuze develops the concept of the power of the false more fully in *Cinema 2*. In his narrative of film history, he notes that the movement-image enters a crisis at some point in the mid-20th century in the sense that it begins to exhaust its creative possibilities. We have already challenged this linear, almost teleological history. But time-images are important as a species of movement-images in which — due to the direct presentation of time — each of the elements of perception, affection, and action become 'out of joint' and therefore become reified within the image. This shift from the indirect representation of time in the movement-image to the direct presentation of time in the time-image should be understood as a thematization of the shift from normal, empirical perception to Bergsonian intuition. Deleuze likes to say that 'the subordination of time to movement is reversed, time ceases to be the measurement of normal movement, it increasingly appears for itself and creates paradoxical movements.'[32] Despite the appearance of an *ontological* shift in the two volumes from movement to time, this shift is simply an epistemological one from an Aristotelian view of time as spatially quantified — time as the *measure* of movement — to a Bergsonian view of time as qualitative duration. And despite Deleuze's assertion that it was Kant who initiated this reversal, his thesis, at least on this point,

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[28] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), pp. 141-142

[29] Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), p. 98

[30] Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, p. 27

[31] Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. 184-185

[32] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. xi

would be all the more powerful if we follow Bergson rather than read the strict movement-time dualism as an essential element of Deleuze's film-philosophy. In the end, Kant only inverts this binary by subordinating measured space to measured time. As John Mullarkey correctly notes, 'Bergson's thesis is not about the movement-time binary in fact (which he wouldn't recognize at all), but one concerning measure and immeasure, or quantity and quality. Kant simply internalized space and called it time. Bergson instead wants time to be understood as *qualitative movement, that is, to have its qualitative actuality restored*. Movement is not a mere "actual" to time's "virtual" — it *is* the time of the living world. Movement *is* Time.'[33] The crucial difference between the two volumes concerns not simply a shift from movement- to time-images; in Bergson's view there is simply no ontological difference between movement and time. Rather, what is important is that, as the result of a cinematic intuition of duration — which Deleuze calls here a shock to thought or a direct presentation of 'time as force' — the normal relations between percepts, affects, and actions are short-circuited forcing one to create new connections between them. For a moment, we no longer know how to act or think; we become seers just as 'the landscape becomes hallucinatory,' that is, unrecognizable.[34] There is an 'out of joint' of these relations that cannot be resolved by appealing to a transcendent world as idea (Kant), the disclosure of a world as essentially true (Heidegger), or by attempting to fabricate a higher world as an organic whole (Eisenstein). What is ultimately distinctive about the new regime of images is that it produces unresolved or broken *movement*, false continuities, and non-localizable relations. We are presented with the pure force of time that puts truth in crisis, 'a chronic non-chronological time which produces movements necessarily 'abnormal' and essentially 'false.'[35] Deleuze often discusses the consequences of the power of the false in terms of incompossible presents and the coexistance of not-necessarily true pasts. While this exhibition of multiple times that are not reducible to the empirical present sometimes has important consequences for the trajectory of narrative, more fundamentally it points to the opening up of other durations, which is signaled by expanded perception — or intuition — as we saw in the last chapter. Deleuze clearly states that

> what is in the present is whatever the image 'represents,' but not the image itself. The image itself is a bunch of temporal relations from which the present unfolds, either as a common multiplier or a common denominator. Temporal relations are never seen in ordinary perception, but they can be seen in the image, provided the image is creative. The image renders visible, and creative, the temporal relations which can not be reduced to the present.... The time-image is entirely founded in the coexistance of heterogeneous durations.[36]

False movement in action, whether as gesture or narration, is a *consequence* of the breakdown of habitual, continuous movement of the sensory-motor system. What is primary is the creation of a hallucinatory optical and sound situation in which the subject — character *or* spectator — becomes a seer and begins to co-create an entirely new *Umwelt*.

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[33] John Mullarkey, *Refractions of Reality: Philosophy and the Moving Image* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2009), p. 99
[34] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 129
[35] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 129
[36] Gilles Deleuze, 'The Brain is the Screen' in *Two Regimes of Madness*, trans. Ames Hodges and Mike Taormina (New York: Semiotexte, 2006), pp. 290-291

Again, this seer is not a Romantic genius or mystic, since the world that opens as a result of the intuition of a time-image is not a true world, any way we choose to slice it. Given this crucial aspect of Deleuze's film-philosophy, Malcolm Turvey's charge of 'revelationism' — a tendency of certain filmmakers and theorists, including Vertov, Balázs, Epstein, and Kracauer, who supposedly claim that 'human vision fails to see the *true* nature of reality' and that cinema offers a corrective to this deficiency — ultimately does not hold.[37] The seer opens a new *Umwelt* beyond the normal Kantian coordinates even as these new coordinates are not coextensive with some true, or *noumenal,* world. The seer is the opposite of the 'truthful man' who wants 'nothing other than to judge life,' who 'holds up a superior value, the good, in the name of which he will be able to judge.'[38] In *The Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche famously claims that 'We have abolished the true world: what world is left? The apparent world perhaps?... But no! with the true world we have also abolished the apparent world.'[39] After the critique of transcendent metaphysics, there is no longer any stable frame of reference, no true perspective from which to judge our position in the world. But, Deleuze asks: 'What remains? There remain bodies, which are forces, nothing but forces. But force no longer refers to a center, any more than it confronts a setting or obstacles. It only confronts other forces, it refers to other forces that it affects or affect it.... Nietzsche already substituted affect for judgment.'[40]

The intuition of time-images opens up, or rather creates, an unrecognizable *Umwelt* — an environment rather than a world — of pure affects and percepts by plunging into new layers of duration. This hallucinatory shock disorients the seer who is initially unable to proceed smoothly into action but, because the normal circuits of the body-brain have been short-circuited, the seer is only able to exhibit broken gestures and broken movements. We will define cinematic *poiesis* as consisting of two stages. First is the co-creation of a new frame, a pure optical and sonic situation. Beyond Bergson, in a direct time-image, the movement of circuits that course through the body-brain are fed by a power of the false that injects a crack or fissure within subjectivity, displacing the I and provoking an unharnessed and 'untrue' redistribution of sensibility. Second, and beyond Deleuze, rather than being simply and entirely sublimated to virtual or affective movement, these circuits well up and continue to course through the brain, albeit a brain redefined in a way that enfolds all the unhinged circuits of perception, affection, *and* action. There is no clean break of the sensory-motor circuit here, even if there is a momentary affective shock to thought. The passivity that would apparently result from such a break — along with its ethical, political, and creative consequences, including all the paralyzed mummies and zombies, of *Cinema 2* — is replaced with the plasticity of this circuit, creating new albeit

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[37] Malcolm Turvey, *Doubting Vision: Film and the Revelationist Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 49. He includes Bergson and Deleuze in this camp of revelationists on pages 93-98. For precisely the same reason, we must dismiss Rancière's charge that Deleuze's history of cinema, insofar as it fulfills the Romantic ideals of Epstein's film theory, is a 'history of redemption.' Jacques Rancière, *Film Fables*, trans. Emiliano Battista (Oxford: Berg, 2006), p. 111

[38] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 137

[39] Nietzsche, 'The Twilight of the Idols' in *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, ed. Aaron Ridley and Judith Norman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 50

[40] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, pp. 139, 141

broken connections, movements, and gestures. These broken gestures involve the creation of a new plane of immanence that makes the resolution into a final and stable form impossible:

> Everything is changed in the perspective of time as becoming. What we can criticize in the forgers, as well as in the truthful man, is their exaggerated taste for *form*: they have neither the sense nor the power of metamorphosis; they reveal an impoverishment of the vital force, of an already exhausted life.... Only the creative artist takes the power of the false to a degree that is realized, not in form,but in transformation. There is no longer either truth or appearance.[41]

Deleuze claims that the seer 'continually passes the frontier between the real and the fictional (the power of the false, the story-telling function [*la fonction de fabulation*].)'[42] The interesting point about this statement is that here he is explicitly conflating the power of the false with Bergson's concept of fabulation, which is unfortunately rendered here — as it is in the English version of his *Two Sources of Morality and Religion* — as 'story-telling function.' This translation is unfortunate because Bergson himself makes it clear that fabulation is not simply a type of imagination, but a 'faculty' in its own right, a 'virtual instinct'[43] that works in a way similar to attentive recognition, where memory fills in the gaps at the limit of perception, creating or reconstructing objects whose details are left unperceived. John Mullarkey further explains that, for Bergson, 'perception is closely related to fabulation: they both fragment (by selection) our experience of "the real," although to some degree they are also both redeemable or "defragmentable" ... through art.'[44] But Deleuze performs a remarkable operation on Bergson's thought such that the 'fragmenting' process of Bergsonian fabulation and the 'defragmenting' process of creating art are conjoined. He does this by suturing a Nietzschian reading of fabulation with the creative emotion involved in the intuition of duration, which already in Bergson share a similar structure but are in fact polar opposites in the sense that the former leads to closed societies while the latter leads to open societies.

Bergsonian fabulation serves a key socio-biological function in the formation of what he calls 'closed societies,' which 'include at each moment a certain number of individuals and so to exclude others.'[45] Social instinct serves to protect the community as a whole from outside forces, both psychologically, since it produces quasi-hallucinatory myths, religions, and moral codes that placate the existential dread of impending death, as well as physically, since these myths bring the group together as a cohesive unit that can more easily defend itself against malicious external threats. It is therefore precisely the function behind what Nietzsche calls the cumulative construction of 'errors that have made mankind so profound, tender, inventive as to produce such a flower as the arts and religions.'[46] This comparison is justified further when Bergson describes fabulation as a 'systematically false experience, as an 'error' that is ultimately 'beneficial to the species.'[47] On the individual level, fabulation

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[41] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 146
[42] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 153
[43] Henri Bergson, *Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, trans. R. Ashley Audra and Cloudesley Brereton (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977), pp. 195, 110
[44] Mullarkey, *Refractions of Reality,* p. 180
[45] Bergson, *Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, p. 30
[46] Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, p. 27
[47] Bergson, *Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, p. 110

also works, together with perception, to anthropomorphize, name, and therefore attempt to render less frightening, certain traumatic natural processes that could be classified in terms of the Kantian sublime. It attempts to arrest and unify these threatening processes at a primitive level of cognition by individuating and intentionalizing them by naming them as Events.[48] Bergson describes William James's account of his experience of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake in precisely these terms. James 'personifies' the disparate, impersonal forces of the earthquake by naming it and thus 'transforms the situation, evoking a reassuring image.' This 'lends to the Event a unity and an individuality which make of it a mischievous, maybe a malignant, being, but still one of ourselves, with something sociable and human about it.'[49] Bergson argues that this faculty lies at the heart of fiction as well as many other creative activities, including 'the novel, the drama, mythology together with all that preceded it ... therefore, poetry and fantasy of all kinds.'[50] But the crucial point to remember is that, in all these cases, Bergson believes that the origin of the fabulatory function lies in a direct, mostly unconscious, reaction to some felt trauma, a 'sudden shock' which produces an 'incipient hallucination' that 'may indeed masquerade as perception and in that way prevent or modify action.'[51] Furthermore, this alternation between a psychological and aesthetic understanding of fabulation allows us to complete the circuit between the creation and experience of such works of art. In this respect, John Mullarkey suggests that when 'fiction moves us, the result resembles what caused the origin of fabulation in the first place: an "incipient hallucination."'[52]

For Deleuze, the notion of fabulation is usually understood narrowly as one of the political tasks of the modern artist: to fabricate a 'people to come' that would be adequate to his or her vision. But in *What is Philosophy?* he expands upon this notion to include what he sees as the function of art: the construction of larger-than-life images that transform habitual representations. 'Creative fabulation ... goes beyond the perceptual states and the affective transitions of the lived. The artist is a seer, a becomer.'[53] That is, fabulation for Deleuze is precisely the creative rending of a set of percepts and affects from the chaosmos that would subsequently enable the invention of a people to come. He wants to 'take up Bergson's notion of fabulation and give it a political meaning,' which means first of all stripping it of its connection with closed societies.[54] What he finds useful in Bergson's fabulation is its associations with shocking hallucinations that disrupt the flow of experience beyond the everyday

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[48] Bergson, *Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, p. 157. Bergsonian fabulation can indeed be understood as a full-fledged theory of the event [*Evénement*] that precedes Heidegger's conception by three years. And, much more than Heidegger's, this theory of the event clearly informs Deleuze's own.

[49] Bergson, *Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, p. 158. It is perhaps more than a coincidence that Bergson chooses James's experience of an earthquake to illustrate his point, since 'thunder, storm, earthquake, etc.' are the primary examples Kant lists as evoking an experience of the dynamically sublime. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, trans. Paul Guyer (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2000), p. 146

[50] Bergson, *Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, p. 108

[51] Bergson, *Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, pp. 160, 109

[52] Mullarkey, *Refractions of Reality,* p. 180

[53] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?,* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 170

[54] Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 174

capacities of 'judgment and reason.'[55] But he wants to replace the 'infra-intellectual emotion' that insures fabulation does not pass into the realm of true creation, art, and open societies with the 'supra-intellectual emotion' that is more or less adequate to the *élan vital* and therefore allows the creation of the new. For Bergson, an infra-intellectual emotion is the 'consequence of an idea or a represented image,' a habitual and socially-coded feeling elicited by an external representation. By contrast, a supra-intellectual emotion 'is not determined by a representation which it follows and from which it is distinct.' Rather, it is 'pregnant with representations, no one of which is actually formed, but which it draws or might draw from its substance by an organic development.'[56] That is, 'alongside the emotion which is the effect of a representation and which is added to it, there is he emotion which preceded representation, which contains it virtually and which to a certain point is its cause.'[57] Every new supra-intellectual emotion 'is the source of the great creations of art, science, and civilization in general.'[58] Insofar as supra-intellectual emotion is connected to the *élan vital* — indeed, 'it *is* this impetus itself, communicated in its entirety to exceptional men'[59] — it is precisely the creative emotion or 'cosmic memory' Deleuze associates with intuition. While these two qualitatively distinct emotions both involve a shock to thought, the first is 'a sudden shock [that] paralyses' action and creates instead false hallucinations.[60] The second involves a more fundamental 'shock to the soul' that triggers 'the passing from the static to the dynamic, from the closed to the open.'[61] It is a shock that is ultimately 'consummated in action.'[62] But Deleuze wants it both ways: for him, the task of all art involves the fabulation of false or hallucinatory percepts and affects that demand, and help usher, a people to come insofar as they perpetuate *actions* and the creation of an open society. These actions cannot simply be the 'superficial activities' of habitual, everyday life but must be *broken gestures* that are initially unrecognizable.[63]

In a play on the title of Bergson's book, Deleuze says that 'art, according to Bergson, has two sources. There is a *fabulatory* art, sometimes collective, sometimes individual and there is a ... *creative* art. Perhaps all art presents these two aspects, but in variable proportions. Bergson does not hide the fact that the fabulatory aspect seems to him to be inferior to art: the novel would above all be fabulation; music, on the contrary, creation.'[64] One way to read this statement is as the denial of a hierarchical taxonomy of the arts but, more importantly, the combination of fabulation and creation within *any* art

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[55] Bergson, *Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, p. 109
[56] Bergson, *Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, pp. 43-44
[57] Bergson, *Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, p. 47
[58] Bergson, *Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, p. 43
[59] Bergson, *Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, p. 235
[60] Bergson, *Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, p. 160
[61] Bergson, *Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, p. 229
[62] Bergson, *Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, p. 212. Interestingly enough, while William James's experience of the 1906 earthquake serves as one of Bergson's main examples of the first type of shock, James's experience on nitrous oxide is described as an example of the second type. However, Bergson expresses caution here and suggests that this latter experience 'might have been evoked spiritually by an effort made on its own spiritual level. But it could just as well be brought about materially, by an inhibition of what inhibited it, by the removing of an obstacle.' *Ibid.*, p. 218
[63] Bergson, *Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, p. 160
[64] Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, p. 134 n. 36. Translation modified.

means that Deleuze assigns to art two distinct tasks that together evoke a people to come: a radical *aisthesis* understood as the pre-gestural creation of new percepts and affects and a radical *poiesis* that leads to the creation of non-habitual or broken gestures. In this sense, art conceived as a fabulatory power of the false requires the help of both Bergson and Nietzsche, since the former offers a philosophically robust post-Kantian theory of intuition as expanded perception, while the latter offers clues on how to construct an idea of creation as the will to invent another, 'divinely artificial' art. Both of these movements are qualified as 'false' in that they demand real creation as distinguished from both habit and mimesis. Fabulation creates visions and gestures that falsify and critique received truths, breaking historical continuities and conventional narratives. As in Deleuze's conception of *phusis*, the term 'false' emphasizes the process of *differentiation* rather than the simple repetition of the same. In the realm of cinematic creation, it implies a future politics as the redistribution of sensation, duration, and gesture. We would like to speculate here that this tripartite redistribution — although it applies to subjectivation in general through encounters with *sentendia*, *memoranda*, and *cogitanda* — happens more specifically for the cinematic artist in conjunction with her chosen technical apparatus in the co-creation of a new *Umwelt*, or environment.

Art as the fabulation of Umwelt

As an empiricist, Deleuze argues that there is a clear directionality from *sentendia* to *cogitanda* in the encounter, but he also suggests that analyzing this movement into individual parts would be a pointless intellectual task since, for example, 'the second moment is inseparable from the first.'[65] Nonetheless, we claim that the moment of fabulatory intuition, or expanded perception, that we discussed at length in chapter two roughly corresponds to the 'first' moment of the encounter in the creation of a new *frame*, that is, the creation of new sensations in the form of percepts and affects. As we have seen, Deleuze defines the frame simply as an immobile carving-out of perception from the whole of duration; it is a closed set that defines the borders of a particular milieu. Expanded perception, with or without film, would simply be the establishment of new coordinates of this frame. It would be less straightforward to map the *shot* as plan(e) of immanence onto the moment of *memorandum,* but we can clearly locate the creation of this plane somewhere between pure *aisthesis* and pure *poiesis*. Furthermore, it utilizes all the resources of sensation and memory in order to initiate the first stirrings of real thought by eradicating old habits and cliches. The encounter is the bearer of a fundamental 'problem' we are forced to explicate. And if we allow it to move towards its transcendental limit, it forces the burgeoning of that which can only be thought. The being of thought, the *cogitandum,* is not an idea for Deleuze but rather, depending upon one's particular proclivity, the broken concepts, functions, or gestures that are *composed*

[65] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 158

in the attempted explication of the problem the encounter forces us to pose. That is, Deleuze believes that pure thought takes place not only in the ideas of reason, but in the creations of the philosopher, scientist, and artist. More generally, the being of thought is what Deleuze calls 'essence:' the final coming-to of a new *Umwelt* which envelops the thinking subject. We will discuss more fully the development of the cinematic shot and composition in the next two sections. For now, we should explicate more clearly the concept of *Umwelt*, of which the establishment of a new frame is the first instantiation.

Although Deleuze's philosophy of art is indebted to the work of biologist Jakob von Uexküll, he doesn't make a habit of using the word *Umwelt*, the central term of Uexküll's ethology. This is most likely a strategic move that is meant to distinguish his position from the term's use in phenomenology. Heidegger was drawn to Uexküll because he found in his biological writings ideas that Heidegger believed might help him in thinking through the concept of Being-in-the-World. But he ultimately parts ways with Uexküll to the extent that the latter gives no privilege of place for human Dasein in his schema. Heidegger says:

> The whole approach does become philosophically problematic if we proceed to talk about the human world in the same manner. It is true that amongst the biologists Uexküll is the one who has repeatedly pointed out with the greatest emphasis that what the animal stands in relation to is given for it in a different way than it is for the human being. Yet this is precisely the place where the decisive problem lies concealed and demands to be exposed.[66]

Insofar as Heidegger's phenomenology depends upon a radical separation between animal and human, he becomes frustrated and ultimately confused about how to proceed with Uexküll's findings, a confusion that is expressed by shifting emphasis on the words *Umwelt* and *Welt* as well as in his use of phrases like 'thoroughly enigmatic' and 'here we become involved in insoluble difficulties.'[67] The late Merleau-Ponty's metaphysics of nature is grounded upon an understanding of the world beyond the confines of human Dasein and more in terms of the fundamental 'openness' of *Umwelt*.[68] And remarkably, his 'theory of the flesh' seems to be directly inspired by his reading of Uexküll's *Umwelt*, '(that is, the world + my body).'[69] In any case, for Uexküll, *Umwelt* is the site that enfolds an animal with its environment. It outlines the spatio-temporal coordinates defined by the possible range of percepts, affects, and meaningful signs, given the animal's neurological and biological makeup. It is the phenomenal world of the animal in contrast to the *Umgebung*, which would be the objective, or *noumenal*, world in its totality. Uexküll's *Umwelt* should be understood as a 'bubble' that surrounds and contains the perceptual world of an animal:

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[66] Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, trans. William McNeill and Nicholas Walker (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), pp. 263-264

[67] Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics,* pp. 241, 246. Incidentally, Agamben's concepts of 'bare life' and 'the open' take as one of their philosophical starting points this impasse in Heidegger's thought. And he goes back to Uexküll in order to rethink the solution. See for example Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal,* trans. Kevin Attell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), pp. 39-47

[68] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 1968), pp. 185-186

[69] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Nature: Course Notes from the Collège de France*, trans. Robert Vallier (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 2003), pp. 209, 216

> We must imagine all the animals that animate Nature around, be they beetles, butterflies, gnats, or dragonflies who populate a meadow, as having a soap bubble around them, closed on all sides, which closes off their visual space and in which everything visible for the subject is also enclosed. Each bubble shelters other places, and in each are also found the directional planes of effective space, which give a solid scaffolding to space. The birds that flutter about, the squirrels hopping from branch branch, or the cows grazing in the meadow, all remain permanently enclosed in the bubble that encloses their space.[70]

But, insofar as the *Umwelt* must permanently enclose the animal, Deleuze will opt out, preferring instead his concept of territory which — together with the movements of deterritorialization and reterritorialization — implies that this bubble neither is fixed *a priori* in the transcendental or intentional subject, nor is it simply open. Rather, at least for more developed animals, it is *necessarily* co-created in each new encounter with the environment. In this way, Deleuze both avoids the clear Kantian pedigree of *Umwelt* — and therefore all the philosophical baggage such a pedigree entails — as well as bypasses the discussions concerning 'world' that are internal to the phenomenological tradition, from Being-in-the-World to enfolded flesh. Nonetheless, if we keep in mind these understandable reservations, *Umwelt* is perhaps a useful term since it connects Deleuze's early descriptions of *cogitanda* as essences — which 'are veritable monads, each defined by the viewpoint to which it expresses the world'[71] — to his late musings on territorialization — which is simultaneously the birth of art and, following Nietzsche's imperative in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 'the creation of a new earth.'[72]

In *Proust and Signs*, Deleuze describes the last stage of individuation — the coming-to of thinking and creating subjectivity — as the encounter with an 'essence' or *cogitandum*. This is the moment that an *Umwelt* finally opens itself for a subject:

> Each subject expresses an absolutely different world.... Essence is indeed the final quality at the heart of a subject, but this quality is deeper than the subject, of a different order.... It is not the subject that explains essence, rather it is essence that implicates, envelopes, wraps, itself up in the subject. Rather, in coiling around itself, it is essence that constitutes subjectivity. It is not individuals that constitute the world, but the worlds enveloped, the essences that constitute individuals.... Essence is not only individual, it *individuates*.[73]

We can forgive Deleuze for using the term 'essence' in this early text since, first of all, he takes it directly from Proust. Second of all, it is replaced four years later, in *Difference and Repetition,* with the term *cogitandum*. In *What is Philosophy?* it is unnamed as such but is still very much evoked as that which forces us 'to find one's bearings in thought' and to subsequently express this thought with composed sensations, functions, or concepts.[74] What is important is that, in each case, it provokes one to open onto an *Umwelt*, to (re)construct a 'zone of indiscernibility' in the face of chaos. Likewise, in *A*

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[70] Jakub von Uexküll, *A Foray into the Worlds of Animals and Humans*, trans. Joseph O'Neil (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), p. 69

[71] Gilles Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, trans. Richard Howard (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), p. 41

[72] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 510. Nietzsche's creative imperative for the nomadic *Übermensch* is to 'shift all boundary stones. For him all boundary stones themselves will fly into the air and he will christen the earth anew — as "the light one."' Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, trans. Adrian del Caro (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 154

[73] Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, pp. 42-43

[74] Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* p. 37

Thousand Plateaus, the term 'world' in *Proust and Signs* is, as we have already mentioned, clarified through the work of Uexküll but it becomes milieu or territory rather than *Umwelt*.

Deleuze credits Uexküll as one of the main founders of ethology, which is normally understood to be the science of animal behavior. But in Deleuze's Spinozist reading of Uexküll, behavior is made secondary to the study of affects within and between bodies:

> You will define an animal, or a human being not by its form, its organs, and its functions, and not as a subject either; you will define it by the affects of which it is capable.... Uexküll will do this for the tick, an animal that sucks the blood of mammals. he will define this animal by three affects: the first has to do with light (climb to the top of a branch); the second is olfactive (let yourself fall onto the mammal that passes beneath the branch). and the third it thermal (seek the area without fur, the warmest spot).[75]

In this well-known example, the tick is defined as inhabiting a milieu demarcated by only three affects; everything that lies outside these affects is a matter of total indifference. The emphasis is neither on the extensive properties of the tick *per se* — for example, 'its form, its organs, and its functions' — nor of the environment, but on the affective *relations* between them at the level of the 'body without organs,' which is traversed by the sensory qualities of light, scent, and heat that themselves determine possible actions.[76] It should be apparent that, in the sense being employed here, the word affect is simply shorthand for the range of percepts, affects, and actions that define the contours of an *Umwelt*. The object of study in ethology is displaced onto horizontal relations between bodies such that the tick-in-the-environment is reduced to nothing more than a set of 'waves and vibrations, migrations, thresholds and gradients, intensities.'[77] Although a tick is effectively trapped within its bubble-world, animals with more complex neural development are able to form territories in that they break away from instinctually repetitive coding within a milieu.[78] According to Bergson and Deleuze, this creative capacity is pushed to the limit in humans, since they are 'capable of rediscovering all the levels, all the degrees of expansion and contraction ... that, elsewhere, can only be embodied in different species.'[79] For Uexküll, territory is a specialized milieu, 'a problem of the environment because it represents an exclusively subjective product' for relatively developed animals. 'One might now ask, "Which animals have a territory, and which do not?" A housefly whose *repeated* back and forth flight marks a certain segment of space does not have, by that right, a territory. On the other hand, a spider who builds a nest in which it is permanently *active* has home which is also its territory.'[80] The fundamental difference between milieu and territory is that, in the latter, the bubble that demarcates an *Umwelt* is porous and

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[75] Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, trans. Robert Hurley (San Francisco: City Lights, 1988), p. 124

[76] Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, p. 124

[77] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 153 'Nietzsche does not hesitate: there exists a justice that is opposed to all judgment, according to which bodies are affected by each other ... following the *finite blocks* that circulate in a territory.' Deleuze, 'To Have done with Judgment,' pp. 127-128

[78] Here Deleuze also relies upon the work of the philosopher of biology Raymond Ruyer, who has developed a whole schema for distinguishing levels of complexity in living beings from molecules to humans. In this schema there is a point at which, for certain higher-order animals, the '*Umwelt* is subordinated and differentiated into a distinct form ... that simultaneously includes organic circuits of the milieu as well as extra-organic circuits of the territory.' Raymond Ruyer, *La genèse des formes vivantes* (Paris: Flammarion, 1958), p. 230

[79] Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, p. 107

[80] Uexküll, *A Foray into the Worlds of Animals and Humans*, p. 103. My emphasis.

able to be redefined in the sense that the range and extent of possible affective relations are mutable. Species that are able to form territories are, as Uexküll suggests, relatively active — *creative* — rather than mere creatures of instinct and habit, who treat affects as fixed codes that demand only one type of solution.

One striking example Deleuze uses is that of the brown Stagemaker, a bird who picks leaves off a particular tree and constructs a 'display-court' by placing them pale side up on the ground. In Deleuze's terminology, the leaves are 'deterritorialized' from the milieu and become expressive. 'Can this becoming, this emergence, be called Art?... The Stagemaker practices *art brut*. Artists are Stagemakers.'[81] This undecidable question blurs the hard distinction between the capacities of animals and humans and, therefore, between nature and artifice. That is, the transition from milieu to territory introduces the possibility of seemingly 'unnatural' transcodings — which rewire the organic circuits of nature with all sorts of extra-functional broken gestures and false movements — *within* nature itself:

> Uexküll has elaborated an admirable theory of of *transcodings*. He sees the components as melodies in counterpoint, each of which serves as a motif for another: Nature as music. Whenever there is transcoding, we can be sure that there is not a simple addition, but the constitution of a new plane, as of a surplus value. A melodic or rhythmic plane, surplus value of passage or bridging.... *Territory* is not a milieu, not even an additional milieu, nor a rhythm or passage between milieus. The territory is in fact an *act* that affects milieus.[82]

It is quite possible that art begins in the animal kingdom, as the synaesthete composer Olivier Messiaen suggests when he says that certain birds are 'the greatest musicians existing on our planet.'[83] His own compositions of birdsong — which blur even further the nature/artifice divide — utilize ametric rhythms, which 'scorn repetition, straightforwardness, and equal divisions. In short, it's music inspired by the movements of nature, movements of free and unequal durations.'[84] Remarkably, by durations Messiaen means not only segments of empirical time that constitute a broken rhythm, but also something close to Bergson or Deleuze's conception of duration: 'various time-scales superimposed on each other, which surround us. The endlessly long time of the stars, the very long time of the mountains, the middling one of the human being, the short one of insects, the very short one of atoms (not to mention the time-scales inherent in ourselves: the physiological, the psychological.'[85] Such music therefore involves not the habitual or metric repetition of the same, but a different and differentiating type of rhythm — understood as 'the unequal or the incommensurable that is always undergoing transcoding' — that stakes out a territory whether in nature or in art.[86]

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[81] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 316

[82] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 314

[83] Claude Samuel, *Conversations with Olivier Messiaen*, trans. Felix Aprahamian (London: Stainer & Bell, 1976), p. 51. Messiaen is interesting because he is a bi-directional synaesthete who composed a whole series of pieces by transcribing birdsong with his own 'method of composition to specifically convey music in color terms.' Richard Cytowic and David Eagleman, *Wednesday is Indigo Blue: Discovering the Brain of Synesthesia* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2009), p. 94

[84] Samuel, *Conversations with Olivier Messiaen*, p. 33. Deleuze refers to Messiaen's birdsong compositions as 'multiple chromatic durations in coalescence.' Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 309

[85] Messiaen quoted in Almut Rößler, *Contributions to the Spiritual World of Olivier Messiaen,* trans. Barbara Dagg (Duisburg: Gilles & Francke, 1986), p. 40

[86] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 313

> As Messiaen says, music is not the privilege of human beings: the universe, the cosmos, is made of refrains; the question in music is that of a power of deterritorialization permeating nature, animals, the elements, and deserts as much as human beings. The question is more what is not musical in human beings and what already is musical in nature. Moreover, what Messiaen discovered in music is the same things the ethologists discovered in animals: human beings are hardly at an advantage.[87]

The transition from habitual repetition to the constructive and deterritorializing rhythm of the 'refrain' fosters a new type of action; an action that is no longer organic or holistic but rather one constituted by an open set of broken gestures adequate to a power of the false. With Agamben, we could say that it is *poiesis* as *gerere* — a discontinuous gestation without end — that is itself grounded upon a 'polyphonic and contrapuntal conception of nature' instead of a purely teleological one.[88] Just as intuition as expanded perception becomes a creative fabulation that stretches the limits of our perceptual *Umwelt*, in the formation of a territory we have a conception of *creation* as false movement that deterritorializes the normal circuits of coded behavior. When we consider both Bergsonian fabulatory *aisthesis* together with Nietzschean *poiesis* as power of the false, we can begin to grasp what a cine-aesthetics might look like in its full glory. We will now consider in more detail how broken gestures emerge from this newly conceived *Umwelt*.

[87] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 309
[88] Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 185

3.3 Nomad art: Creating a new cinematic *plan*

In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari offer a description of what they call 'nomad art' by detailing its three primary characteristics: close-range vision, haptic space, and abstract line. In an attempt to unpack the significance of this provocative term, will now sketch the provenance of the first two of these characteristics, both of which come from Deleuze and Guattari's particular reading of Alois Riegl. Together, close-range vision and haptic space delineate the synaesthetic vision of the artist as well as the space s/he creates in the work. Walter Benjamin will be invoked as a sort of phantom link between Riegl and Deleuze, a link that will both provide the proper orientation towards the central aspect of the haptic — against a phenomenology of affect — as well as inject the necessary political significance into the discussion of nomad art.

Deleuze's appropriation of the Viennese art historian Alois Riegl for the development of his own philosophy of art is well documented. My aim here is not so much to recount systematically the intricacies of this appropriation than it is to highlight the theoretical stakes of misreading any of Deleuze's philosophical maneuvers. One of the most critical issues is the significance of the concept of the 'haptic,' since it is central to Riegl's art theory and since it also ultimately lies at the core of all three aspects of nomad art. I will attempt a philosophical genealogy of this term from Riegl to Deleuze, mediated through the work of Walter Benjamin. I specifically use Benjamin in order to save Deleuze from trends that uncritically employ the term haptic to develop seductive phenomenologies of 'multi-sensory media' or that — by freely connecting the term to psychological or psychoanalytic meanings of affect — reduce it to a function of embodied Being-in-the-world. My purpose is not to argue for a strong theoretical lineage from Benjamin to Deleuze, which would probably prove to be an impossible task, but rather to suggest that reading Deleuze's Riegl through Benjamin is one way of avoiding a collapse into phenomenology. The Benjaminian reading of Riegl is also useful since it imparts a political dimension to the latter's mostly apolitical analyses of art. In the end, I hope to show that the most important feature of a haptic *Kunstwollen*, or regime of art, for Benjamin and Deleuze is that it signals a non-Romantic and non-phenomenological aesthetics of shock, which takes its cue from the late-nineteenth century discourses concerning psychophysics and physiological psychology to which Riegl was directly responding.[1] This shock, rather than inducing a form of political quietism, necessitates an ethico-political response at the level of the work, that is, within the smooth space it draws.

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[1] Michael Podro argues that Riegl 'was taught philosophical psychology by the Herbartian Robert Zimmermann and history by Max Büdiger, who envisioned a general system world history. The Herbartian element was the more important, and if Riegl's formalist analysis of art always retained world-historical overtones, as it did, to focus upon this is to miss virtually everything that is now of interest in his writing.' *The Critical Historians of Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), p. 71

In *The Origin of German Tragic Drama* (1928), Benjamin adopts Riegl's art historical methodology and applies it to literature, in particular 17th century Baroque *Trauerspiel*. Although Benjamin only occasionally cites him directly, Riegl's concepts can be detected in essays connected to the themes of this book as early as 1916 and continued to play a central role throughout Benjamin's career including his famous essay 'The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility' (1935-1939).[2] In short, it is hard to overemphasize the influence of Riegl on the development of Benjamin's thought. Despite his relative reticence of this fact, we do have one explicit and emphatic declaration of allegiance — in a short review article, published a year after his *Trauerspiel* book, concerning 'four great works of German scholarship' that have 'remained alive' — in which he describes Riegl's *Late Roman Art Industry* as an

> epoch-making work that applied with prophetic certainty the sensitivity and insights of expressionism (which occurred twenty years later) to the monuments of the late Imperial period, [which] broke with the theory of 'periods of decline,' and recognized in what had previously been called 'regression into barbarism' a new experience of space, a new *Kunstwollen*.... Indeed, in the last four decades no art-historical book has had such a substantive and methodologically fruitful effect.[3]

Benjamin acknowledges that what drew him to Riegl was the constellation of a few ideas which revolve around the concept of *Kunstwollen*, an idea which helps us relate art objects to the broader cultural and spiritual concerns of a historical period. The details of a work are expressions of this *Kunstwollen*, a 'realm of perception that,' according to Benjamin, 'changes over time and in accordance with shifts in cultural and intellectual direction.'[4] Although Riegl himself sometimes confuses the matter by using language that might link *Kunstwollen* with the subjective will of an individual artist, he makes it clear that it is ultimately linked to the general cultural attitude of the period: 'The character of this *Wollen* is always determined by what may be termed the conception of the world at a given time [*Weltanschauung*].'[5] Modifying Rancière's vocabulary, the *Kunstwollen* might be characterized as the normative 'distribution of sensation' of a particular episteme since, as Riegl explains, it 'regulates the relation between man and objects as we perceive them with our senses; it is how we always give shape and color to things.'[6]

An important consequence of Riegl's *Kunstwollen* for Benjamin is that it completely relativized the concept of beauty and undermined any version of the claim to eternal values. That is, it provides an art theoretical way out of the classicist conception of value in judgments of art. In Riegl, Benjamin saw for the first time a serious scholarly consideration of an artistic period and its works — late Roman

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[2] Michael Jennings, *Dialectical Images: Walter Benjamin's Theory of Literary Criticism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), pp. 154-155

[3] Walter Benjamin, 'Bücher, Die Lebendig Geblieben Sind' in *Gesammelte Schriften III*, ed. Hella Tiedemann-Bartels, (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1980), p. 170, trans. in Thomas Levin, 'Walter Benjamin and the Theory of Art History' in *October* 47 (Winter 1988), p. 80. For other explicit references to Riegl see Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. John Osborne (London: Verso, 1998), pp. 55, 99; Walter Benjamin, 'Curriculum Vitae (III)' in *Selected Writings, Volume 2: 1927-1934,* ed. Michael Jennings, Howard Eiland, and Gary Smith (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), p. 77-79; Walter Benjamin, 'The Rigorous Study of Art' in *Selected Writings, Volume 2,* pp. 666-672

[4] Benjamin, 'The Rigorous Study of Art' in *Selected Writings, Volume 2,* p. 667

[5] Alois Riegl, *Late Roman Art Industry*, trans. Rolf Winkes (Rome: Bretschneider, 1985), p. 231

[6] Riegl, *Late Roman Art Industry*, p. 231

antiquity as illustrated, for example, by the sketchiness of the Pompeii paintings — that was usually considered unworthy of study. Just as late Roman art was largely dismissed as decadent by the classicist aesthetes, so was German Baroque drama. Thus Riegl initiated a new art historical methodology that legitimated Benjamin's own analyses whether in literature, art, or the new medium of cinema. He saw Riegl attempting to theorize, through the close analysis of art works, an objective organizing principle intrinsic to the style of the period and a value which made sense only in relation to its *Kunstwollen*. That is, Benjamin understood the revolutionary importance of Riegl's art historical method to lie in the fact that it locates the value of a work within the mode of perception through which it was produced and consumed. Qualitative distinctions between low, high, and the applied arts could no longer be substantiated. Rather, the concept of *Kunstwollen* demanded an entirely different criteria of judgment: not the quasi-moral value implied by the concept of beauty, but rather a psychophysical value which is measured on a sliding scale between what Riegl called the optic and the haptic.

In *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, Benjamin articulates this new stance regarding the judgment of art with terminology familiar to Deleuzians: he argues for the necessity of bringing to the fore 'the laborious efforts of *minor* writers.'[7] It is quite possible that there is a direct inheritance of the idea of minor literature from Benjamin given the fact that Deleuze was familiar with this work and even acknowledges his debt to it for his own conception of the Baroque.[8] To this it should be added that 'Toward a Minor Literature' is the subtitle to Deleuze's book on Kafka, an author who in many ways Benjamin regards as *the* literary exemplar that most fully expresses 'tradition falling ill' in modernity: 'To do justice to the figure of Kafka in its purity and its peculiar beauty, one must never loose sight of one thing: it is the figure of a failure.'[9] In any case, in the *Trauerspiel* book Benjamin already goes as far as to suggest that a *Kunstwollen* only fully appears in works that exhibit 'eccentric features' that are 'offensive or even barbaric to refined taste.'[10] Likewise, decadent periods are 'historically responsible' precisely to the extent that they tend to not produce works which display classical or organic beauty:

> These are the periods of 'decadence' in the arts, the periods of artistic 'will.' Thus it was that Riegl devised this term [*Kunstwollen*] with specific reference to the art of the final period of the Roman empire. The form as such is within reach of this will, a well-made individual work is not.[11]

Again, this sentiment is directly inspired from Riegl. In the introduction to his *Late Roman Art Industry*, he argues that choosing to focus upon the late Roman period was deliberate and productive for

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[7] Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama,* p. 58. My emphasis. There is a genuine lacuna in Deleuze scholarship that considers his relation, both implicit and explicit, to Benjamin. A good speculative account — which analyses this relation *vis-à-vis* the two thinkers' uses of cinema in their respective attempts to move beyond Romanticism — is Josef Früchtl's 'Exhibiting or Presenting? Politics, Aesthetics, and Mysticism in Benjamin's and Deleuze's Concepts of Cinema' in *Proceedings of the European Society for Aesthetics* 2 (2010), pp. 143-160

[8] Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, trans. Tom Conley (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), p. 125

[9] Walter Benjamin, 'To Gerhard Scholem, 12 June 1938' in *The Correspondence of Walter Benjamin*, trans. Manfred and Evelyn Jacobson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp. 565-566

[10] Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama,* pp. 58, 50

[11] Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama,* p. 55

objective analysis precisely because the values of taste intrinsic to its *Kunstwollen* were completely removed from those of his own. In fact, Riegl's entire intellectual career was motivated by the desire to legitimize the study of under-appreciated arts and crafts.

Benjamin's 'Work of Art' essay can also be read as an adaptation of Riegl, this time to the era of modern art, which is intimately tied to the birth of cinema. Indeed, one could almost argue that his account of the destruction of the aura in modern art is fully comprehensible *only* as a highly original appropriation of Riegl's concepts of haptic and optic perception. The essay proceeds with analyses of photographic and cinematic media combined with assertions about a new regime of sensibility, without specifically arguing for a strong relation of cause and effect in either direction. However, Riegl's influence on Benjamin makes the relation clear. Given the former's framework, cinema would simply be an expression of the *Kunstwollen* of the era, or 'mode of perception,' which is itself inseparable from the broader *Weltanschauung* or 'mode of existence.'[12] Although both Riegl and late Roman art are specifically evoked in this crucial section of the essay, the reader has to connect the dots. Here, what ultimately interests Benjamin are the characteristics of this new mode of perception — as well as, in a move beyond Riegl, its social implications — rather than simply the birth of a medium. He even goes so far as to suggest later in the essay that this new mode of perception was inaugurated prior to the invention of cinema by a new type of group experience of landscape paintings in the mid-nineteenth century. Therefore, rather than being a progenitor of the haptic regime, cinema is merely a more adequate expression of it: 'The simultaneous viewing of paintings by a large audience, as happens in the nineteenth century, is an early symptom of ... a crisis triggered not exclusively by photography but, in a relatively independent way, by the artwork's claim to the attention of the masses.'[13] Furthermore, the spectator of cinema is assaulted by constant and abrupt changes that Benjamin also compares to the modern experience of being jostled in a crowd, thus confirming this connection between the modern reception of painting and cinema. In this regard, Benjamin relies upon Baudelaire's essays on art, whose various descriptions of the 'shock' effect of movement through the urban landscape announce the 'renunciation of the magic of distance' associated with the loss of aura.[14] The aura is defined by Benjamin as the quality of 'authenticity' that accumulates within the contemplative space between subject and object, 'the unique apparition of a distance, however near it may be.'[15] The

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[12] Walter Benjamin, 'The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility: Second Version' in *Selected Writings, Volume 3: 1935-1938*, ed. Michael Jennings, Howard Eiland, and Gary Smith (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), p. 104

[13] Benjamin, 'The Work of Art,' p. 116. Translation modified.

[14] Walter Benjamin, 'Central Park' in *Selected Writings, Volume 4: 1938-1940*, ed. Michael Jennings and Howard Eiland (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), p. 172. In his 'The Painter of Modern Life' (1863), Charles Baudelaire describes this experience as 'a more or less violent nervous shock that reverberates in the very core of the brain.' *Selected Writings on Art and Literature*, trans. P.E. Charvet (London: Penguin, 2006), p. 398. Translation modified. Baudelaire is simultaneously more poetic and more neuroscientifically precise when he identifies the brain's core as *le cervelet*, the diminutive of the Old French for brain, because by his time the word was beginning to refer specifically to the cerebellum. This is the main relay in the brain between sensory input and motor coordination, which we might relate to the *appareil sensori-moteur* of Bergson's philosophy that is short circuited in an intuition.

[15] Benjamin, 'The Work of Art,' p. 105

'destruction of the aura' is a 'process of immeasurable importance for both thinking and perception' since it indicates a disruption of the given distribution of sensibility as well as the birth of a new mode of perception that seeks to overcome distance with a desire 'to "get closer" to things.'[16] As we shall see, this language of nearness and distance is intimately connected to Riegl's opposition between the haptic and optic. Thus, we should take Benjamin to mean that the birth of modern art, as measured by the destruction of the aura, is to be understood as a fundamental shift from an optic to a haptic distribution of the senses. The cinematic *Kunstwollen* marks a distinction between a bygone era of 'alluring visual composition[s]' to one which turns 'the artwork into a missile.' Cinema jolts 'the viewer, taking on a tactile quality' and producing a 'physical shock effect' and thus evokes the 'decadence' and 'barbarism' of Dada, which 'attempted to produce with the means of painting or literature the effects which the public today seeks in film.' Like the experience of moving through an urban crowd, the cinema is characterized by 'successive changes of scene and focus which have a percussive effect on the spectator.'[17] In Riegl, the categories of optic and haptic were only employed in tracing the historical development of the arts from ancient Egypt (primarily haptic), through to Greece (optic-haptic), and ending with late Imperial Rome (primarily optic). Although he wasn't the first or last to break with this schema while retaining Riegl's concepts — Deleuze also cites Wilhelm Worringer and Henri Maldiney in this regard — Benjamin's labeling of the modern regime as fundamentally haptic implicitly rejects any neo-Hegelian reading of Riegl, like that of Hans Sedlmayr, who argues that the optical regime reached its teleological apex with Impressionism.

The main points outlined so far can be applied to Deleuze's philosophy of art as much as they can be attributed to Benjamin's interpretation of Riegl. Indeed, they more or less sum up Deleuze's position concerning the significance of the haptic. Along with the optic, the haptic indicates a displacement of the criteria for the judgment of art from one based on a quasi-moral theory of aesthetic value to one that uses the practical and tangible language of psychophysics. This allows for the rejection of value theory without falling into a postmodern abyss in which *any* qualification becomes impossible or irrelevant. It also is an advance over Rancière's otherwise useful conception of different regimes of art — which relies too heavily upon the ambiguity of the term 'sensible' thus unnecessarily confusing the registers of *Kunstwollen* and *Weltanschauung* — and which seems to be, in fact, a direct appropriation from Deleuze's *Foucault*.[18] After Benjamin and Deleuze, the affective

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[16] Benjamin, 'The Work of Art,' p. 105

[17] Benjamin, 'The Work of Art,' pp. 118-119

[18] In 1986, well before Rancière coined the term 'le partage du sensible' (*La Mésentente*, Paris: Galilée, 1995) and applied it to regimes of art (*Le Partage du sensible*, Paris: La Fabrique, 2000), Deleuze characterized Foucaudian historical formations as implying a 'distribution' or 'répartition du visible et de l'énonçable ... une perception historique ou sensibilité, non moins qu'un régime discursif.' *Foucault* (Paris: Minuit, 1986), p. 56, Of course, Foucault uses similar language in describing the new regime of medical vision in the Preface to his *Naissance de la clinique*: 'une nouvelle découpe des choses;' 'une nouvelle distribution des éléments discrets;' 'tout le rapport du signifiant au signifié se redistribue.' (Paris: PUF, 1963), pp. xiv-xv. Interestingly, Michaux used exactly the same language even two years before this — in the opening lines of his *Connaissance par les gouffres* of 1961 — where he attempts to describe the mechanisms of mescaline: 'A vast redistribution of sense perception occurs, which makes everything strange; a complex, continual redistribution of sense perception.' Henri Michaux, *Light through Darkness*, trans, Haakon Chevalier (New York: Orion Press, 1963), p. 3

character of a *Kunstwollen* or an individual work of art might be better qualified, without judgment, on a sliding scale from the glowingly contemplative to a violently disturbing jolt to the nervous system. The haptic for Deleuze indicates first and foremost an aesthetics of psychophysical shock along the lines we have been describing; it refers to the act of touching (Greek, *haptikos*) only insofar as art is able to deliver, through cinema, '*a shock to thought, communicating vibrations to the cortex, touching the nervous and cerebral system directly.*'[19] But, like Benjamin, the haptic *Kunstwollen* is another name for this cinematic distribution of sensation — with or without film — since it involves, as Deleuze now argues in his book on Francis Bacon, a 'violence of sensation ... inseparable from its direct action on the nervous system.'[20] Finally, this shock forces the subject to move beyond the organization of the lived body which 'is still a paltry thing in comparison with a more profound and almost unlivable Power' towards what Deleuze calls the 'body without organs.'[21] Similarly Benjamin, quoting Baudelaire, writes that with 'the experience of shock,' the human is effaced by 'a reservoir of electric energy' and reduced to a mere 'kaleidoscope.'[22] Therefore, any 'reterritorialization' back into the realm of phenomenology under the guise of the term haptic completely betrays the enormous amount of philosophical work Deleuze has performed in order to get out of this discourse. It is true that Deleuze relies upon the phenomenological work of Henri Maldiney. But he does so strictly for two reasons, neither of which turns *him* into a phenomenologist. First, Maldiney extends and amends Riegl's history to include the movement of the haptic and optic from Byzantine to Modern art. Second, Maldiney's reading of neurologist Erwin Straus's account of perception gives Deleuze the technical vocabulary he needs — for example the notions of systole, diastole, and rhythm — to bolster his own psychophysical conception of the haptic.

At this point, we should take a short detour in order to get crystal clear about Deleuze's relation to phenomenology. François Zourabichvili has stated that, despite all the obvious and fundamental differences, 'in certain respects, Deleuze's proximity to the final pages of Merleau-Ponty's *The Visible and the Invisible* is disturbing.'[23] However, once we move beyond such quick assertions in order to understand the philosophical coordinates of this proximity, it becomes less disturbing and more about the type of problems that were on continental philosophy's table in the mid-1960s. In this regard, it is important to remember that Heidegger's whole project of reopening the question of Being can be seen as an attempt to correct the subjectivistic failures of Husserl's philosophy. Likewise the later Merleau-Ponty, under the influence of Heidegger, transforms his thought from a phenomenology of perception to an ontology of the visible and the invisible. The metaphysics developed in Deleuze's work —

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[19] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image,* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), p. 156

[20] Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, trans. Daniel Smith (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), p. 34

[21] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon,* p. 39

[22] Walter Benjamin, 'On Some Motifs in Baudelaire' in *Selected Writings, Volume 4,* p. 328

[23] François Zourabichvili, 'Six Notes on the Percept,' trans. Iain Grant in Paul Patton, ed., *Deleuze: A Critical Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), p. 191

especially in *Difference and Repetition* where the first philosopher mentioned is in fact Heidegger — 'finally puts an end to the subjectivizing tendency of ontology, a tendency that one can still find in both Heidegger's ontology and Merleau-Ponty's ontology.'[24] Thus Deleuze — from a staunchly Bergsonian point of view — brings to completion this phenomenological tendency towards eliminating the intentional subject while still addressing Husserl's basic problem: the return to things themselves. And he does this while remaining, from beginning to end, completely outside phenomenology. He was interested, like so many others of his generation including phenomenologists, in moving beyond the human condition, in decentering the subject of philosophy once and for all, and he was never afraid to appropriate arguments and concepts which were useful for this project. But it should be emphasized that it is quite well known that his unique type of appropriation — which he once called philosophical 'buggery' — was his methodology when approaching any philosopher.[25] No one would argue, for example, that his extended musings on Spinoza mark Deleuze as a pre-Kantian Rationalist. So, while he does sometimes appear to use technical terminology appropriated from the late Merleau-Ponty — Zourabichvili lists resonance and the fold, amongst others — the status of the being of both subject and object is entirely different. As he himself notes, 'Deleuze is less concerned to fix an essence of the appearing of things, than with bringing out and differentiating the *non-organic life* that they involve.'[26] This is another way of saying, as Deleuze does in his final book with Guattari, that the key ontological concept of *The Visible and the Invisible* — the flesh — 'is a only the thermometer of a becoming.'[27] In order to delve deeper into the precise philosophical differences between the late Merleau-Ponty and Deleuze, it would be necessary to investigate very closely the logic by which *The Visible and the Invisible* attempts to de-subjectivize phenomenology, a logic that simultaneously involves a conscious move *away* from dialectical thought and *towards* a more Bergsonian-inspired thought. And, of course, these tendencies are at the heart of Deleuze's own philosophy.[28] Finally, Deleuze's remark in *The Logic of Sensation* that sensation 'is Being-in-the-World, as the phenomenologists say'[29] should be read only as a kind of provocation in the sense that his own conception of the 'being of the sensible' — which we

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[24] Leonard Lawlor, *Thinking Through French Philosophy: The Being of the Question* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), p. 96

[25] 'I saw myself as taking an author from behind and giving him a child that would be his own offspring, yet monstrous ... resulting from all sorts of shifting, slipping, dislocations, and hidden emissions that I really enjoyed.' Gilles Deleuze, 'Letter to a Harsh Critic' in *Negotiations*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), p. 6

[26] Zourabichvili, 'Six Notes on the Percept,' p. 191

[27] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 179

[28] The prominent Merleau-Ponty scholar, Renaud Barbaras, has argued in his book on the former's ontology that '*The Visible and the Invisible* is an extraordinary example of non-dialectical thought, and it is not surprising that many readers recognize in Gilles Deleuze what they find in Merleau-Ponty and vice versa. The reference to Bergson is fundamental in the later Merleau-Ponty, and I have not been able to give it its proper due here. An accurate reading of *The Visible and the Invisible,* one that respects its balances and symmetries, must grant Bergson a place comparable to that occupied by the other great interlocutors, such as Husserl and Sartre.' Renaud Barbaras, *The Being of the Phenomenon: Merleau-Ponty's Ontology*, trans. Ted Toadvine and Leonard Lawlor (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), p. xxii

[29] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon,* p. 31. He continues: 'at one and the same time, I *become* in the sensation and something *happens* through the sensation, one through the other, one in the other. And at the limit, it is the same body that, being both subject and object, gives and receives the sensation.' It is interesting that the note connected to this statement lists only 'phenomenologists like Maldiney or Merleau-Ponty.' *Ibid*., p. 156 n. 1

discussed in the last chapter — completely radicalizes and replaces Heidegger's 'Being-in-the-World,' a phrase which here stands in for the entire phenomenological project of attempting to correct Husserl's subjectivism. Keith Ansell Pearson sums up Deleuze's position *vis-à-vis* phenomenology quite succinctly: 'all phenomenology is *epi*phenomenology, since it fails to penetrate the more profound individuations that are implicated in the creative evolution of difference and repetition.'[30]

Returning now to our main discussion: After piggy-backing on Maldiney's art historical account in order to move beyond Riegl, Deleuze ultimately jettisons it in favor of a more Benjaminian view, which holds that a certain trajectory within modern art is fundamentally haptic. Specifically, while Maldiney defines the late Cézanne's use of color as representing the apex of purely optical art, Deleuze sees it as the beginning of a lineage that continues with the work of Francis Bacon and which should be properly described as haptic. Without getting into the details here, the seemingly paradoxical term 'haptic colorism' points to another important aspect of Deleuze's concept of the haptic. It involves 'the formation of a third eye, a haptic eye, a haptic vision of the eye ... as if the duality of the tactile and the optical were surpassed visually in this haptic function born of the diagram.'[31] Haptic vision is therefore synaesthetic in that there is a disjunctive 'joining together of the two senses of touch and sight'[32] in which the 'eye itself has a haptic, non-optical function.'[33] Furthermore, the haptic 'may be as much visual or auditory as tactile.'[34] The main issue here is not forcing a strict equivocation of haptic vision with clinical synaesthesia — which, incidentally, is specifically evoked by Benjamin in one of his descriptions of haptic shock — but rather the fact that Deleuze loathed any art which involves a hierarchy of the senses.[35] Specifically, he is attracted to art that escapes the haptic-optic *Kunstwollen* with

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[30] Keith Ansell Pearson, *Germinal Life* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 87

[31] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 129

[32] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 99

[33] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), p. 494. It should be noted that Riegl — working within the post-Herbartian context of physiological psychology in which the phenomenon of synaesthesia, clinical as well as poetic, attracted a great deal of attention — admitted in 1902, a year after he published *Late Roman Art Industry*, that haptic was indeed a better word than tactile to describe the Egyptian aesthetic. 'Physiology has long since introduced the more fitting designation "haptic" ... and I intend henceforth to use this proposed term.' Alois Riegl, 'Late Roman or Oriental?' trans. Peter Wortsman in Gert Schiff, ed., *German Essays on Art History* (New York: Continuum, 1988), p. 190

[34] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 493

[35] Deleuze does acknowledge the power of synaesthesia elsewhere for its ability to challenge, not only the hierarchy of the senses, but also 'the hegemony of the signifier.' Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 15. In this context, it is useful to recall Nancy's claim — which, subtracted from its phenomenological traces, resonates with Deleuze's own position and may help us further elucidate his conception of haptic vision — that 'synaesthetic synergy consists in nothing other than the auto-heterology of touch.' For Nancy, touch is understood not as an individual sense, but rather as 'the general extension and particular extraposition of sensing' itself; it is 'the *corpus* of the senses' that nonetheless 'subordinates nothing to it.' Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Muses*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. 17. For his part, Benjamin explicitly links synaesthesia with the 'breakdown' of 'modern man' in his 'On Some Motifs in Baudelaire' in *Selected Writings, Volume 4*, p. 333. For an interesting discussion of Benjamin's modern man as an enactive 'synaesthetic system' decentered from itself due to a discontinuous neuronal circuitry, which not only violently mixes different sense modalities and higher cognitive functions; it is also 'not contained within the body's limits' and is therefore 'open in the extreme sense' to the external world, see Susan Buck-Morss, 'Aesthetics and Anaesthetics: Walter Benjamin's Artwork Essay Reconsidered' in *October* 62 (Autumn 1992), pp. 3-41. For an extremely erudite analysis that connects Benjamin's conception of the aura to synaesthesia and to his own experiments with hashish and mescaline, and that also properly discloses his unpaid debt to Bergson, See Miriam Hansen, 'Benjamin's Aura' in *Critical Inquiry* 34.2 (Winter 2008), pp. 336-375.

which Riegl defines the ancient Greek aesthetic, and which Deleuze argues continued, for the most part, in Western representational art from the Renaissance until the 19th century. This type of art — which he characterizes as expressing figuratively the 'organic activity of man'[36] — does not depend upon an egalitarian distribution of the senses, but is primarily optic utilizing tactile elements only subordinately in order to produce the illusion of three-dimensional space. While the space of both Byzantine art and Maldiney's Cézanne is a step beyond representational figuration, it still prioritizes the optical. It is only with Deleuze's characterization of Cézanne and Bacon as 'haptic colorists' and his appropriation of Wilhelm Worringer's 'Gothic line' — which exhibits 'an impure, and to a certain extent uncanny, amalgamation'[37] of abstraction and empathy, terms Worringer uses as rough psychological equivalents to Riegl's haptic and optic — that we move away from a distribution of sensation which subordinates one sense to another.

Another characteristic of the haptic-optic regime of art — where the hand and eye work together under the controlling gaze of the latter — is that it produces 'striated space,' which Deleuze defines as a 'mode of distribution' that restricts free movement through the use of 'walls, enclosures, and roads between enclosures.'[38] It denotes the type of compulsive parceling-out of the ideal city Plato describes at the end of Book V of his *Laws*. That is, 'haptic' and 'optic' qualify not only a particular distribution of the senses, but also the type of distribution of space they draw out. Specifically, the type of distribution of space in a work is determined by the relative nearness or farness required for both producing and viewing it. Deleuze describes the haptic distribution of space as 'smooth' and relates it to the 'close vision' involved in haptic viewing. As Deleuze notes, it was again Riegl who 'gave fundamental aesthetic status to the couple *close vision/haptic space*' in his descriptions of ancient Egyptian bas-relief sculpture.[39] Riegl convincingly argues that the surfaces of these reliefs are characterized by a

> tactile plane suggested by the sense of touch ... this is the plane which the eye perceives when it comes so close to the surface of an object, that all the silhouettes and, in particular all shadows which otherwise could disclose an alteration of depth, disappear. The perception of objects, which characterizes this first level of the ancient *Kunstwollen*, is thus tactile and in as much as it has to be optical to a certain degree, it is *nahsichtig*; ancient Egyptian art expresses it in almost its purest form.[40]

However, Riegl's categories of *Nahsicht* (close vision) and *Fernsicht* (distant vision), which are fundamental qualities of the haptic and optic regimes of art respectively, are modeled upon the concepts of *Nahbild* (close image) and *Fernbild* (distant image) put forth by the German sculptor Adolf Hildebrand almost ten years before the publication of *Late Roman Art Industry*. This point is not only interesting because it rectifies the proper genealogy of these terms; it is also important because Deleuze ultimately amends Riegl's conception of close vision and the space it creates, preferring one that is in a certain way reminiscent of Hildebrand. The latter suggests that in looking at a distant background, a

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[36] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 102
[37] Wilhelm Worringer, *Form in Gothic,* trans. Herbert Read (London: Tiranti, 1957), p. 42
[38] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 381
[39] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 492
[40] Riegl, *Late Roman Art Industry*, pp. 24-5

spectator does not need to move the gaze; the eyes remain still and the image appears flat, almost two-dimensional. However, in order to see a nearby object and bring it into focus, the eyes have to continually shift from one viewpoint and depth-of-field to another, in effect scanning the object in a way that is akin to examining it through touch. He argues that these 'two different means of perceiving ... not only have separate existence in our faculties for sight and touch, but are united in the eye.' What is important for Deleuze's conception, although he doesn't cite Hildebrand, is that the continuous scanning of the eyes in close vision is qualified by Hildebrand not merely as the 'mixing' of the visual and the tactile but also as 'kinaesthetic,'[41] that is, as the sense of movement of and between them. Rather than traditionally synaesthetic, which presupposes a rigid partitioning of individual sense modalities, haptic vision in Deleuze should be understood as a nomadic kinaesthesia in both the physiological sense — the self-perception of movement, which is closely related to affect, within an inhuman, or non-phenomenological, body — as well as the etymological sense — *kinein* (moving), *aisthesis* (sensation) — of the term: 'This rhythmic unity of the senses can be discovered only by going beyond the organism,' where 'sensation is vibration' and 'the state of the body "before" organic representation' is defined by 'axes and vectors, gradients, zones, kinematic movements.'[42]

Likewise, the smooth space drawn out on a canvas subsequent to such a haptic vision should also be understood as nomadic. Deleuze's main critique of Riegl's account of the close vision/haptic space couple is precisely that it eliminates this nomadic quality. This is because Riegl approaches it only 'under the imperial conditions of Egyptian art ... conditions under which it already serves to striate space.' These conditions include 'the presence of a horizon-background; the reduction of space to the plane ... ; the rectilinear outline enclosing individuality and withdrawing it from change. Like the pyramid form, every side a surface, against the background of the immobile desert.'[43] Deleuze emphatically argues that the distribution of space produced by haptic vision cannot be reduced only to that which is suggested in Egyptian art, although he does agree that the strange contortion and distortion of heads, eyes, torsos, and limbs in these works is a good first approximation. However, they still exhibit a geometric delimitation of background, plane, and contour, which cannot occur in a purely smooth space. Riegl's relatively sober depictions of Egyptian bas-relief figures become wild and almost carnivalesque in Deleuze's rendering: 'twisted animals have no land beneath them; the ground constantly changes direction, as in aerial acrobatics; the paws point in the opposite direction from the head, the hind part of the body is turned upside down.'[44] But, even more than this, the best descriptions of haptic space according to Deleuze are taken from examples of visions of the desert, ice, and sea in which the eye nomadically scans the field of vision unable to find rest since 'orientations, landmarks, and linkages are in continuous variation:'

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[41] Adolf Hildebrand, *The Problem of Form in Painting and Sculpture*, trans. Max Meyer and Robert Ogden (New York: Stechert, 1907), p. 14

[42] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 39

[43] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 495

[44] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 494. For a good example of how Riegl describes figures in Egyptian bas-relief, see his *Late Roman Art Industry*, p. 59.

> no line separates earth from sky, which are of the same substance; there is neither horizon nor background nor perspective nor limit nor outline or form nor center; there is no intermediary distance, or all distance is intermediary.'[45]

With the depiction of such a smooth space on the canvas, we simultaneously enter the nomadic expanse of the desert pictorially as well as the brain of the artist who has suffered a haptic shock to thought and is able to render this disorienting close vision: 'This is what Bacon calls a ... diagram: it is as if a Sahara, or a zone of the Sahara, were suddenly inserted into the head.'[46] This smooth, 'diagrammatic' space is neither homogeneous nor heterogeneous but amorphous, following a Riemannian rather than Euclidian topology, and bears a similarity to certain works of art informel and op art. It is a space 'occupied by intensities, wind, noise, forces, and sonorous and tactile qualities ... far more than by formed and perceived things.'[47] Rather than simply disclosing a latent Orientalism in Deleuze, the purpose of his evocation of visions of the desert is specific and strategic. Furthermore, the repetition of this theme across several of his works marks its crucial importance for a proper understanding of his aesthetics.[48] Its function is to dispel any remnants of striated space in Riegl's descriptions of Egyptian bas-relief. Smooth space is more analogous to the nomadic space of shifting desert sands than it is to the structure and decoration of pyramid walls, whose monolithic geometry punctuates and organizes space in a way that indicates a move away from the purely haptic.

Deleuze's nomadology should be taken neither too literally, as a Romantic reference to 'real' nomads, nor simply as a suggestive metaphor. Rather, he develops a functional, and highly technical, definition of the *nomos,* which draws on the work of linguist Emmanuel Laroche and anthropologist Jean-Pierre Vernant.[49] Before it was understood in the normative sense of custom or law, as in Democritus and Plato, the *nomos* referred to the unpartitioned and common land outside the boundaries of the *polis,* which was itself divided according to a geometric *logos*. This meaning of the *nomos* was later taken up in Zeno's *Republic*, securing for the Stoic the title of 'the best exponent of anarchist philosophy in ancient Greece' by Peter Kropotkin.[50] Deleuze uses the term both in this early etymological sense as well as in the sense of its root, *nemô*, which means to distribute. That is, his nomadology should be understood as employing these two aspects of the *nomos* simultaneously, against the Platonic law, such that smooth or haptic space implies an unpartitioned distribution. It is a nomadic *nomos*,

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[45] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 493-494

[46] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 82

[47] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 479

[48] For example, he cites not only Francis Bacon's 'Sahara' in *The Logic of Sensation*, but also the various visions of the desert depicted in Wilfred Thesiger's *Arabian Sands* (*A Thousand Plateaus,* pp. 557, 572), Thomas de Quincey's 'Revolt of the Tartars' (*The Fold*, p. 94), and T.E Lawrence's *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (*Essays Critical and Clinical*, pp. 115-125). Deleuze shows that visions of ice or sea landscapes can replace these desert visions, proving that he doesn't rely merely on the Oriental implications of desert nomads. See his use of Edmund Carpenter's *Eskimo* (*A Thousand Plateaus,* pp. 557, 572, 574) and Paul Virilio's *L'Insécurité du territoire* (*A Thousand Plateaus,* p. 480, 572), respectively.

[49] For the following etymology of *nomos,* I am indebted to John Sellars, 'Deleuze and Cosmopolitanism' in *Radical Philosophy* 142 (March/April 2007), pp. 30-37.

[50] Peter Kropotkin, *The Conquest of Bread and Other Writings*, ed. Marshall Shatz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 236

> a distribution which must be called nomadic, a nomad *nomos*, without property, enclose, or measure. Here, there is no longer a division of that which is distributed but rather a division among those who distribute *themselves* in an open space — a space which is unlimited, or at least without precise limits.[51]

A nomadic distribution is one in which, for example, nomads traverse the smooth, unregulated expanse of the desert — beyond the confines of the Egyptian state — without themselves dividing it. For Deleuze, this functional definition can apply to 'real' nomads — 'Egypt had its Hyksos, Asia Minor its Hittites, China its Turco-Mongols ... the Hebrews had their Habiru, the Germans, Celts, and Romans their Goths, the Arabs their Bedouins'[52] — as much as it can to other, more recent, constructions like Baudelaire's *flâneur* or Debord's psychogeographer. The *nomos* for him is simply a type of distribution and movement, which functions outside of any principle that organizes and defines the borders, both internal and external, of a territory. It is therefore anarchically indifferent to the *logos* that partitions Plato's ideal city where

> twelve parts should radiate, dividing the city itself as well as the whole territory. The twelve parts should be equal, in the sense that the ones where the earth is good should be smaller and the ones where it is worse larger. There should be a division into five thousand forty allotments, but each of these should be divided in two, and the two parts put together to constitute an allotment, one part nearer and one part farther away.... The men should also be distributed into twelve parts, in such a manner as to make the twelve parts as equal as possible with respect to the rest of their property.[53]

Deleuze's *nomos* has both intensive and extensive senses corresponding to close vision and haptic space, respectively. Just as close vision should be understood as a nomadic distribution of sensation in that it kinaesthetically involves different sense modalities, haptic space should be understood as the nomadic re-distribution of the space of a work, which is a direct result of this disorienting, indeed shocking, vision. Beyond Riegl, haptic space is the smooth, diagrammatic space created on a canvas that suggests the mind-twisting logic of a Riemannian manifold. It is populated by what Deleuze calls 'events,' intensities or forces in flux rather than fully formed entities, that erase all the figurative clichés inherited from the *nomos* — now understood in the Platonic sense of habit or law — of the history of art. In short, the diagram is simply the name Deleuze gives to the smooth space of art in his book on Bacon, where it is more fully articulated under this new terminology.[54] It is the principle of generative deformation that marks the interval between vision and creation in a work and, as such, it lies at the very heart of what Deleuze calls nomad art. The diagram is the preparatory phase that primes the canvas, replacing the normative *nomos* of figurative givens with a nomadic one. As we have seen, in the realm of art, the smooth space of the diagram is synonymous with what Deleuze calls the plane of immanence [*plan d'immanence*]: the determination of a mobile 'section of chaos,' a 'selection of movement' that precedes the act of creation proper.[55] With or without film, but always co-determined

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[51] Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 36. *Cf.* Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 480-481.
[52] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 495
[53] Plato, *The Laws of Plato,* trans. Thomas Pangle (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), p. 133
[54] Interestingly, Deleuze notes that at the top of Bacon's list of figurative clichés to be destroyed are all the 'photographs ... newspaper ... cinema images ... and television images' that constitute the space of mass media. Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 71
[55] Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* pp. 42, 39

by whatever medium the artist chooses to employ, the diagram replaces the concept of a shot [*plan*], which is 'the mobile section of a duration,' 'the determination of the movement that is established in the closed system.'[56]

This conception of *nomos* is political precisely in the sense in which Rancière's and Benjamin's politics of aesthetics converge: a politics that traces the coordinates and consequences of changes to the 'organization of perception' at a particular historical moment, 'using art to draw such conclusions.'[57] Although neither go as far as Deleuze in championing a nomadic distribution, Benjamin comes close in his admiration of the anarchic spirit of Dada, which he singles out as expressing, in a highly charged manner, the haptic shock of the cinematic, or modern, regime of art. In effect, smooth space challenges Riegl's 'will to art,' a notion that Deleuze must ultimately put into question in favor of nomadic *nomos*, which re-distributes the sensory coordinates of a given *Kunstwollen* with every new successful work. This problem reaches its peak in the cinematic regime since — and here Deleuze both cites Benjamin's 'Work of Art' essay as well as appropriates its language and political argument — the shock to thought in modernity coincides with a fascist 'automization of the masses' in which the politics of aesthetics is reduced to a situation where 'politics becomes "art."'[58] In this regime of shock to the brain, Deleuze continues with an implicit reference to Riegl, artists are continuously 'circling the question: cerebral creation or deficiency of the cerebellum?' because 'all *will to art*' now risks being reduced to 'a business, a pornography, a Hitlerism.'[59] Deleuze's ethico-political answer to this problem is that the shock of a close vision — rather than initiate the collapse into a catatonic, quietist, or even 'theophanic'[60] state — *must* involve a movement beyond this debilitating moment, a creative movement of nomadic expression adequate to its 'profound and almost unlivable Power.'[61] This is not a normative imperative, but simply a functional definition of what counts as nomad art. This reading explains the placement of the pages concerning nomad art at the conclusion not only to 'The Smooth and the Striated' but to *A Thousand Plateaus* as a whole, arguably Deleuze's most political book. But whereas Benjamin proposes countering the mind-numbing anaesthetization of fascist politics with a communist politics of aesthetics — in which revolution is defined by a productive 'innervation of the collective'[62] — for Deleuze, a slightly different sort of revolution already begins with the production of haptic space in nomad art.

The first glimpse of the type of revolution that might be involved here appears at the conclusion of Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition*, where he states that philosophy is like painting since 'it

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[56] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), pp. 22, 18

[57] Benjamin, 'The Work of Art,' p. 104

[58] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 264. Compare this to the last two sentences of Benjamin's essay, where he states that 'the aestheticizing of politics, as practiced by fascism' must be countered by a communist 'politicizing of art.' Benjamin, 'The Work of Art,' p. 122

[59] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 266. My emphasis.

[60] Peter Hallward, *Out of this World: Deleuze and the Philosophy of Creation* (London: Verso, 2006), p. 4

[61] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon,* p. 39

[62] Benjamin, 'The Work of Art,' p. 124 n. 10

needs that revolution which took art from representation to abstraction. This is the aim of a theory of thought without image.... Crowned anarchies are substituted for the hierarchies of representation; nomadic distributions for the sedentary distributions of representation.'[63] The expression 'crowned anarchy' comes from the title of Artaud's novelized biography of the Roman Emperor Heliogabalus, so it seems that the anarchy being advocated is first and foremost an anarchy of thought: a thought unhinged from the supposed Truth of the model of recognition that has been perpetuated as philosophy's *Urdoxa* from Plato's *Theaetetus* to Descartes' *Meditations* to Kant's first *Critique*. How far this crowned anarchy may be extended to inform a proper political philosophy is left rather vague in Deleuze's writings, although he does make it clear that it is no longer possible to believe in the kind of utopian communist revolution Benjamin advocated:

> Instead of gambling on the eternal impossibility of the revolution and on the fascist return of a war-machine in general, why not think that *a new type of revolution is in the course of becoming possible*, and that all kinds of mutating, living machines conduct wars, are combined and trace out a plane of consistence which undermines the plane of organization of the World and the States?' He is therefore not so much interested in the question of how individual people may or may not become revolutionaries in the future as much as 'the question of the revolutionary-becoming of people, at every level, in every place.[64]

In a note to the section on 'Nomadology' in *A Thousand Plateaus*, two types of revolution are contrasted: a 'Western' one that is concerned with the transformation of the State versus an 'Eastern' one associated with its destruction. It is then insinuated that these may in fact be 'successive phases of revolution' that 'reflect the opposition between between the socialist and anarchist currents of the nineteenth century.' From this perspective, 'transformation' in the former is understood to take place through the rise of labor power while 'destruction' in the latter occurs through the nomadization of power itself. But this dichotomy between East and West, anarchism and socialism quickly collapses — in what appears to be an unresolved point of political difference between Deleuze and Guattari — when they write that 'not only did many anarchists invoke nomadic themes originating in the East, but the bourgeoisie above all were quick to equate proletarians and nomads, comparing Paris to a city haunted by nomads.'[65] This is why the invocation of Peter Kropotkin, the anti-Hegelian, anti-Darwinian, 'anarchist' zoologist and geographer of the Siberian steppe — who in fact always referred

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[63] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, pp. 276, 278

[64] Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues II*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), p. 147. Compare this to what Guattari has called the necessary 'permanent evolution of every practice and its theoretical framework,' which seems to be a *double entendre* that plays both on Benjamin's notion of 'permanent revolution' as well as the kind of creative evolution advocated by both Henri Bergson and Ilya Prigogine, who Guattari cites in the next sentence. Félix Guattari, 'The Three Ecologies,' trans. Chris Turner in *New Formations* 8 (Summer 1989), p. 134.

[65] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 558 n. 61

to himself as a communist — seems quite fitting.[66] But ultimately, the precise political consequences of Deleuze's *nomos* remain a topic of groping speculation. More pressing for him are the consequences for the pre-philosophical image of thought, whose coordinates are redistributed by the operations of a nomadic philosophy that is at once critical and creative. 'The conditions of a true critique and a true creation are the same: the destruction of an image of thought which presupposes itself and the genesis of the act of thinking in thought itself.'[67] For Deleuze this anarchic 'thought without image,' as the name suggests, takes as its model the production of nomad art, with its two sides of close vision and haptic space. This is evident in the chapter entitled 'The Image of Thought' in his early book on Proust, where Deleuze states that 'philosophy, with all its method and its goodwill, is nothing compared to the secret pressures of the work of art.'[68] In these last lines of the first edition of this small book, Deleuze already lays down the foundations for his analysis of the image of thought — including the role of an encounter, beyond mere recognition, that forces us to think — in *Difference and Repetition*. But it is only until Deleuze's own encounter with Francis Bacon, nearly two decades later, that this thought *without* image receives a positive articulation, again from the world of art.[69]

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[66] The political philosopher Saul Newman has attempted to connect Deleuze's thought to the 'individualist anarchism' of Max Stirner. See Saul Newman 'The War-Machine: Deleuze and Guattari' in *From Bakunin to Lacan: Anti-Authoritarianism and the Dislocation of Power* (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2001), pp. 97-114; Saul Newman, 'Empiricism, Pluralism, and Politics in Deleuze and Stirner' in *Idealistic Studies* 33:1 (2003), pp. 9-24; Saul Newman 'War on the State: Stirner and Deleuze's Anarchism' in *Anarchist Studies* 9:2 (2001), pp. 147-164. This connection may help us to interpret Deleuze's rather elitist one-off claim that a truly open society would be 'a society of creators, where we pass from one genius to another ... across closed deserts.' Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Zone Books, 1991), p. 111. But it ultimately belies Deleuze's own scathing dismissal of Stirner as 'too much of a dialectician to think in any other terms but those of property, alienation, and reappropriation, but too exacting not to see where this thought leads: to the ego which is nothing, to nihilism.' Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), p. 162. It also belies his sustained commitment to some unelaborated form of Marxism: 'Félix Guattari and I have remained Marxists, in our two different ways perhaps, but both of us.' Gilles Deleuze, 'Control and Becoming' in *Negotiations*, p. 171

[67] Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 139. The specifically anarchic resonances of this operation are made sufficiently clear when we remember that the redistribution of the image of thought, for Deleuze, involves displacing the model of recognition as the ground of philosophy. As we have already discussed, the latest incarnation of the model of recognition, put forth in Kant's critical philosophy, depends upon 'common sense,' which is glossed by Deleuze as 'the unity of all the faculties at the center of the Cogito, the State consensus raised to the absolute.' Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 376

[68] Gilles Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, trans. Richard Howard (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), p. 98. This is one way to understand Deleuze's concept of 'micropolitics:' the creative redistrubution of the image of thought. Indeed he argues again and again, especially in interviews, that all creative practice, understood as the nomadic opening up of new space-times, is necessarily political: 'Any creative activity has a political aspect and significance.' Deleuze, *Negotiations*, p. 60; 'All philosophy is political,' *Ibid*., p. 172. 'We ought to take up Bergson's notion of fabulation and give it a political meaning.' *Ibid*., p. 174

[69] 'Bacon, when he refuses the double way of figurative painting and abstract painting, is put in a situation analogous to that of Proust in literature.' Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 56

3.4 Cinematic lines from Worringer to Michaux: The composition of figures

The diagrammatic and nomadic plane of immanence is the ground of any creative act, properly speaking, whether we consider the philosophical creation of concepts, the scientific creation of functions, or the artistic creation of figures. We could also speculate — beyond Deleuze and in response to Badiou's charge that the plane of immanence does not allow for the emergence of a politics — that it also grounds a certain anarchic conception of the political.[1] As we have already seen, Deleuze thinks that the establishment of such a ground, understood as a re-distribution of sensation, is itself already a political act. We could go further and suggest, considering the potent metaphysical vision to which it is linked, that the plane of immanence may also serve as a ground — in the sense of providing a non-dialectical political ontology — for a future post-autonomist politics. Nonetheless, this is not our present concern. Rather, we will focus here on what Deleuze means by the artistic composition figures, or 'blocs of sensation,' since the logic of such composition most clearly and directly illustrates the type of creative act that necessarily emerges from any plane of immanence.[2]

In order to get the fullest sense of the logic of the figure, we must trace its provenance back to the concept of 'abstract line' which, as we stated at the outset of the last section, is the third and final characteristic of what Deleuze and Guattari call nomad art. They derive this concept from the German art historian Wilhelm Worringer, who developed a theoretical schema for the analysis of non-representational art, whether Egyptian, Oriental, Gothic, or the type of abstraction that was beginning to emerge in Europe in the early 20th century. Worringer's art theory builds upon Riegl in interesting ways that have often been dismissed by art historians as merely popularizing, in a 'vulgarized and sensationalized' way, Riegl's work.[3] But Worringer's historical schema — which is driven by the non-linear alternation and repetition of the sentiments of abstraction and empathy — challenges the more or less Hegelian historiography posited by Riegl, a move that Benjamin builds upon and more adequately articulates in his conception of cultural history, and which Deleuze follows in his own non-

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[1] 'How is it that, for Deleuze, politics is not an autonomous form of thought, a singular section of chaos, one that differs from art, science, and philosophy? This point alone bears witness to our divergence and there is a sense in which everything can be said to follow from it.' Alain Badiou, 'One, Multiple, Multiplicities' in *Theoretical Writings*, ed. and trans. Ray Brassier and Alberto Toscano (London: Continuum, 2004), p. 68

[2] In the broadest possible sense, Deleuze and Guattari describe 'the diagrammatic or abstract machine' simply as a that which 'does not function to represent, even something real, but rather constructs a real that is yet to come.' Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), p. 142. And such a construction can occur in any field. John Mullarkey has constructed the beginnings of a diagrammatic philosophy in which a 'flexuous line' would become 'the *out-line* of philosophy, what picks philosophy out from the non-philosophical background while also tying its figure to its background conditions.' Such a philosophical diagram would be 'the pre-philosophical, meta-philosophical, and ante-philosophical all in one ... the outline of a process (of thinking).' John Mullarkey, *Post-Continental Philosophy: An Outline* (London: Continuum, 2006), p. 157

[3] E.H. Gombrich, *The Sense of Order: A Study in the Psychology of Decorative Art* (London: Phaidon, 1979), p. 202

progressive history of haptic and optic regimes of art. Furthermore, Worringer's invocation of Georg Simmel at the start of his two major works, *Abstraction and Empathy* and *Form in Gothic,* implicitly injects a socio-political element to his analyses that is lacking in Riegl, but essential for both Benjamin's and Deleuze's philosophies of art.[4] In addition to broadening the scope of Riegl's art theory to include innovative historical and political concerns, Worringer expands upon Riegl's technical discussion concerning the haptic and optic regimes, replacing them with the terms abstraction and empathy, and investing them simultaneously with new affective and formal significance. The concept of the abstract — or 'Gothic' — line marks the apex of Worringer's innovation since it combines the formal and affective elements of his two regimes of art. However, Deleuze's use of this term in *A Thousand Plateaus* is ambiguous and does not adequately distinguish the formal and affective registers, as indicated by his use of the terms 'abstract' and 'inorganic' almost interchangeably. This ambiguity may be resolved if we allow these two registers of the abstract line to simply collapse into and then further articulate smooth space and haptic vision, which is indeed a perfectly viable reading given Deleuze's relative lack of clarity on these points. But we will suggest instead that abstract line becomes, in the Bacon book, the 'figure' which emerges from the catastrophe of the diagram.

Deleuze writes that 'the abstract line is the affect of smooth spaces, not a feeling of anxiety that calls forth striation.'[5] The first part of this statement — that the formal element of the line is an affect — already conveys a sense of the ambiguity at the heart of Deleuze's notion of abstract line. The second part is a direct reaction to Worringer, whose book *Abstraction and Empathy* uses these two terms to replace Riegl's sensorial schema of the haptic and the optic with concepts that are more affectively charged. 'Abstraction' — which is most fully exhibited in the geometric lines and bas-relief surfaces of Egyptian art, but finds a modern expression in the early works of Mondrian and Malevich — is the artistic response to a primal psychic anguish according to Worringer. It is motivated by an intense 'spiritual agoraphobia'[6] of open space, which avoids the representation of distance and perspectival depth through the use of stable, tactile forms that arrest the flux of a threatening and incomprehensible world. Unlike abstraction, 'empathy' had been a well-developed idea in the context of German art theory since the late-19th century, which Worringer appropriates and applies to the art of classical Greece. He argues that the Greeks quelled their anxiety of open space through the use of reason and were thus able to identify with the organic and changing forms of nature. These two

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[4] For an excellent exposition of these themes, in regard to Benjamin, see Michael Jennings, 'Against Expressionism: Materialism and Social Theory in Worringer's *Abstraction and Empathy*' in Neil Donahue, ed., *Invisible Cathedrals: The Expressionist Art History of Wilhelm Worringer* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), pp. 87-104. It should also be noted that, in addition to Deleuze's texts that display more explicit art theoretical themes, Worringer is named in his overtly political 'Treatise on Nomadology.' Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 411-415. Furthermore, both Benjamin and Simmel are cited in Deleuze's book on the time-image, precisely at the moments in which he is attempting to articulate the political consequences of the cinematic regime. Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image,* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), pp. 264, 322

[5] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 497

[6] Wilhelm Worringer, *Abstraction and Empathy: A Contribution to the Psychology of Style*, trans. Michael Bullock (New York: International Universities Press, 1953), p. 129

emotional responses associated with abstraction and empathy are mixed in Gothic art, which according to Worringer is an expression of 'sublime hysteria:'

> This is not a case of the harmonious interpenetration of two opposite tendencies, but of an impure, and to a certain extent uncanny, amalgamation of them, a requisition of our capacity for empathy (which is bound up with organic rhythm) for an abstract world which is alien to it. Our organically tempered sense of vitality recoils before this senseless rage of expression as from a debauch. When, however, finally yielding to compulsion, its energies flood these lifeless lines, it feels itself carried away in a strange and wonderful manner and raised to an ecstasy of movement, far outstripping any possibilities of organic movement.[7]

While the concepts of abstraction and empathy give affective value to Riegl's haptic and optic, for Deleuze they are merely *psychological* affects associated with human emotion. However, in the 'sublime hysteria' Worringer uses to describe the sensibility of Gothic art — and which was subsequently applied to the existential angst associated with modernity by the German Expressionists — Deleuze finds a movement beyond the human. This is because Worringer qualifies this affective sublime as 'inorganic,' as a 'vitality which appears ... to have an *expression of its own*, which is stronger than our life.'[8] This inorganic affect traverses the haptic space that envelopes the artist, canvas, and surrounding environment alike. And indeed, Deleuze introduces Worringer in *Logic of Sensation* with the chapter entitled 'Hysteria,' which outlines the specifically nonhuman character of this affect: 'This is not a hysteria of the painter, but a hysteria of painting. With painting, hysteria becomes art. Or rather, with the painter, hysteria becomes painting.'[9] That is, one way to understand this affective aspect of the abstract line is as further expressing the cine-aesthetic qualities of haptic vision beyond phenomenological notions of the subject:

> This rhythmic unity of the senses can be discovered only by going beyond the organism. The phenomenological hypothesis is perhaps sufficient because it merely invokes a lived body. But the lived body is still a paltry thing in comparison with a more profound and almost unlivable Power [which is defined by] axes and vectors, gradients, zones, kinematic movements, and dynamic tendencies, in relation to which forms are contingent.[10]

With this nonhuman notion of affect, Deleuze avoids the embodied subject of phenomenology.[11] And by connecting it to the inorganic — a trope that he inherits not only from Worringer, but also, through Bergson, from the early *Naturphilosophien* of Schelling, Hegel, and Hölderlin — he completely sidesteps the phenomenological debate concerning the metaphysics of presence: 'The concept of presence, even if I use the word, does not interest me much. It's too pious. It is "life" which seems essential ... a conception of life as a non-organic power.'[12] The inorganic ultimately points to the perpetual and false movements of differentiation in Deleuze's ontology that completely disallow the empirical notion of

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[7] Wilhelm Worringer, *Form in Gothic,* trans. Herbert Read (London: Tiranti, 1957), pp. 79, 42. Translation modified.
[8] Worringer, *Form in Gothic*, p. 42
[9] Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, trans. Daniel Smith (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), p. 45
[10] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 39
[11] Michaux also thinks that 'what counts is not the repulsion or the emotion, but the tone, the energy. It is toward this the one directs oneself, consciously or unconsciously, toward a state with a maximum of *élan*.' Henri Michaux, *Emergences/ Resurgences*, trans. Richard Sieburth (New York: The Drawing Center, 2000), p. 44
[12] Giles Deleuze, 'Lettre-Préface' in Mireille Buydens, *Sahara: l'esthétique de Gilles Deleuze* (Paris: PUF, 2005), p. 7

present time as well as any form of stable proximity. In a way, it might be understood as Deleuze's version of the critique of the 'metaphysics of presence.' Furthermore, it is only with this inorganic notion of hysteria that Deleuze's flirtations with the Romantic ideas of the genius or seer — in his books on Kant and the time-image, respectively — can be adequately understood. As indicated by Deleuze's transformation of Worringer's 'sublime hysteria' into a more inhuman 'hysteria,' the seer of haptic vision is not a sublime hero, but one who has been completely effaced by a shock to thought that pushes her beyond the threshold of the human.

The term inorganic was initially employed as a formal concept by Riegl. In *Historical Grammar of the Visual Arts*, he develops a formal schema — utilizing a dualism between the 'organic' and the 'inorganic' or 'crystalline' — that roughly maps onto the historical development from the haptic to the optic he develops in his analyses of Egyptian, Greek, and late Roman art.[13] Worringer retains the formal status of organic and inorganic elements in *Abstraction and Empathy*, where he begins his analysis by describing his relation to Riegl: 'Just as the urge to empathy as a pre-assumption of aesthetic experience finds its gratification in the beauty of the organic, so the urge to abstraction finds its beauty in the life-denying inorganic, in the crystalline.'[14] In Worringer's *Form in Gothic,* the function of the inorganic becomes ambiguous, qualifying both the formal aspect of Gothic ornament as well as the sublime hysteria that produces it. Here, he goes beyond Riegl's dialectic of organic and inorganic — the boundary between which is defined by 'life, as manifested in movement'[15] — since he posits a sublime affect associated with inorganic vitality. This ambiguity remains in *A Thousand Plateaus* and is only worked out fully in the *Bacon* book, where we can locate a formal concept of the abstract line that is conceptually distinct from the inorganic affect that traverses its surface.

Just as the affective register of the inorganic is an 'impure and uncanny amalgamation' of abstraction and empathy, the Gothic line strikes an uneasy balance between the free-flowing organic forms of the former and the crystalline geometry of the latter, which Worringer describes with the words 'vitalized geometry.' Worringer describes the Gothic line quite remarkably:

> Once the natural barriers of organic movement have been overthrown, there is no more holding back: again and again the line is broken, again and again checked in the natural direction of its

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[13] In this work, Riegl claims that all artistic representation can be divided 'into two main categories: (1) inanimate, inert, inorganic motifs; (2) animate, organic motifs. The criterion is life, as manifested in movement.' Alois Riegl, *Historical Grammar of the Visual Arts*, trans. Jacqueline Jung (New York: Zone Books, 2004), p. 343. While the organic is represented, for example, by plant and animal motifs, the crystalline is characterized by absolute symmetry, sharp distinction, and lack of emotional expression. He found the perfect model of crystalline art and beauty in the legacy of ancient Egyptian figures, which 'sit stiffly and lifelessly but whose torsos and heads display both proportion and symmetry.' *Ibid.*, p. 349. He was clearly more fascinated by this form and devoted less attention to the organic, perhaps since it is the inherited norm of high art. Although Riegl doesn't explicitly link the haptic-optic historical development to the crystalline-organic scheme, it would be fair to broadly draw this parallel. For example, he argues that the haptic-optic art of the Greeks also exhibits 'the proper balance by organizing the crystalline.' *Ibid.*, p. 372. And in late Roman art, crystallinity was, in large part, 'surrendered.' *Ibid.*, p. 393. Deleuze develops an opposition between 'organic' and 'crystalline' regimes of the image in his philosophy of cinema, which bears a trace of resemblance to Riegl's concepts.

[14] Worringer, *Abstraction and Empathy,* p. 4

[15] Alois Riegl, *Historical Grammar of the Visual Arts*, p. 343

> movement, again and again it is forcibly prevented from peacefully ending its course, again and again diverted into fresh complications of expression, into confused and spasmodic movements.[16]

> All that remains is a lingering impression of a formless, ceaseless activity.... But it is more than enigmatic, it is labyrinthine. It seems to have neither beginning nor end and above all no center: there is a total absence of any such means of allowing for the organic feeling of pause. We find no point of entrance, no point of rest. Every point in this endless movement is of equal value and all of them combined are without value compared with the agitation they produce.... Symmetry is replaced by repetition and multiplication, ... by an uninterrupted, accelerating, mechanical movement ... that moves ever further forward until it has covered the whole surface.[17]

In the last few pages of *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze uses precisely this language to invoke the formal qualities of the abstract line: a zigzagging, feverish, and mutant *trait* of continuous variation, without beginning or end, which outlines no form but rather describes a smooth space. The best examples are 'certain works by Pollock: multidirectional, with neither inside nor outside, form nor background, delimiting nothing, describing no contour, passing between spots or dots, describing a smooth space, stirring up a close-lying haptic visual matter.' But Deleuze also calls to mind Kandinsky's 'lines of march or transit that seem to recall Mongolian nomadic motifs.'[18] We might add to this list the type of *art informel* paintings that immediately followed Michaux's experimentation with mescaline, which have been described in a strikingly similar manner:

> The most conspicuous departures from earlier modes are in the realm of rhythm, movement, and space. What was initially felt as a flickering, subliminal texture or appearance and implied disappearance has now become a sustained structure across the page, evoking something akin to the movement of wild geese in the sky or a horde of mounted Tartars across the Asian steppes.[19]

But the problem with this easy conflation of Pollock (or Michaux) and Kandinsky is that, in *The Logic of Sensation*, they represent two artistic movements that deal with the problem of representation in supposedly diametrically opposed ways: the tactile works of abstract expressionism and the optical works of abstraction, respectively. As we shall see, this conflation is part of a larger muddle Deleuze subjects himself to in this book, a muddle born of the fact that it is indeed a book about Francis Bacon even as it attempts to propose a general theory of painting.

In this book, the diagram is most clearly depicted by works of abstract expressionism and *art informel*. Furthermore, as we have already seen, the diagram is also specifically related to the smooth space of Bacon's Sahara, a chaos or catastrophe that involves 'the collapse of visual coordinates,'[20] that is, the collapse of representation and figuration from which a figure emerges. Like smooth space, the diagram follows the logic of Riemannian space:

> Neither form nor ground exists any longer, in any sense, because the powers of the line and the plane tend to be equalized: by constantly being broken, the line becomes more than a line, while at the same time the plane becomes less than a surface. as for the contour, the line does not delimit one; it is never the outline of anything, either because the line is sept along by the infinite

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[16] Worringer, *Form in Gothic*, p. 42
[17] Worringer, *Form in Gothic*, pp. 55-57. Translation modified.
[18] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 575. Translation modified.
[19] Thomas Messer, 'Postface' in *Henri Michaux* (New York: Guggenheim, 1978), p. 181
[20] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 83

> movement, or else because it alone possesses an outline, like a ribbon, as the limit of the movement of the inner mass.[21]

On one level, the abstract line, or *trait*, of *A Thousand Plateaus* gets subsumed within the diagram of *The Logic of Sensation*, where it is defined as a set of non-representative 'line-strokes [*traits*] and color-patches [*taches*]' that covers the entire canvas.[22] In the latter book, Deleuze follows the Swiss art historian Heinrich Wölfflin in distinguishing the linear [*linear*] from the pictorial [*malerisch*] in the formal analysis of art. He further explains that the German word for painting, *Malerei*, derives from the Latin *macula*, which refers to a stain, blotch, or *tache* in French.[23] This point cannot be ignored, since the transformation of *le trait abstrait* into the *traits et taches* of the diagram is only the preparation for a more important move Deleuze needs for the description of Bacon's paintings: the movement from a nomadic, informal principle of the pure abstract line to the formal principle of haptic colorism, in which tonal color-patches define the entire space of the canvas. This is precisely the move from the 'catastrophic mess' or 'black hole' of the diagram to the emergence of Bacon's figures. In this analysis of Bacon, Deleuze needs Worringer — on the one hand — for the concept of the inorganic, which becomes the inhuman affect of smooth, diagrammatic space that is necessary for effacing figuration and — on the other — in order to imagine the possibility of a formal haptic principle beyond Riegl. But in the end, this formal principle is not the Gothic or abstract line, but rather the haptic colorism of Cézanne, Van Gogh, and Bacon. This non-figurative but formal colorism is directly inspired by Maldiney even though, ironically enough, Maldiney himself describes this colorism as the pinnacle of *optical* art.

The basic function of a figure can be explained quite simply: in the formal register, it must 'break with representation' without collapsing into complete formlessness and, in terms of sensation, it must break with the 'old tactile-optical function,' in order to become haptic and express inorganic forces.[24] Deleuze argues that the abstraction of Kandinsky and the expressionism of Pollock simply bypass representation. The former does this by reducing the canvas to a 'purely optical space,' a 'coding of the figurative' that ultimately proves to be 'cerebral and lacks sensation' since it fails to touch the nervous system directly.[25] And the latter remains subsumed within the 'manual rhythm' of the diagram, which 'covers the entire canvas' and therefore 'creates a veritable mess' without achieving the haptic, even though 'this time sensation is indeed attained.'[26] But this easy dichotomy is too reductive to be useful beyond the analysis of Bacon's canvases. For example, not only have Kandinsky's 'nomadic' lines already been evoked in *A Thousand Plateaus* as examples of the *manual*, abstract line; his early abstract works have been described by art historians as evoking the sense of *touch*. Furthermore, he is one of the key figures who has offered a theory and practice of modern art based largely upon a conception of

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[21] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, pp. 104-105
[22] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 83. He defines the abstract line as a *trait* in *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 499
[23] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 156 n. 6
[24] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, pp. 3, 121
[25] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, pp. 107, 109
[26] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 89

synaesthesia.[27] It has been argued that — while some of Kandinsky's early works seem to resonate with Deleuze's characterization of abstraction as optical, geometric, and cerebral — certain works of his later period in fact 'seem to produce a Deleuzian figure.'[28] In the end, reducing Kandinsky's work to optical abstraction only serves Deleuze's analysis of Bacon and 'cuts off a vast source of Figural energy that can be found in abstract art.'[29] This oversimplification is based upon an uncritical appropriation of Maldiney's already 'inaccurate analysis of Kandinsky' that renders Deleuze's schema 'misguided' and 'riddled with contradiction.'[30] Likewise,

> Deleuze's term for abstract expressionism, 'art informel,' appears to come directly from Maldiney's *Forme et Art Informel*, and has its own complex definition, relevance, and historiography.... Maldiney's 'art informel' in fact seems to fit with Deleuze's 'abstraction' more than his 'expressionism,' which is confusing, unreferenced, and raises difficulties around what they are both trying to describe. The influence of Maldiney thus poses problems for the clarity of Deleuze's *Logic of Sensation*.[31]

To this confusion we have to add that Bacon himself, whose writings Deleuze relies heavily upon, says that the composition of his own figures involves traversing 'a tightrope between what is called figurative painting and abstraction,' the latter of which includes for him abstract *expressionists* like Pollock.[32] And when we add to this the confusion surrounding the possible role of the line in Deleuze's theory of painting beyond the *traits* of a diagram, the contradictions are compounded. For example, given Deleuze's schema, how can we properly describe Worringer's Northern Gothic or German Expressionist line, or Paul Klee's various 'adventures in lines'?[33] Like Kandinsky, Klee scrambles the dualistic schemas that Deleuze appropriates from Riegl, Worringer, and Maldiney: abstraction *versus* expressionism, crystalline *versus* organic, optical *versus* tactile. But ultimately, albeit in a different way than Bacon, his work does seem to fit within the conceptual solution Deleuze proposes. That is, Klee's sketches and drawings can be described as Figural, inorganic, and haptic. In fact, Klee's work is evoked as the primary example of figural art in Jean-François Lyotard's *Discourse, Figure*, a book which fundamentally grounds Deleuze's own conception of the painterly figure. For Lyotard, 'the line is figural when, by her or his artifice, the painter or drawer places it in a configuration in which its value

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[27] Margaret Olin, 'Validation by Touch in Kandinsky's Early Abstract Art' in *Critical Inquiry* 16.1 (Autumn 1989), pp. 144-172

[28] Lorna Collins, 'Sensations Spill a Deluge over the Figure' in *Deleuze Studies* 2.1 (June 2008), p. 63

[29] Collins, 'Sensations Spill a Deluge over the Figure,' p. 61

[30] Collins, 'Sensations Spill a Deluge over the Figure,' pp. 60-61

[31] Collins, 'Sensations Spill a Deluge over the Figure,' p. 59

[32] Francis Bacon, *The Brutality of Fact: Interviews with Francis Bacon*, ed. David Sylvester (London: Thames & Hudson, 1987), p. 12

[33] 'Adventures in Lines' is the title of the preface Michaux wrote for a important exhibition catalogue on Klee, edited by William Grohmann. Klee was one of the few visual artists Michaux openly and lavishly praised. Describing Klee's work, Michaux writes: 'The complex network of lines appear little by little ... lines living with the little people of dust and dots.... Lines going for a walk ... travelers, lines that don't so much make objects as trajectories, paths (he even put arrows in them).... Lines for what is underneath, finding their nerve centers not in a feature of the face but in the inside of the head ... allusive lines, presenting a whole metaphysics.... A line meets a line. A line avoids a line. Adventures of lines ... lines of growth.... A line rises up. A line goes to see. Winding, a melodic line crosses through twenty stratified lines. A line is germinating. A thousand others around it, bearers of thrusts: A lawn. Grasses. A line gives up. A line rests. Stop. A stop with three clinging roots: a habitat. A line closes itself in. Meditation. Threads are still sprouting from it, slowly. Dividing line there, a ridge line, further on the observatory line. Time, time. A line of consciousness has formed again.' Henri Michaux, 'Adventure in Lines' in *Darkness Moves*, ed. and trans. David Ball (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), pp. 317-318

cannot yield to an activity of recognition.'[34] Of course, Deleuze parts with Lyotard in many respects, but perhaps if we revisit *Discourse, Figure* we can find a place within Deleuze's own schema for painterly lines that are figural, inorganic, and haptic.

The motivation behind Lyotard's text — which was originally published in 1971 — is to offer a theory of art that avoids, on the one hand, the Structuralist tendency for textualizing any and every object of analysis and, on the other, the reduction of art to the time and space of the phenomenological subject. He claims that the sensual realm of art always presents itself *in excess* of the codings of rational and linguistic systems: 'It presents itself as a fall, a slippage, an error, exactly the meaning of *lapsus* in Latin. This event clears a vertiginous space and time; untethered from its context or perceptual environment, this discontinuity or hovering goes hand in hand with anxiety.'[35] We should note that the elements of error and discontinuity beyond recognition immediately evoke Deleuze's conception of fabulation; moreover, vertigo and anxiety evoke the affective qualities of Worringer's Gothic line. In any case, the temporal order of this realm is fundamentally other than the structure of Husserl's 'living present,' which Lyotard describes as 'the unity of the temporally diverse within consciousness,' the 'retention and protention' of the past, present, and future within a 'hyper-presence' of the phenomenological subject.[36] Likewise, the spacial order of this realm of the figure is beyond, or before, Merleau-Ponty's 'lived body.' Even though Merleau-Ponty posits a primary layer of synaesthetic sense experience that operates below conscious intentionality, it still assumes a space in which objects are properly recognized as having 'good form.' Instead, Lyotard claims that the event of art renders inoperative the 'Gestaltist organization of well-measured depth,' allowing 'the fundamental heterogeneity and unevenness of the spatial field to be approached,' forcing us to 'unlearn how to recognize.'[37]

In contrast to the world of phenomenology — whose artist of choice is, more often than not, Paul Cézanne — Lyotard presents the art of Klee. Unlike Cézanne, who is primarily taken to be a colorist, for Klee 'the line and the chromatic element are in conflict' without there ever being a subordination of one to the other. And Lyotard always choses examples of his work that exhibit 'the way in which line and color intermingle.'[38] Furthermore, he claims that Klee rejects the classical problem of making 'recognizable an intelligible world.' Instead, Lyotard says that the problem for the modern artist, according to Klee, is to create 'an "interworld," another possible nature, extending

[34] Jean-François Lyotard, *Discourse, Figure*, trans. Antony Hudek and Mary Lydon (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), p. 213
[35] Lyotard, *Discourse, Figure*, pp. 129-130
[36] Lyotard, *Discourse, Figure*, p. 148
[37] Lyotard, *Discourse, Figure*, p. 153
[38] Lyotard, *Discourse, Figure*, p. 218

creation, making visible what is not — without, however, falling prey to subjective imagination.'[39] This interword points to a realm beyond normal empirical vision that might best be understood in Deleuzian or Bergsonian terms. As Klee insists, it is not the product of a mystical or fantastical imagination, but rather points to the imperceptible, inhuman force of nature constructing itself through the artist. Lyotard claims that Klee's work attests

> to the fact that creation exceeds created nature, and that the artist is a site where nature continues to bear fruit. Creation holds sway over both nature and art. The latter, however, owes nothing to the former.... [To the type of art that attempts to produce] a 'good nature' through geometric reason, a nature closer to the intelligible than visible nature, Klee might have replied with Aristotle's two contradictory statements: '*Techne* brings to completion what *phusis* failed to craft;' 'the way it is crafted determines the way it grows, and the way it grows determines the way it is crafted, each and every thing.' Klee states that the artist is no more than a tree trunk in which sap rises — but no one had seen the fruit borne by this tree before, making recognition, even reminiscence, impossible.[40]

This statement perhaps only makes sense within the context of a distinctly modern art. And, in certain ways, it repeats some of the rhetoric of phenomenological aesthetics. For example, Maldiney explains that 'figurative art ... moves itself in the act of formation. This act is that by which *a form forms itself:* it is its autogenesis.'[41] Recently, Jean-Luc Nancy has used similar, albeit more nuanced, post-phenomenological language to describe how the gestures of drawing express a 'metastable' power that hovers between '*energeia* and *dynamis,* to speak in Aristotle's terms, the power of the *élan*.' Nancy also calls this gestural power — following Spinoza's *natura naturans* — '*forma formans*,' by which he means 'the sense of a form that forms, in the act, the power and tension of its own self-formation.'[42] Nonetheless, without falling again into the murky borderlines of phenomenology, the most important point here is that Lyotard offers us a way to understand and conceptualize the figure, beyond Deleuze, in terms of Wölfflin's notion of the *linear* as it is distinguished from his notion of the *malerisch*.

In *Cinema 1*, two years after the publication of his book on Francis Bacon, Deleuze offers another way to think about the figure. Remarkably, this occurs at the beginning of the chapter that discusses the genetic elements of the action-image: the 'broken stroke' of the *vector* and the 'single stroke' of the *encompasser* that, as we have seen, are inspired in part by principles from East Asian calligraphy. Deleuze states that some directors have created 'an original form, a deforming form, capable of playing on the two others [the Small and Large forms].... We call the sign of such

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[39] Lyotard, *Discourse, Figure*, p. 218. In Klee's own words: 'I overstep neither the picture's nor the composition's limits. But I do stretch its content by introducing into the picture new subject matter — or rather, not so much new as barely glimpsed subject matter. Obviously this subject matter, like any other, maintains its ties to the natural world. By natural world I am not referring to nature's appearance (as would naturalism) but to the sphere of its possibilities: this content produces images of nature's potentiality.... Worlds have come into being and continuously unfold before our eyes — worlds which despite their connection to nature are not visible to everybody, but may in fact only be to children, the mad, and the primitives.' Klee quoted in *Ibid*., p. 446 n. 32

[40] Lyotard, *Discourse, Figure*, p. 231

[41] Henri Maldiney, *Regard Parole Espace* (Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 1973), p. 155

[42] Jean-Luc Nancy, *Le Plaisir au dessin* (Paris: Galilée, 2009), pp. 35, 49. *Élan* is indeed a direct reference to Bergson, who is evoked in the previous sentence.

deformations, transformations, or transmutations *Figure*. There are here all kinds of aesthetic and creative evaluations, which go beyond the question of the action-image.'[43] Eisenstein, for one,

> rightly considers himself to have created a *transforming form*, capable of passing from SAS' to ASA'.... Starting out from the large organic representation, from its spiral or respiration, he subjects them to a treatment which relates the spiral to a cause or law of 'growth' (golden section) and thus determines as many caesuras within the organic representation as intervals of respiration. And we can see how these caesuras mark crises or privileged instants which, on their own account, enter into relationships with each other according to vectors. This is the *pathos*, which undertakes the 'development' by carrying out qualitative leaps between two moments carried to their peak.[44]

Here, we can see that the creation of a cinematic figure, by dialectically informing and enfolding the two types of action, produces the necessary affective charge Eisenstein calls 'pathos.' But, of course, this affect is still caught within the *organic* logic of the golden section as well as the whole it both constructs and is grounded upon. Deleuze claims that Werner Herzog's early films go much further than Eisenstein's in the production of figures since the ways in which they transform the logics of action, more often than not, produce *inorganic* or *inhuman* affects. For example, in the cases of *Heart of Glass* and *Aguirre, the Wrath of God*

> there is both a hallucinatory dimension, where the acting spirit raises itself to boundlessness in nature and a hypnotic dimension where the spirit runs up against the limits which nature opposes to it. And the two are different, they have a figural relationship.... In both cases — the sublimation of the large form and the enfeeblement of the small form — Herzog is a metaphysician. He is the most metaphysical of cinema directors (although German Expressionism had already been imbued with metaphysics, this was within the confines of a problem of Good and Evil to which Herzog is indifferent).[45]

This connection that Deleuze evokes between Herzog and German Expressionist cinema is significant in that it brings us directly back to its logic of the 'intensive composition' of light and shadow that is informed by Worringer's inorganic lines.

In *The Haunted Screen: Expressionism in the German Cinema* — a book Deleuze relies heavily upon for his analysis of German Expressionism — Lotte Eisner also traces this link between Herzog and Expressionist cinema.[46] She also explains that the Expressionists have an 'eerie gift for animating objects ... such that they seem to have an insidious life of their own.... This is Worringer's "spiritual unrest" creating the "animation of the inorganic."'[47] In addition to inorganic life, the particular qualities and themes of this cinema — unstable compositions of diagonals and sharp-angled shots, dramatic chiaroscuro effects, madness and hallucination — are taken to be directly informed by a conception of intensive movement that finds its inspiration in Worringer and Goethe. The intensive movement of inorganic life produces a spasmodic and broken line without resolve that refuses the organic composition of Hollywood and Soviet cinema since it finally 'constructs space instead of describing it.'

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[43] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), p. 178
[44] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 180
[45] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, pp. 184-185
[46] Lotte Eisner, *The Haunted Screen: Expressionism in the German Cinema*, trans. Roger Greaves (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), p. 341
[47] Eisner, *The Haunted Screen,* p. 23

We will quote Deleuze at length in order to fully capture the sense of Expressionism he is trying to convey:

> Expressionism invokes a dark, swampy life into which everything plunges, whether chopped up by shadows or plunged into mists. *The non-organic life of things*, a frightful life, which is oblivious to the wisdom and limits of the organism, is the first principle of Expressionism.... It is not the mechanical which is opposed to the organic: it is the vital as potent pre-organic germinally, common to the animate and the inanimate, to a matter which raises itself to the point of life, and to a life which spreads itself through all matter. The animal has lost the organic, as much as matter has gained life. Expressionism can claim kinship with a *pure kinetics*; it is a violent movement which respects neither the organic contour nor the mechanical determinations of the horizontal and the vertical; its core is that of a perpetually *broken line*, where each change of direction simultaneously marks the force of an obstacle and the power of a new impulse; in short, the subordination of the extensive to intensity. Worringer, its first theoretician, created the term 'Expressionism,' and defined it as the opposition of vital force [*élan vital*] to organic representation, invoking the 'Gothic or Northern' decorative line, a broken line which forms no contour by which form and background might be distinguished, but passes in a zigzag between things, sometimes drawing them into a bottomlessness in which is loses itself, sometimes whirling them in a formlessness in to which it veers in a 'disorderly convulsion.'[48]

This concept of the inorganic does not point to 'vitalism,' a term which has recently become an empty signifier even as it remains a term of abuse in *uncritical and uninformed* charges against Bergson and Deleuze. Rather, the latter's 'inorganic vitality' should be understood within the context of the non-deterministic theories of biology, for example, of Raymond Ruyer and Francisco Varela. Those who continue to use this word without qualification simply disclose their naive adherence to a rather antiquated conception of nature.[49] And while it seems as though Deleuze isn't doing himself any favors by expressing these themes with the Romantic language of Worringer and Goethe, this move should in fact be understood strategically and as a provocation: the post-Kantian debate surrounding the concepts of the organic and inorganic needs to be reopened today, in light of the new biology.

In any case, for our purposes here, Worringer and Goethe are essential also because they allow us to think the figure in terms of broken black and whites lines that logically precede and engender color. As we have already seen in the section on Leibnizian perception, Deleuze uses Goethe's theory of color in order to explain the actualization of the visible world.[50] He reads Goethe through Eliane Escoubas, who explains that the visible is produced through a fundamental interaction of light and

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[48] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 50-51

[49] Kant — despite his dogmatic adherence to Newtonian science, as well as his equally dogmatic aversion to theories of hylozoism — has to rekindle Aristotelian hylomorphism to bolster his conceptions of genius and teleology in nature. In the first chapter of his *Creative Evolution*, Bergson offers a new solution to the false-choice between mechanism and teleology and this solution has nothing to do with the naive vitalism of which he is all too often accused. Such vitalism, which assumes the existence of an extra-physical force animating nature, is yet another form of hylomorphism that is entirely incompatible with Bergson's *élan vital.* Rather, Bergson's 'vitalism,' if we insist on using that word, has arguably more in common with recent developments in non-equilibrium thermodynamics (Ilya Prigogine) as well as autopoetic biological systems (Francisco Varela). For excellent coverage of these themes, see Keith Ansell Pearson, *Germinal Life: The Difference and Repetition of Deleuze* (London: Routledge, 1999).

[50] Incidentally, Deleuze also evokes Leibniz in his exposition of German Expressionism. If the movement of Soviet cinema is symbolized by the spiral, he argues, the image of Expressionist cinema is that of 'the ideal summit of a pyramid which, in rising up, constantly pushes away its base.' Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 54. This is a direct reference to the last, hallucinatory scene of Leibniz's *Theodicy* in which Theodorus becomes entranced when he encounters the infinite possible worlds contained within a pyramid of rooms that 'had an apex, but no base; it went on increasing to infinity.' Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Theodicy,* trans. E.M. Huggard (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), p. 372

darkness and that colors are merely degrees of opacity through which an 'invisible and blinding' luminosity gradually congeals into objects as white darkens to yellow and black brightens to blue: 'color is that through which the visible begins, it is the *arche* of the visible.'[51] Through the continuous integration of black and white, the world becomes increasingly colorful and distinct. This is why Escoubas refers to the Goethean universe as a world of *'speed* and *movement'* and why, remarkably, he calls Goethe's theory of color 'a theory of the contour, a theory of the figure.'[52] Perhaps the fact that Escoubas's article was published a year after Deleuze's book on Bacon and a year before *Cinema 1* helps explain why, in the former text, Deleuze couldn't yet connect the Expressionist line with the birth of the figure. Nonetheless, he does claim in *The Movement-Image* that, despite Griffith's and Eisenstein's experiments in polychrome, 'it is undoubtedly Expressionism which was the precursor of real cinematic colorism.' And its formula, according to Deleuze, comes straight from Goethe:

> In contrasts of black and white, or in the variations of chiaroscuro, one might say that what is darkened and black is toned down. It is as though two degrees were apprehended in an instant, points of accumulation which would correspond to the upsurge of color in Goethe's theory: blue as lightened black, yellow as darkened white.... Goethe explained precisely that the two fundamental colors — yellow and blue as degrees — were grasped in a *movement of intensification* that ... culminates in a vivid red, which has become independent, pure incandescence or blazing of a terrible light, which burns the world and its creatures, a fire which belongs neither to nature or to our organic individuality.[53]

And in *The Logic of Sensation* — despite the fact that the main line of argumentation points to the pinnacle of haptic art occurring in the works of 'colorists' like Cézanne, van Gogh, and Bacon — this haptic colorism is defined again in terms of Goethean color *contra* the Newtonian conception of purely optical color. But the philosophical foundation of this colorism will ultimately help support another, more subdued line that emerges from Deleuze's theory of painting. He says that 'colorists can indeed make use of black and white, light and dark; but this is because they treat black and white as colors, and establish tonal relations between them.... Against the Newtonian conception of optical color, it was Goethe who laid down the first principles of such a haptic vision.' The main tenant of such haptic colorism is simply 'the prohibition of mixtures except to obtain a *broken tone*,' which in practice means 'the abandonment of local tone; the juxtaposition of unblended patches; the aspiration of each color to tonality by appealing to its complimentary color.'[54] But, if these colors remain the primordial qualities of light and dark of Goethe's color theory — as Deleuze's colorism allows — at the extreme limit we

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[51] Eliane Escoubas, 'L'oeil (du) teinturier' in *Critique* 418 (March 1982), p. 233

[52] Escoubas, 'L'oeil (du) teinturier,' pp. 235, 237. However Romantic this vision of the universe sounds, it has in fact been corroborated by some recent cognitive neuroscientists and philosophers of mind. For instance, Thomas Metzinger has argued that: '*The world is not inhabited by colored objects at all.* It is just as your physics teacher in high school told you: Out there, in front of your eyes, there is just an ocean of electro-magnetic radiation, a wild and raging mixture of different wavelengths. Most of them are invisible to you and can never become part of your conscious model of reality. What is really happening is that the visual system in *your brain is drilling a tunnel through this inconceivably rich physical environment and in the process is painting the tunnel walls in various shades of color*.' Thomas Metzinger, *The Ego Tunnel: The Science of the Mind and the Myth of the Self* (New York: Basic Books, 2009), p. 20. My emphasis.

[53] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, pp. 52-53

[54] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 112

are left with a kind of monochromatic impressionism of broken black and white *taches,* which might convey 'the incandescent flash or brilliance, the turbulence of fire at the extreme limit of the visible.'[55]

Surprisingly enough, it is with German Expressionist cinema that we have the most elaborate theory of a figure composed solely of 'broken' or 'zigzag' lines.[56] For Deleuze, these films are generally composed by a 'whole contrasting series of white and black lines, rays of light and outlines of shadow: a striped world which could already be seen in the painted canvases of Wiene's *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*.'[57] The logic of this type of Expressionist composition is grounded upon and 'invents false continuities, which express the intensive changes of the whole' even if it 'sometimes whirls into the formlessness' reminiscent of a diagrammatic catastrophe.[58] Nonetheless, it primarily expresses 'intensive movement par excellence ... indeed as an abstract *kinetic art*,' which 'decomposes organic composition.'[59] But sometimes — having plunged into this formlessness — it moves beyond it, 'passes through the fire [of Goethean luminosity] in order to break its sensible attachments with the organic and the human' and ultimately construct 'the abstract spiritual Form of the future (Hans Richter's *Rhythms*).'[60] It is difficult to know precisely how to understand this reference to Richter's highly abstract films except by noting that Eisner describes them, in relation to Expressionism, as 'capturing plastic forms in movement while accounting for their dynamism ... the primordial rhythmic function of movement.'[61] That is, Richter's *Rhythms* do precisely what Deleuze seems to imply: they initiate a movement from formlessness to form, or to the figure, *within* the logic of the Expressionist line. It is worth noting that, along with Walter Ruttmann and Viking Eggeling, Richter helped to create an experimental cinematic language in the early 20s that scrambled the distribution of the senses and the arts. They described their 'absolute films' variously as abstraction in motion, painting in time or, in more synaesthetic terms, visual music. For our purposes here, Deleuze's evocation of both Richter — the Dadaist who worked at the crossroads of painting, graphic design, and cinema — as well as the 'painted canvases' of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari,* already incites us to extract this Expressionist figure from the confines of film form. And, as we have already suggested, this move forces us to recast filmic montage as the cinematic '*composition* of an aesthetic figure' that disrupts the hierarchical taxonomy of the arts.[62]

> Art is not chaos but a composition of chaos that yields the vision or sensation, so that it constitutes, as Joyce says, a chaosmos, a composed chaos — neither foreseen nor preconceived. Art transforms chaotic variability [the formlessness of the dynamic sublime] into *chaoid* variety, as in El Greco's black and gray conflagration.... Art struggles with chaos but it does so in order to render it sensory.[63]

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[55] Escoubas, 'L'oeil (du) teinturier,' p. 241
[56] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 51
[57] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 50
[58] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, pp. 51-52. Deleuze relates this *formless* tendency of Expressionist cinema to the logic of Kant's dynamic sublime.
[59] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, pp. 49, 53
[60] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 55
[61] Eisner, *The Haunted Screen,* p. 265
[62] Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* p. 67
[63] Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* pp. 204-205

With this in mind, we can begin to draw out even further a conception of the linear figure that remains latent in *The Logic of Sensation*.

There are at least two distinct ways in which the *traits* and *taches* that make up the diagram — whose purpose is to 'introduce formless forces throughout the painting,' that is, to disrupt figuration — are subsequently able to inform a figure. Quite simply, and beyond the analysis of Bacon's colorism, *traits* and *taches* are able to emerge, each in its own way, into a figure: the former emerge as 'broken lines' while the latter become 'broken tones.'[64] As Deleuze insinuates, 'this is enough to make the beautiful unity of the haptic world seem doubly broken.'[65] He also seems to acknowledge that the two main forms of painting — *linear* and *malerisch* — allow for these two different solutions to the problem of the figure and that, in a way, his focus on the work of Francis Bacon has complicated this possibility: 'The two definitions of painting, by line and color, and by the *trait* and the *tache*, do not overlap exactly, for the first is visual, but the second is manuel [*sic*].... The relationship between the hand and the eye is infinitely rich, passing through dynamic tensions, logical reversals, and organic exchanges and substitutions.'[66] The broken tones of Bacon's canvas indeed compose a figure — for example, 'those painted in the colors of meat, red and blue' — but only with fully *visible* or *actualized* colors, according to Goethe's schema.[67] Without imposing a logic of either/or, there is a sense in which the broken line composes a figure while still maintaining another important requirement of painting that Deleuze takes from Klee's art theory:

> In art, and in painting as in music, it is not a matter of reproducing or inventing forms, but of capturing forces. For this reason no art is figurative. Paul Klee's famous formula — 'Not to render the visible, but to render visible' — means nothing else. The task of painting is defined as the attempt to render visible forces that are not themselves visible. Likewise, music attempts to render sonorous forces that are not themselves sonorous.[68]

While there is no doubt that Bacon's figures express the inhuman forces that pulse beneath the flesh, Klee's own figures, as Lyotard suggests, do this mainly at the level of the painterly *line* in a way that remains closer to the prescriptions of Goethe's colorism: 'the world of black and white is still *invisible*.'[69] The point to be taken here is simply that, in a more expansive logic of sensation beyond the analysis of Bacon's paintings, broken lines are just as capable of composing figures as broken tones are. And the former perhaps have the advantage of remaining closer to the invisible forces of the diagram *even as* a figure is allowed to emerge from its catastrophe. A figure is simply a composed bloc of sensation, of percepts and affects, that expresses not the pure formlessness of the diagrammatic plane of immanence — that is itself necessary since it erases all the cliches of figuration and injects the force of the haptic into a work — but rather a perpetual coming-to-form that retains the synaesthetic qualities

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[64] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, pp. 40, 114
[65] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 109
[66] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 124
[67] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 23
[68] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 48
[69] Escoubas, 'L'oeil (du) teinturier,' p. 235

of the haptic and the inorganic. The figure attests to a shock to thought and thus remains, in a certain sense, unrecognizable without being completely formless. The figure 'emerges both gradually and all at once' and therefore expresses a logic of 'painting as process, in which there is a continual injection of the manual diagram into the visual whole, a "slow leak," a "coagulation," an "evolution."'[70] That is, figural composition expresses the type of cinematic action that we have extracted from the thought of Giorgio Agamben. This action short-circuits the traditional Aristotelian dichotomy between *praxis* and *poiesis* in order to become (dis)continuous, broken gestures in which 'nothing is being acted or produced, but rather something is being endured and supported (*gerere*).'[71] Given the theoretical framework we have constructed over the course of this thesis, we could read *The Logic of Sensation* beyond Bacon just as we could read Deleuze's *Cinema* books beyond film. And we are able to do this in a way that finally allows us to interpret Michaux's self-described 'cinematic' drawings and paintings, which emerge from the catastrophe of his mescaline period. By way of conclusion, we could say that, at the point of intersection of the technical/material axis of painting and the aesthetic/conceptual axis of the cinematic, the broken gestures of action become the figural expression of false movement and broken lines. And, following Lyotard, we could also say that this broken linear figure would be 'an anti-good form, a "bad form" as an energetics indifferent to the unity of the whole.'[72]

Deleuze agrees with Bacon, who thinks that in the domain of 'the irrational *trait* and the line without contour, Michaux went further than Pollock,' but only because he is the 'master of the diagram.'[73] However, by uncritically agreeing with Bacon, Deleuze makes a fundamental mistake. As we have already shown, Michaux and Pollock should not be grouped together as proponents of the same artistic tendency. Nor should Michaux be simply called a *tachiste*, a label he himself rejects. This is because the majority of his visual works present, not simply the formless *traits* and *taches* of the diagram, but a more self-conscious movement that simultaneously draws-out the maximal amount of affective, diagrammatic energy while avoiding the violent and uncontrolled spontaneity of Pollock. His works hover or, to speak with Agamben, gesticulate within the very moment of the birth of the figure, in the interstice between the pre-gestural and the gesture. That is, they are works that present a pulsing and perpetual *gestation*. As Michaux himself explains, his works express a 'teeming space of gestation, of transformation.' Or again, 'these lines of discontinuous growth ... are born by means of strange multiplication and spasmodic gestation.'[74] Deleuze argues that, in order for a figure to emerge, the diagram must 'remain operative but controlled, the violent methods must not be given free reign.'[75] We

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[70] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 128
[71] Giorgio Agamben, 'Notes on Gesture' in *Dass die Körper sprechen, auch das wissen seit langem*, ed. Hemma Schmutz and Tanja Widmann (Köln: Walther König, 2004), p. 110
[72] Lyotard, *Discourse, Figure*, p. 275
[73] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 89
[74] Henri Michaux, *Miserable Miracle*, trans. Louise Varèse and Anna Moschovakis (New York: New York Review Books, 2002), pp. 67-68
[75] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 89

would argue that it is precisely to the extent that Michaux *does* control his gestures that his cinematic drawings and paintings go further than Pollock and, in this way, ultimately express figures.

Curiously enough, Bacon himself has said that Michaux's paintings 'have always been about delayed ways of remaking the human figure, through a mark which is totally outside an illustrational mark, but yet always conveys you back to the human image — a human image generally dragging and trudging through deep ploughed fields, or something like that. They are about these images moving and falling and so on.'[76] And Michaux often explains that much of his work presents emergent humanoid figures that continuously metamorphose into various forms of nature even as they emerge from and dissolve back into the chaos of informal brushstrokes: 'Their dance is that of a crayfish-human, a demon-human, a spider-human, a beyond-human with a hundred hands, or a hundred snakes, feverishly escaping from all sides.'[77] He calls this dynamic movement of figures 'emergence/resurgence' and refers to the works themselves as 'drawings of disaggregation and reaggregation.'[78] One art critic has adequately described the relation between the purely *informel* aspect of Michaux's work and the figures that simultaneously emerge from it:

> Technically, these images of exploding, speeding clusters are accomplished by dropping black inkblots directly out of the bottle upon the paper surface and then subjecting them to further manipulation. The method lends itself perfectly to Michaux's undefined imagery, as the blot, on the one hand, remains just that, while, on the other, it assumes, as if by magic, physiognomies that cannot but evoke human or animal likenesses or refer to plants, trees, or inorganic matter.[79]

Further corroborating our argument, Michaux describes his post-mescaline work — produced without ingestion of the drug, but after his ten-year experimental catastrophe — as compositions of 'multiple broken lines,'[80] lines produced by 'jerky and disheveled gestures,'[81] 'lines beyond beaten paths ... that break lose and take flight.'[82] He considers these broken lines as various attempts to express the very inorganic and haptic qualities that define Deleuze's figure as well as the Goethean incandescent brilliance that lies at the extreme edge of the visible:

> Lines, more and more lines, which I am not sure I really see, though already distinct and fine (which I *feel*?), which I begin to see.... The diabolical lines of dismemberment are still growing. These lines of incessant, inhuman speed.[83]

> This is a crystalline flux ... fractured into a thousand shards[84]
> and against the golden section.[85]

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[76] Bacon, *The Brutality of Fact,* pp. 61-63
[77] Henri Michaux, 'Signes' in *Oeuvres Complètes II*, ed. Raymond Bellour (Paris: Gallimard, 2001), p. 431
[78] Michaux, *Emergences/Resurgences*, p. 70
[79] Messer, 'Postface' in *Henri Michaux,* p. 181
[80] Michaux, *Miserable Miracle*, p. 59
[81] Michaux, *Emergences/Resurgences*, p. 28
[82] Michaux, *Emergences/Resurgences*, p. 50. 'Not having taken any hallucinogenic substances in years, the call to fragmentation remains. I often begin drawings only to see them decompose, divide, re-divide as infinitum.' *Ibid.*, p. 70
[83] Michaux, *Miserable Miracle*, pp. 113, 123
[84] Michaux, *Miserable Miracle*, p. 13
[85] Michaux, 'First Impressions' in *Darkness Moves*, p. 328

> The luminous, scintillating, wild 'colors' had without a doubt entered into me as brutally and bluntly as a worker's thick thumb into a soft slab of clay, at moments causing me considerable pain — iridescent, glaring, dazzling, and outrageously vivid.[86]

> I managed to provide a sort of graphic translation in pen and ink of the vibratorium I had experienced. As for the colors? No, impossible.... But without wanting to, I was involved in color fabulation.[87]

And, like the lines themselves, Michaux explains that his 'attempts at *composition* are endlessly broken up,' that his figures express a 'disorder of composition and of creation ... impulses [*élancés*] in jerks, indefinitely renewed.'[88] Figures do in fact appear, but these are *kinematic figures* that seem to perpetually dance and grow within the space of the canvas. They convey, to borrow a term from Frank Popper, 'virtual movement.'[89]

> Formed, unformed, re-unformed, a jerking building, a building in abeyance, in perpetual metamorphous and transubstantiation, sometimes appearing to be the rough draft of an immense and almost orogenic tapir.[90]

> The rending of luminous loops and arcs and lines. The occultations and reappearances of dancing bursts of light being decomposed, recomposed, contracted, spread out, only to be redistributed once more.[91]

All this impels us to describe Michaux's cinematic works as compositions of broken — and virtually moving — lines in which, following Deleuze, 'multisensible Figures appear visually ... in a common exercise of all the sense organs at once.'[92] That is, these works are *cine-aesthetic*. Michaux himself claims that the figures depicted in these visual works simultaneously express a broken movement in the image as well as a synaesthetic movement in the mind: 'all emerge from the human figure, perhaps missing legs or arms or torso, but nonetheless but we *feel* the inner dynamics, twisting, exploding, stretching, expanding in every direction, in every sense.'[93]

In his musings on synaesthesia, Jean-Luc Nancy claims that the singular-plurality of zones of sensation 'breaks down the living unity of perception *and* action.'[94] Similarly, as we have seen, Deleuze argues that the cinematic creates 'movements in *esprit*,' which means — all at once — movements in the image, movements in the mind, and movements that 'include aberrant *actions*.'[95] In a world where organic action has been made impossible by our picnoleptic condition of increasing cinematic speed, the cinematic itself restores our belief that *broken* gestures and *broken* lines — that is, *aberrant* actions — still connect us back to ourselves and to the movements of *phusis*, which are themselves broken. The logic of this action is not one of infinite deferral — it is not the catatonia of Artaud or the mind-

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[86] Michaux, *Emergences/Resurgences*, p. 64
[87] Michaux, *Emergences/Resurgences*, pp. 64, 52
[88] Michaux, *Miserable Miracle*, pp. 70, 30. My emphasis.
[89] Frank Popper, *Origins and Development of Kinetic Art* (London: Studio Vista, 1968), p. 78
[90] Michaux, *Miserable Miracle*, p. 32
[91] Michaux, *Miserable Miracle*, p. 12
[92] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 37
[93] Michaux, *Emergences/Resurgences*, p. 34. Translation modified.
[94] Nancy, *The Muses*, p. 21
[95] Gilles Deleuze, 'The Brain is the Screen' in *Two Regimes of Madness*, trans. Ames Hodges and Mike Taormina (New York: Semiotexte, 2006), p. 283. My emphasis.

numbing anaesthetics of fascism — but rather of continuous, if quasi-epileptic, gestation. Similarly, without judgment, we cannot retrieve the old forms of wholesome revolutionary action. In this sense, Peter Hallward is correct. If we are still looking for an *October* revolution, we must indeed 'look for our inspiration elsewhere' than in Deleuze.[96] But we must leave behind the comfort of our old ways and believe in the emergence of new modes of existence and new forms of action. As Deleuze says, with the cinematic regime we have entered the 'domain of cold decision, of absolute obstinacy, of the choice of existence.'[97] He makes an effort to distinguish Worringer and Romanticism and he does so, surprisingly, in a way that allies Worringer with Kandinsky. At the same time, he gives us an affective formula for what this cinematic obstinacy might look like:

> Worringer's modernist positions seem to us to be very close to those of Kandinsky. Both criticize a concern — in both Goethe and Romanticism — to reconcile spirit and nature, which keeps art tied to an individualistic and sensualist perspective. They conceive, on the contrary, of a 'spiritual art,' which goes beyond persons and keeps nature in the background, relating them to a chaos from which modern man must emerge. They are not even sure that the enterprise will succeed, but there is no other choice: this is the origin of Worringer's comments on 'the scream' as the only expression of expressionism.[98]

Such broken action and broken connection to nature is therefore accompanied by an "'affective athleticism," a scream-breath'[99] to which Michaux also attests: 'To arrive at such thinking is an athletic feat — you have to be in excellent shape.'[100]

If we answer in the affirmative to Jacques Rancière's question 'Is There a Deleuzian Aesthetics?' we would have to qualify our response by adding that it is a *cine-aesthetics*, just as his philosophy as a whole has been described as a 'kinematic philosophy' or as a 'cine-thinking.'[101] His is not a philosophy *of* art, but an attempt at the construction of a new relation between the two disciplines, a critical construction that simultaneously breaks down the old boundaries between different genres and senses. Furthermore, this cine-aesthetics is itself an attempt to conceive a new relation, without judgment, between the human and its world through new notions of perception and action. Cine-aesthetics consists in a broken cinematic line or circuit that links the false movements of *phusis*, *aisthesis*, and *poiesis*:

> It is all a question of line, there is no substantial difference between painting, music, and writing. These activities are differentiated from one another by their respective substances, codes, and territories, but not the abstract line they trace, which shoots between them and carries them towards a common fate. When we come to trace this line, we can say 'It is philosophy.'[102]

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[96] Peter Hallward, *Out of this World: Deleuze and the Philosophy of Creation* (London: Verso, 2006), p. 164

[97] Deleuze, 'The Brain is the Screen' in *Two Regimes of Madness*, p. 283

[98] Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 225

[99] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 40

[100] Henri Michaux, *The Major Ordeals of the Mind and the Countless Minor Ones*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1974), p. 11

[101] Jacques Rancière, 'Is There a Deleuzian Aesthetics?' trans. Radmila Djordjevic in *Qui Parle* 14.2 (Spring/Summer 2004), pp. 1-14. For the descriptions of Deleuze's thought as 'kinematic philosophy' and 'cine-thinking,' see John Mullarkey, *Refractions of Reality: Philosophy and the Moving Image* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2009), pp. 78-109; and Éric Alliez, 'Midday, Midnight: The Emergence of Cine-Thinking' in Gregory Flaxman, ed., *The Brain is the Screen: Deleuze and the Philosophy of Cinema* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), pp. 293-302, respectively.

[102] Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues II*, trans Hugh Tomlinson (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), p. 74

Appendix: Translated transcript of Henri Michaux's *Images du monde visionnaire*[1]

[With extraordinary lucidity and incredible precision, Henri Michaux has managed to fix in his memory some images of the visionary world that appear under the influence of certain hallucinogenic substances. It is the great scientific value of these experiments/experiences that justified the initial medical perspective of Eric Duvivier's creation. In 1963, Professor Jean Delay presented this film to the medical profession explaining that: 'The analogy or identity of these experimental/experiential states — which arise and subside {*produits et réduite*} within a few hours — with certain states of mental derangement {*alienation*}, is at the forefront of current research on the biochemical pathogenesis of psychosis.'

Preamble to the film
IMAGES OF THE VISIONARY WORLD

Henri Michaux speaks to you: **]**

When someone proposed that I make a film about mescaline visions, I repeated again and again that it would be an impossible undertaking. This drug is beyond anything we could possibly create. I would say that even a superior film, made with much more considerable means and with all that is necessary for an outstanding production, would be insufficient for these images. They are more dazzling, more unstable, more subtle, more labile, more imperceptible, more oscillating, more trembling, more martyring, more swarming, more infinitely charged, more intensely beautiful, more terribly colored, more aggressive, more idiotic, more strange. As for the speed, it is such that all the sequences together should take fifty seconds. Here cinema becomes impotent, especially since one would need to increase all these characteristics at the same time. The images in the film are thus very sober, slowed down, attenuated, simple indications of the visual formations by which, almost without fail if the dose taken is sufficient, the drug images will occur. It doesn't matter if the subject is a genius of the inner life or a plain and simple man. We did not attempt to represent the general and profound effect on the personality — such a film would be entirely different — but rather the types of images that one commonly encounters in these states. It will suffice to show how considerably these visions differ from those of the dream, and, in a certain way, those caused by hashish, and in what ways they coincide with those that some psychotics have reported. This is the justification behind our attempt. Before there was

[1] Transcribed directly from the film. Square [brackets] denote text that scrolls across the screen. Curly {brackets} are my notes. Everything else is read aloud by Michaux himself.

nothing; next time we will be able to do better. Although the mescaline visions ordinarily pass in absolute silence, it is not without reason that music has been introduced. It has a role to play.

[A Film by Henri Michaux
Directed by Eric Duvivier
Images: Pierre Fournier
Set: Jean Caillon
Sound Editing: Albert Luzuy
Interpretation: Abel Jores
Produced by Sciencefilm

IMAGES OF THE VISIONARY WORLD
I. On Mescaline
Original music: Gilbert Amy **]**

{ After the protagonist ingests mescaline, 15 minutes of mescaline-inspired sounds and images }

[IMAGES OF THE VISIONARY WORLD
II. On Hashish
Sound: H.M., E.D., A.L.
with the assistance of R.T.F. and S.I.S. **]**

Whether the subject becomes apathetic, blissful, jovial, or restless, the visionary images invade, animated this time, not by a vibratory movement, but by a rousing movement. That which is disproportionately elongated, which is exaggeratedly high, which fuses, streams out, precipitates; an extreme, crazy, irresistible animation, always ready to take flight; the unexpected, the funny, the immense, the marvelous; endless corridors, terraces as far as the eye can see, chasms, fabulous palaces, incessant, amazing metamorphoses; the unusual, especially the unusual: this is the realm of hashish. We hear murmurs, real voices sometimes. Some of the noises relate to the visions, but not constantly, not strictly, often delayed. Similarly music, just beginning, soon ends in a dizzying and comedic amalgam. Periodically everything stops — sound and light, or one without the other — as if it were gathering its forces. From this fantastic parade, more fleeting than enigmatic, we have imperfectly and with extended gropings, reconstituted a few parts.

{ After the protagonist ingests hashish, 15 minutes of hashish-inspired sounds and images }

[END **]**

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Summary

This thesis attempts to extract and reconstruct an aesthetic theory after the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze. We argue that one of the first conditions of such an aesthetics is the formula 'without judgment,' which should be read as a declaration of distantiation from what is perhaps the founding text of European aesthetics: Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Judgment*. A major philosophical problem with Kant's system is the ambiguity of the term 'aesthetics' which refers, on the one hand, to the science of *a priori* sensibility and, on the other, to the judgment of beauty and the creation of art through genius. For our purposes, 'without judgment' points to a theory of aesthetics subtracted from the notion of beauty and, more generally, subtracted from the *power* of judgment that ultimately depends upon a transcendent Law. If we apply this formula to Kant's schema, aesthetics is immediately reduced to the sciences of sensation and creation. That is, it roughly corresponds to the ancient Greek concepts of *aisthesis* and *poiesis*. And if we consider seriously the often neglected second-half of Kant's third *Critique* — on the teleology of nature — as an important aspect for the study of aesthetics, we can add a third concept: *phusis*. *Phusis, aisthesis, poiesis*: this is the framework we adopt in constructing a post-Deleuzian aesthetics. Each of these concepts inform, in sequence, one of the three chapters of this thesis.

The term 'cine-aesthetics' refers to two further conditions of the aesthetic theory being drawn-out here. First is the observation that Deleuze's books on the philosophy of cinema actually thematize and put to work the most important concepts of his aesthetics. And they do this, more than any of his other considerations of the various arts — literature, theater, music, painting — in a way that comes the closest to forming a coherent system. So, while we analyze all of Deleuze's writings on art and aesthetics, we present our findings in the language of the cinematic. Second, and more generally, we argue that any contemporary aesthetics must be thought within the frame of the epistemic regime of art that roughly defines the character of our current historical moment. In line with the Greek term *kinesis*, we call this regime 'cinematic' since it might be best understood by the ways in which the concept of movement — as well as the related concepts of time and speed — has shifted over the past hundred years. We show how the cinematic, understood in this way, offers a lens through which we can recast the last century of art history in a new light, dispensing with any traces of Romanticism as well as the easy anti-aesthetics of postmodernism. But, looking back from our current 'post-medium condition' — to borrow an important term from Rosalind Krauss — the question should be not simply 'What is the cinematic after film?' but rather 'What is the cinematic without film?' The task of the first chapter is to address this latter question.

In chapter two, we analyze Deleuze's paradoxical-sounding formulation 'transcendental empiricism,' which proposes to be an alternative to Kant's transcendental idealism. A significant part of

this transcendental empiricism involves a new conception of *aisthesis* based upon a particular reading of Bergsonian and Leibnizian intuition as well as Gustav Fechner's 'experimental aesthetics.' Although Deleuze doesn't explicate this theory of *aisthesis* in a systematic way, we attempt to reconstruct it from various points throughout his work. What emerges is a non-Romantic theory of intuition — devoid of any pious overtones of presence — that may be useful for analyzing cinematic art. In order to go beyond ideas concerning beauty, genius, and the 'faculty' of judgment — none of which are particularly tenable after late-19th century philosophy and aesthetics — we develop a theory of *aisthesis* after Deleuze's transcendental empiricism. We consider this transcendental empiricism to be a particular manifestation of the minor lineage of 'radical empiricism' from William James forward, a tradition which combines ideas from Hume and Leibniz in a way completely other than that of Kant.

While chapter two offers an alternative to Kantian *aisthesis*, the third chapter attempts to conceive of a post-Heideggarian *poiesis*. Although Heidegger was an insightful interpreter of Nietzsche, and indeed initiated a major current in Nietzsche studies, there is one very important way in which he consciously rejects the Nietzschian intervention in philosophy. This is Heidegger's adherence to a notion of truth, even though he radically rearticulates its significance. In this thesis, 'without judgment' means not only an aesthetics subtracted from the concept of beauty, but also from the Kantian Law — the categorical imperative — which, despite all of Kant's efforts to the contrary, compelled him to resurrect the transcendent truths or 'ideas' of World, Soul, and God as the postulates of practical reason. *Poiesis* for Heidegger means 'bringing forth.' It is the unconcealing of a world and, as such, is strongly associated with his conception of *Ereignis,* an event that ultimately bears all the marks of a transcendent truth. Against Heidegger's retention of the category of truth for works of art, we offer a more Nietzschean conception of *poiesis* as fabulation. Here, the creation of art is understood as a 'power of the false' that necessarily erases the cliches and habits of the status quo. This power of the false replaces Kant's 'power of judgment' (*Urteilskraft)* and allows for a completely different kind of ethics and politics than Kant's philosophy has allowed for.

Finally, each chapter ends with a consideration of the cinematic art of Henri Michaux. Although he only produced one film, Michaux often describes his entire *oeuvre* — whether poetry, prose, ink drawings, or *tachiste* paintings — as 'cinematic attempts to draw the flow of time.' We build upon this sentiment and show that Michaux's experimentation with different media was, in fact, motivated by the much larger aim of developing a cinematic art that adequately dealt with the problem of expressing time, speed, and movement. Ultimately, we argue that Michaux's work displays the qualities of what we are calling here cine-aesthetics.

Samenvatting

Dit proefschrift poogt een esthetische theorie te herleiden en reconstrueren in navolging van de filosofie van Gilles Deleuze. We beargumenteren dat een hoofdzakelijke voorwaarde voor een dergelijke esthetica de formule 'zonder oordeel' moet zijn, welke ingezet wordt als een distantiering van een grondleggende tekst in Europese esthetica: Immanuel Kants *Kritiek van het Oordeelsvermogen*. Een centraal filosofisch probleem in Kants systeem is de ambiguïteit van de term 'esthetica,' die enerzijds verwijst naar de wetenschap van *a priori* waarneming en anderzijds naar het oordeel van schoonheid en creatie van kunst middels genie. Volgens onze stelling verwijst 'zonder oordeel' naar een theorie van esthetica die losgezet is van de notie van schoonheid en, in meer algemene zin, van de *macht* van een oordeel dat uiteindelijk ondergeschikt blijft aan een transcendentale Wet. Als we deze formule toepassen op het schema van Kant, wordt esthetica onmiddellijk afhankelijk gemaakt van de wetenschappen van zintuiglijkheid en creatie, welke algemene overeenkomstigheden hebben met de Oudgriekse concepten van *aisthesis* en *poiesis*. En als we de vaak buiten ogenschouw gelaten tweede helft van Kants derde *Kritiek* — over de teleologie van natuur — serieus nemen voor de studie naar esthetica, kunnen we tevens een derde concept toevoegen: *phusis*. *Phusis, aisthesis, poiesis*: dit is het raamwerk dat wij aannemen in het construeren van een post-Deleuziaanse esthetica. Elk van deze concepten stuurt, in sequentiële volgorde, een van de drie hoofdstukken uit dit proefschrift.

De term 'cine-esthetica' verwijst naar twee bijkomende voorwaarden van de hier uitgesponnen esthetische theorie. In de eerste plaats is er het argument dat Deleuzes publicaties over de filosofie van film in wezen de belangrijkste aspecten van zijn gehele esthetica thematiseren en toepassen. Dit gebeurt in deze publicaties nadrukkelijker dan in zijn andere overwegingen van de verschillende kunsten — literatuur, theater, muziek, schilderkunst — zodanig dat het een coherent systeem nadert. Het is om deze reden dat wij de taal van het 'cinematische' aannemen voor onze bevindingen, terwijl we ieder van Deleuzes werken over kunst en esthetica betrekken in onze analyses. In meer algemene zin beargumenteren we, in de tweede plaats, dat hedendaagse esthetica gedacht moet worden binnen het kader van het epistemische regime van de kunsten, die in ruwe zin het karakter van ons huidige historische moment duidt.

Overeenkomstig met het oorspronkelijk Griekse *kinesis*, noemen wij dit regime 'cinematisch' omdat ze het best begrepen kan worden volgens de manier waarop het concept van beweging — evenals de verwante concepten van tijd en snelheid — zich heeft ontwikkeld gedurende de laatste honderd jaar. We laten zien hoe het cinematische, begrepen op deze manier, een kader biedt waardoor we de afgelopen eeuw van kunstgeschiedenis in nieuw licht kunnen zien en ons kunnen ontdoen van sporen van Romanticisme, evenals een te gemakzuchtige anti-esthetica van het postmodernisme.

Gezien vanuit onze huidige 'post-mediumconditie' — om een belangrijke term van Rosalind Krauss te nemen — moet de vraag echter niet simpelweg zijn 'Wat is het cinematische na film?' maar eerder 'Wat is het cinematische zonder film?' Het is de opgave van het eerste hoofdstuk om deze tweede vraag te overwegen.

In hoofdstuk twee analyseren we Deleuzes paradoxaal klinkende formulering 'transcendentaal empiricisme,' een alternatief voor Kants transcendentaal idealisme. Een aanzienlijk deel van dit transcendentaal empiricisme betrekt een nieuwe conceptie van *aisthesis* gebaseerd op een specifieke lezing van Bergsoniaanse en Leibniziaanse intuïtie, alsmede Gustav Fechners 'experimentele esthetica.' Hoewel Deleuze zijn *aisthesis* niet op systematische wijze uitwerkte, pogen we het te reconstrueren vanuit verschillende punten in zijn werk. Wat zich aandient is een non-Romantische theorie van intuïtie — ontdaan van ieder spoor van Aanwezigheid — die nuttig kan zijn in het analyseren van cinematische kunst. Om voorbij ideeën te gaan over schoonheid, genie, en de 'faculteit' van het oordeelsvermogen — geen van welk aannemelijk is in het kielzog van filosofie en esthetica uit de laat 19e eeuw — ontwikkelen we een theorie van *aisthesis* na Deleuzes transcendentaal empiricisme. We overwegen dit transcendentaal empiricisme als een specifieke manifestatie van 'radicaal empiricisme' vanaf William James, een traditie die ideeën van Hume en Leibniz combineert op een compleet andere wijze dan Kant.

Waar het tweede hoofdstuk een alternatief biedt voor Kantiaanse *aisthesis*, probeert hoofdstuk drie een post-Heideggeriaanse *poeisis* te denken. Hoewel Heidegger een inzichtvolle lezer van Nietzsche was en een invloedrijke stroming inluidde in Nietzsche studies, is er een belangrijke manier waarop hij bewust de Nietzscheaanse interventie in de wijsbegeerte afwees. Deze afwijzing is gemotiveerd door Heideggers naleving van een notie van waarheid, ofschoon zijn werk haar betekenis radicaal herziet. In dit proefschrift betekent 'zonder oordeel' niet alleen een esthetica losgezongen van ieder concept van schoonheid, maar ook van de Kantiaanse Wet — de categorische imperatief — die Kant, ondanks zichzelf, aanzette om nieuw leven te blazen in transcendentale waarheden of 'ideeën' van Wereld, Ziel en God als postulaten van de praktische rede. *Poiesis* betekent voor Heidegger 'voortbrengen.' Het is het onthullen van een wereld en als zodanig sterk verwant met zijn conceptie van *Ereignis*; een gebeurtenis die uiteindelijk eveneens alle tekens van een transcendentale waarheid vertoont. Tegen Heideggers behoud van een categorie van waarheid voor kunstwerken, bieden wij een meer Nietzschiaanse conceptie van *poiesis* als 'fabulatie.' Hier wordt de ontwikkeling van kunst begrepen als een 'macht van het valse' die noodzakelijkerwijs de clichés en gebruiken van de status quo uitwist. Deze macht van het valse vervangt Kants macht van oordeel (*Urteilskraft*) en staat een totaal verschillende ethiek en politiek toe dan wat Kants filosofie voor mogelijk achtte.

Elk hoofdstuk sluit af met een reflectie op de cinematische kunst van Henri Michaux. Hoewel hij slechts een enkele film produceerde, beschrijft Michaux zijn werk — ongeacht of het gaat om poëzie, proza, inkttekeningen of *tachiste* schilderijen — doorgaans als 'cinematische pogingen om de stroom des tijds te tekenen.' We bouwen voort op dit sentiment en laten zien dat Michauxs

geëxperimenteer met verschillende media in feite gemotiveerd wordt door een veel groter project om een cinematische kunst te ontwikkelen die adequaat omgaat met het de uitdrukking van tijd, snelheid en beweging. Tot slot beargumenteren we dat Michauxs werk de kwaliteiten vertoont van wat wij cine-esthetica noemen.