

**Deleuze on Music, Painting,
and the Arts**

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For my son
Curtis

Abbreviations

All translations from Deleuze, Guattari, and Deleuze-Guattari are my own. For works that have appeared in English translation, citations include page numbers of the original French edition followed by the page numbers of the corresponding passages in the English translation.

- AO Deleuze and Guattari. *L'Anti-Oedipe: Capitalisme et schizophrénie I*. Paris: Minuit, 1972. Trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane under the title *Anti-Oedipus* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977).
- CC Deleuze. *Critique et clinique*. Paris: Minuit, 1993. Trans. Daniel W. Smith and Michael A. Greco under the title *Essays Critical and Clinical* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).
- CH Guattari. *Chaosmose*. Paris: Galilée, 1992. Trans. Paul Bains and Julian Pefanis under the title *Chaosmosis* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995).
- DR Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968. Trans. Paul Patton under the title *Difference and Repetition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).
- FB Deleuze. *Francis Bacon: Logique de la sensation*. Vol 1. Paris: Editions de la différence, 1981.

- IM Deleuze. *Cinéma 1: L'Image-mouvement*. Paris: Minuit, 1983. Trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam under the title *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986).
- IT Deleuze. *Cinéma 2: L'Image-temps*. Paris, Minuit, 1985. Trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta under the title *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989).
- LP Deleuze. *Le Pli: Leibniz et le baroque*. Paris: Minuit, 1988. Trans. Tom Conley under the title *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).
- LS Deleuze. *Logique du sens*. Paris: Minuit, 1969. Trans. Mark Lester, with Charles Stivale, ed. Constantin V. Boundas under the title *The Logic of Sense* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990).
- MP Deleuze and Guattari. *Mille plateaux: Capitalisme et schizophrénie, II*. Paris: Minuit, 1980. Trans. Brian Massumi under the title *A Thousand Plateaus* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).
- PP Deleuze. *Pourparlers*. Paris: Minuit, 1990. Trans. Martin Joughin under the title *Negotiations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995).
- PT Guattari. *Psychoanalyse et transversalité*. Paris: Maspero, 1972.
- QP Deleuze and Guattari. *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?* Paris: Minuit, 1991. Trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell under the title *What Is Philosophy?* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).
- S Deleuze. *Spinoza: Philosophie pratique*. 2nd ed. Paris: Minuit, 1981. Trans. Robert Hurley under the title *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy* (San Francisco: City Lights, 1988).
- TE Guattari. *Les trois écologies*. Paris: Galilée, 1989. Trans. Ian Pindar and Paul Sutton under the title *Three Ecologies* (London: Athlone, 2000).

Introduction

In some twenty-five books written between 1953 and 1993, the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze enunciated a body of thought that touched on a dizzying number of subjects, ranging from embryology, ethology, mathematics, and physics to economics, anthropology, linguistics, and metallurgy. Among the areas to which he most frequently turned were the arts, especially in the fifteen years preceding his death in 1995. He wrote books on Proust (1964, revised and expanded in 1970 and 1976), on the nineteenth-century novelist Leopold Sacher-Masoch (1967), and on Kafka (1975), as well as a final collection of literary essays titled *Essays Critical and Clinical* (1993), and references to literature abound in *The Logic of Sense* (1969), *Difference and Repetition* (1969), *Anti-Oedipus* (1972), and *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980). In *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* (1983) and *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* (1985), he developed an elaborate taxonomy of cinematic images and signs that drew examples from hundreds of films representative of all eras and major tendencies of world cinema. The arts of music and painting he addressed in *A Thousand Plateaus*, and in *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* (1981) he sketched the outlines of a general theory and history of painting in the course of a close examination of Bacon's art.

Although literature and cinema are the arts of which Deleuze speaks at greatest length, music and painting hold a special place in his

Chapter Seven

SENSATION AND THE PLANE OF COMPOSITION

Although Deleuze writes copiously about literature and cinema, those arts play a relatively minor role in his discussions of the collective domain of the arts as a whole. His treatments of music and painting, by contrast, are much less extensive, and yet they are central to his aesthetic theory, and especially to his articulation of both the relationship between philosophy and the arts and the relationship of the various arts to one another. Painting reveals the aesthetic dimension of sensation. Music makes evident the connection between artistic sensation and creation in the natural world. And it is as modes of thought that these arts, and the arts in general, form their relationship with philosophy.

At several points in his writings, Deleuze comments briefly on philosophy's relationship to the arts and the arts' relationship to one another, but it is only in *What Is Philosophy?* (1991), Deleuze's last collaborative effort with Guattari, that these topics are addressed at length. In many regards *What Is Philosophy?* provides a synthetic summation of Deleuze's and Deleuze-Guattari's various treatments of the arts, yet the work also extends their thought in several challenging ways, chief of which for our purposes is in their demarcation of the spheres of activity of philosophers and artists. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari approach artistic and philosophical creation alike in terms of the construction of planes of consistency, but in *What Is Philosophy?* one of their

central concerns is to differentiate between philosophy and the arts, and to do so by distinguishing between a philosophical plane of immanence and an artistic plane of composition. The philosophical plane of immanence they identify as that of the virtual and the pure event, and the artistic plane of composition as that of the possible and sensation. Given the insistent presence of the concepts of the virtual and the event in nearly all of Deleuze's and Deleuze-Guattari's analyses of the arts, such a configuration is puzzling. Solving that puzzle, however, is central to understanding Deleuze and Guattari's sense of philosophy and the arts as complementary modes of thought, and it is on the basis of this understanding that one may determine how Deleuze conceives the specificity of each of the arts and their relative affinities with one another and with philosophy.

SENSATION

In *What Is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guattari define the work of art as "a block of sensations, that is, a compound [*un composé*] of percepts and affects" (QP 154; 164). In *Francis Bacon*, as we have seen, Deleuze develops at length the notion of sensation, both as Cézanne uses the term and as it may be applied to Bacon's paintings. Here, Deleuze and Guattari divide sensation into two components, percepts and affects. Percepts are not perceptions, and affects are not affections (i.e., feelings), for percepts are "independent of a state of those who undergo them" (QP 154; 164), and affects do not arise from subjects but instead pass through them. The percept we met earlier in Cézanne's paradox of "man absent, but everywhere in the landscape" (Maldiney 185). As Cézanne remarked to Gasquet, "At this moment I am one with my canvas [i.e., the world to be painted]. We are an iridescent chaos. I come before my motif, I lose myself there. . . . We germinate" (ibid. 150). The percept, then, "is the landscape before man, in the absence of man" (QP 159; 169). The affect is the "becoming-other" with which we are now familiar, here characterized primarily in terms of "becoming-animal." Hence, "affects are precisely these non-human becomings of man, just as percepts (including the city) are the nonhuman landscapes of nature" (QP 160; 169). In painting, Cézanne's landscapes of "iridescent chaos" are percepts, Bacon's portraits of heads-becoming-animal are instances of affects. In music, Messiaen's "melodic landscapes" and bird-becomings are examples respectively of percepts and affects. Thus, in all

the arts, the goal "is to wrest the percept from perceptions of objects and from states of a perceiving subject, to wrest the affect from affections as passage from one state to another. To extract a block of sensations, a pure being of sensation" (QP 158; 167). When percepts and affects are successfully wrested from human perceptions and affections, "one is not in the world, one becomes with the world, one becomes in contemplating it. All is vision, becoming. One becomes universe. Becomings animal, vegetable, molecular, becoming zero" (QP 160; 169).

In their treatments of music and painting in *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari stress the concept of force, characterizing painting's goal as a rendering visible of invisible forces, and music's aim as a rendering audible of inaudible forces; likewise, in *Francis Bacon* Deleuze says that "there is a community of the arts, a common problem . . . of harnessing forces" (FB 39). In *What Is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guattari reiterate these themes and integrate the concepts of sensation and force, noting that "there is a full complementarity between the grip [*étreinte*] of forces as percepts and becomings as affects" (QP 173; 182). Is this not "the definition of the percept itself," they ask, "to render perceptible [*sensible*] the imperceptible [*insensibles*] forces that populate the world, and that affect us, make us become?" (QP 172; 182). In a "becoming universe," cosmic forces impinge on artists, inducing affects, or becomings, which themselves are compositions of forces—a simple "vibration," or passage of force from one level of corporeal intensity to another; an "embrace [*étreinte*] or clinch [*corps-à-corps*, literally "body-to-body"]" in which forces resonate with one another; or a "withdrawal, division, distension" (QP 159; 168) whereby forces separate and spread out.¹ And as the artists become other, they pass into things, they become "absent, but everywhere in the landscape," at which point they are able to render palpable in the work of art the impalpable forces of the world.

Besides linking sensations and forces, Deleuze and Guattari also treat sensations in terms of the refrain, identifying "the refrain in its entirety" as "the being of sensation" (QP 175; 184). In their discussion of the refrain they rehearse the arguments of plateau 11 of *A Thousand Plateaus* (which we examined in chapters 1 and 3), stressing the role of forces in the passage of the refrain from milieus through territories and into the cosmos. Art "begins perhaps with the animal, at least with the animal that fashions a territory" (QP 174; 183). Its various territorial refrains, such as the stagemaker's song, overturned leaves, and ruffled

neck feathers, are "blocks of sensations in the territory, colors, postures and sounds, which sketch out a total work of art" (QP 174-75; 184). The animal's refrains circumscribe a space, but that space also issues forth into the cosmos along a line of flight. Hence, the refrains enable a general movement from "endo-sensation to exo-sensation," in that "the territory does not merely isolate and join, but it opens onto cosmic forces that arise from the inside or come from the outside, and it renders perceptible their effect on the inhabitant" (QP 176; 185-86).

Though *What Is Philosophy?*'s treatment of art reads at times like a free variation on familiar themes—sensation, forces, refrains, among others—Deleuze and Guattari's primary purpose is less to recapitulate and synthesize previous positions than to explore a relatively new concern, that of the being of art. Percepts and affects are "*beings* that have validity in themselves and exceed any lived experience [*tout vécu*]," and the work of art is "a being of sensation, and nothing else: it exists in itself" (QP 155; 164). Two issues immediately arise from these formulations, and both are questions of embodiment: What is the relationship between sensations and physical bodies, human and otherwise, and what is the relationship between the artwork and the matter in which it is realized (paint, sound, words, etc.)? One means of approaching these issues is to consider the concept of the "house" (QP 169; 179), which Deleuze and Guattari introduce while discussing the phenomenological concept of the "flesh."

After asserting that sensations "incarnate the event" (QP 167; 176), Deleuze and Guattari ask whether Merleau-Ponty's notion of the "flesh" might explain such incarnation, as some phenomenologists claim. In *The Visible and the Invisible*, Merleau-Ponty describes the "flesh" as "a new type of being, a being by porosity, pregnancy, or generality, and he before whom the horizon opens is caught up, included within it. His body and the distances participate in one same corporeity or visibility in general, which reigns between them and it, and even beyond the horizon, beneath his skin, unto the depths of being" (Merleau-Ponty 149). A preconceptual intertwining of the "flesh of the body" and the "flesh of the world" makes possible a communication of embodied self and embodied world, and this "intercorporeity" (Merleau-Ponty 141) is rendered perceptible in works of art.

Noting the strange sensual piety of this essentially religious model of incarnation, Deleuze and Guattari make the somewhat bizarre proposal

that the house rather than the flesh be seen as the intermediary between inner and outer worlds. The flesh is "too tender" (QP 169; 179), they claim, too malleable when engaged in a becoming-other; it requires a scaffolding for its support, an "armature" to which the clay of the flesh may adhere. The house is "the armature" (QP 169; 179), the framework inhabited by the malleable flesh. The house is defined by its "sections [*pans*]," its walls, floor, ceiling, roof, "that is, the fragments of diversely oriented planes that give the flesh its armature" (QP 170; 179). The house's planes orient the body in space (up, down, left, right, foreground, background, etc.), but also form part of a "house-territory system" (QP 174; 183). The floor delimits and founds a territorial habitat, the walls separate inside and outside, the roof "envelops the singularity of the place" (QP 177; 187). The house "frames" the world, each side of the paradigmatic cube-house serving as a picture frame or cinematic frame that carves out a chunk of space, but the house also has windows and doors, frames that allow a communication between inside and outside. The house in this sense is a filter that affords a passage of forces into and out of the habitat. It is a porous, selective membrane through which the inhabitant and the cosmos interact. Deleuze and Guattari conclude, then, that "the being of sensation is not the flesh, but the compound [*le composé*] of non-human forces of the cosmos, of non-human becomings of man, and the ambiguous house that exchanges and adjusts them, makes them swirl around like winds. The flesh is only the photographic developing solution [*le révélateur*] that disappears in that which it develops [*révèle*]: the compound [*le composé*] of sensation" (QP 173; 183).

Deleuze and Guattari's basic point, of course, is that Merleau-Ponty's concept of the flesh as aesthetic mediation between outside and inside ties the work of art too closely to the *corps vécu*, whereas the concept of the house emphasizes the non-human dimension of the aesthetic. But the figure of the house suggests as well something of the artwork's relation to human experience. In one sense, the house may be seen as the paradigmatic material artwork. Art in this regard is a functioning part of our inhabiting of the world, one of the ways whereby we build a territorial home for ourselves, structure and orient our bodies, frame and delimit space, but also a means whereby we communicate with the outside, the artwork serving as a filtering membrane that permits an interchange and circulation of forces across its surface. Yet we must not push this reading too far. The "house" is a figure for the material artwork as an entity, but

it also is a figure for the structuring, modulating, and shifting configuration of forces within the artwork. "The work of art is a being of sensation" (QP 155; 164), and the being of sensation is the *compound*, or *composite*, of percepts ("non-human forces of the cosmos"), affects ("non-human becomings of man"), and house (in the second sense of the term, as configuring structure of forces). This suggests that though the artwork as material artifact ("house" in the first sense of the term) is in relation with other material bodies and the physical world, and hence not isolated and self-contained, the artwork as "being of sensation" is distinct from the material artifact, just as percepts and affects are distinct from the perceptions and affections experienced by human beings.

This point Deleuze and Guattari emphasize especially in their description of the artwork as "monument" (QP 155; 164).² The artwork as monument does not so much commemorate as conserve. The successful artwork has a certain solidity, a viability or self-sufficiency, as if it were able to stand on its own. Its solidity, viability, or "monumentality" has nothing to do with its physical size, but arises from the block of sensations that it conserves. The smile of a young boy captured in a portrait is conserved in the painting. The smile is distinct from the artist who painted it, the boy who served as its model, and finally from the boy himself figured in the painting. The smile as monumental, enduring moment conserves *itself* in the painting, and it is perpetually reactivated and recommenced at each viewing. In a way, it depends for its continued existence on the material survival of the paint and canvas, but the smile is finally distinct from the matter in which it is embodied. The smile itself has an unspecified, free-floating existence, and even if the material of paint and canvas "were to endure only a few seconds, it would give the sensation the power of existing and of conserving itself in itself, *in the eternity that coexists with that short duration*" (QP 157; 166).

The material of the artwork, however, does have a necessary relation to the self-conserving sensation it embodies. The formation of the artwork takes place on a "plane of composition." That plane Deleuze and Guattari subdivide into a "technical plane of composition," which concerns the material of the artwork, and an "aesthetic plane of composition" (QP 181; 192), which concerns sensations. Though artists have developed limitless means of engaging the two planes, Deleuze and Guattari propose two basic poles in their interrelation. In the first, "*the*

sensation realizes itself in the material" (QP 182; 193), that is, sensation adapts itself to a well-formed, organized, and regulated matter. In painting, this is the mode of representational, perspectival art, in which sensations are, as it were, projected onto a material surface that already contains within it the spatial schemata that structure its figures. In music, traditional tonal compositions exemplify this mode, sensations seeping into the conventionally structured sonic material. In literature, it is the mode of mimetic fiction and standard style, in which words and representations are imbued with sensation without themselves becoming markedly strange or deformed. In the second case, "*it is instead the material that passes into the sensation*" (QP 182; 193). Rather than sensation being projected onto a calm material surface, the material rises up into a metamorphic plane of forces. In painting, the paint itself—its thickness, saturation, texture, etc.—articulates forces; in music, variegated timbres, microintervals, and fluctuating rhythms make up a malleable sonic force-matter; in literature, mutant sounds, syntactic patterns, and semantic elements submit to a continuously varying modulation of forces. Yet what is essential is that in both cases matter becomes *expressive* in the artwork. There is finally "only a single plane, in the sense that art involves no other plane than that of aesthetic composition: the technical plane in fact is necessarily covered over [i.e., when the sensation realizes itself in the material] or absorbed by [i.e., when the material passes into the sensation] the aesthetic plane of composition" (QP 185; 195–96).

"Composition, composition is the sole definition of art" (QP 181; 191), and "everything (including technique) takes place between the compounds [*les composés*] of sensations and the aesthetic plane of composition" (QP 185; 196). Sensations are percepts and affects, "beings" extracted from the perceptions and affections of everyday corporeal experience, which then become the compositional elements, the *composés*, that the artist shapes on an aesthetic plane of composition and renders perceptible through materials that have been rendered expressive. When the artist succeeds, he or she not only creates sensations within the artwork, but also "gives them to us and make us become with them; [the artist] takes us up into the compound [*le composé*]" (QP 166; 175). The plane of composition is an "infinite field of forces" (QP 178; 188), the artwork a territorial house opening onto the cosmos, a monument erected on a plane that constitutes a "universe" (QP 185; 196). And when we become with the artwork, we, too, open to the cosmos and

"become universe." "Perhaps this is the proper sphere of art, to pass through the finite in order to rediscover, to give back the infinite" (QP 186; 197). What we have, then, is a circuit of embodiments and dis-embodiments, a passage of sensations through bodies—first extracted from bodily perceptions and affections, then rendered perceptible in the expressive matter of the artwork, then engaged by embodied audiences swept up into the artwork, and then extended into an infinite field of forces. Though this blending of bodies and sensations, of people, artworks, and cosmos, may sound like sheer mysticism, it is based on a coherent theory of nature as creation. How artists are able to render matter expressive is something of a mystery, but less so is the sense in which matter itself is expressive. The key is to understand the plane of composition as both an aesthetic plane of artistic creation and a material plane of physico-biological creation.³ To do so, however, we must first situate the arts' plane of composition in relation to philosophy's plane of immanence.

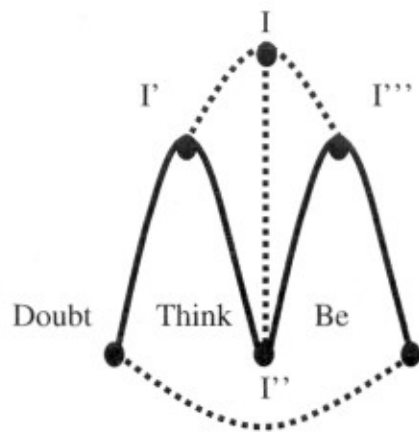
PLANE OF IMMANENCE, PLANE OF COMPOSITION

In *A Thousand Plateaus's* plateau 10, "Becoming-Intense, Becoming-Animal, Becoming Imperceptible. . .," Deleuze and Guattari propose a Spinozist description of the "plane of consistency of Nature" (MP 311; 254) in terms of speeds and affects. The elements of this plane of consistency have neither form nor function (unlike atoms, which have definite form), yet they are not indefinitely divisible; they are "the infinitely small ultimate parts of an actual infinity" (MP 310; 254), distinguished solely by the relative speeds of their movements and by their affects (i.e., their powers of affecting and being affected by other particles). This plane is a "plane of immanence or univocity," in that it is a single plane of the whole of nature in which "the One expresses in a single and same sense all of the multiple, Being expresses in a single and same sense all that differs" (MP 311; 254). It is also a "plane of composition" on which each body is "a composition of speeds and affects" (MP 315; 258), formed through "a natural play of haecceities, degrees, intensities, events, accidents" (MP 310; 253). It is a virtual plane, "like an immense abstract Machine, abstract yet real and individual, whose pieces are the diverse assemblages or individuals, each of which groups an infinity of particles under an infinity of more or less composite [*composés*] relations" (MP

311; 254). Its time is Aion, "the time of the pure event or of becoming" (MP 322; 263). This virtual plane is actualized in the formed entities and stable functions of a "plane of organization and development" (MP 326; 266). The plane of consistency, in short, is "the plane of Nature" (MP 315; 258), a "pure plane of immanence, of univocity, of composition" (MP 312; 255), a virtual plane of events that is actualized in a plane of organization and development.

What Is Philosophy?, one might say, is an effort to describe philosophy in terms of this Spinozist model. If the whole of Nature is composed of a plane of consistency's speeds and affects in process of actualization, where might one situate philosophy, and where locate its related spheres of activity, the sciences and the arts? Deleuze and Guattari's strategy is to divide *A Thousand Plateaus's* Spinozist plane of consistency/immanence/composition in two, and thereby differentiate between a philosophical plane of immanence and an artistic plane of composition, each with its special kind of becoming, and to assign the sciences a complex position within the actual on a "plane of reference" (QP 112; 118). To each plane corresponds a specific object of creation—the philosophical concept, the artistic sensation, and the scientific function—and to each a peculiar kind of agent—the conceptual persona (*personnage conceptuel*), the aesthetic figure, and the partial observer. The sciences' plane of reference, functions, and partial observer are of less concern to us here than philosophy's plane of immanence, concepts, and conceptual personae and their relation to the arts' plane of composition, sensations, and aesthetic figures. We already have some sense of what the artistic domain is like, but the philosophical sphere of concepts, the plane of immanence, and the conceptual persona requires some elaboration.

Philosophy is the creation of concepts, and concepts are events. "Always to disengage an event from things and from beings, this is the task of philosophy when it creates concepts, entities" (QP 36; 33). The concept is "an incorporeal," "a pure Event, a haecceity, an entity" (QP 26; 21). Each concept has three basic characteristics: its components connect it to other concepts; its components have an inner consistency, or adhesion, created by zones of indiscernibility in which one component shades into another; and the concept is "in a state of *overflight* [*survol*] in relation to its components" (QP 26; 20). Deleuze and Guattari offer as an example the concept of the Cartesian cogito, which they illustrate with a simple diagram (see below). Its components are "to doubt," "to think," and



“to be,” and its full articulation is the perpetual event of “I, the one who doubts, am the I who thinks, therefore I am, i.e., I am a thing that thinks.” A series of “I”s marks the three processes of doubting (I’), thinking (I’), and being (I’’); a zone of indiscernibility between I’ and I’’, and another between I’’ and I’’’, give the concept endo-consistency; and the unifying “I” is like an aleatory point passing at an infinite speed through the points I, I’, I’’ and I’’’. Each component is capable of extending the concept toward other concepts, doubt to different kinds of doubt (perceptual, scientific, obsessional), thought to various modes of thought (sensing, imagining, having ideas), being to diverse types of being (infinite being, a finite thinking being, extended being). In the passage of the concept toward diverse types of being the concept reaches its limits, in that the cogito is not an infinite being; a “bridge” then extends from the concept of the cogito to the concept of God, a mobile bridge that also functions as a crossroads for movement toward yet other concepts.

The notion of “overflight,” or *survol*, requires special attention. The word *survol* designates the act of flying over the ground in an airplane, and by extension, the act of rapidly scanning a page with the eyes. Deleuze and Guattari take the idea of *survol* as developed here from Raymond Ruyer, who identifies this “overflight” with the primary consciousness of all living forms. As we saw in chapter 3, Ruyer distinguishes aggregates such as heaps of sand, clouds, and human crowds from living forms, which are self-shaping, self-sustaining, self-enjoying entities. Such self-forming forms extend from subatomic particles through molecules

to the entire range of complex multicellular organisms, and the thematic unity of each living form’s self-forming activity constitutes a primary consciousness. To get at the nature of this consciousness, Ruyer considers the example of a human being seated at a table and looking at that table’s checkerboard surface. Often, he notes, analysts of perception reason that if a two-dimensional surface requires a third dimension to be perceived as a surface (i.e., an eye must be above the surface of a table looking down on it in order to see it as a flat square), the three-dimensional perception of a human observer requires an additional dimension for its description, a second observer standing behind and above our seated observer (and by implication, a third observer behind the second, and so on in an infinite regress). Ruyer agrees that the *representation* of a dimension requires an additional dimension or at least an additional, external, perspective—that a photograph of a table surface requires a camera above the surface, and a photograph of the camera-photographing-the-surface requires a second camera behind and above the first—but this has nothing to do with the consciousness of our seated observer. For the observer, the table top is “a surface grasped in all its details, without a third dimension. It is an ‘absolute surface,’ which is not relative to any point of view external to itself, which knows itself without observing itself” (Ruyer 1952, 98). It is a surface with only one side, that grasped by the perceiving consciousness. The individual squares of its checkerboard surface are distinct and separate, yet they are not totally detached. They are grasped in “an absolute unity which is nevertheless not a fusion or confusion” (ibid. 99). The observing “I” is present at all places on the surface at the same time; it is in “absolute overflight,” in a “non-dimensional overflight” across the surface. In a geometric space, distances on a plane vary, point B being closer to point A than a faraway point C, but in an absolute surface all points are co-present. The absolute surface is “trans-spatial,” and its distances defy the limits of physical space-time, the “I”s “overflight,” as it were, passing at an infinite speed over all points of the surface at the same time. For Ruyer, these characteristics of human consciousness are those of all living forms. Every self-forming form, as ongoing self-shaping, self-sustaining, and self-enjoying activity, is a theme of development in infinite “overflight” across its own absolute surface.

If we return to the diagram of the Cartesian cogito, we can say that the points and paths are like Ruyer’s checkerboard tablecloth, and that the cohesion, or consistency, that holds the concept together is the

"overflight" of a ubiquitous aleatory point. "The concept is defined by the inseparability of a finite number of heterogeneous components traversed by a point in absolute overflight, at infinite speed" (QP 26; 21). Concepts are "absolute surfaces or volumes, forms that have no other object than the inseparability of distinct variations" (QP 26; 21). With the notion of "overflight," then, Deleuze and Guattari describe the "togetherness" of the concept's components without resorting to talk of "unity," and they indicate the virtual nature of the concept, which is outside physical space-time in a "trans-spatial" dimension of infinite speeds (or put another way, in a dimension of events, whose free-floating time is that of the *infinite*). We shall see shortly what bearing the concept's overflight has on the overflight that Ruyer regards as evident in all living forms.

The creation of concepts takes place on a plane of immanence, a "horizon of events," an "absolute horizon" (QP 39; 36). The plane of immanence is "not a concept that is thought or thinkable, but the image of thought" (QP 39; 36–37), the "pre-philosophical" condition that makes thought possible. In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze outlines traditional philosophy's dogmatic "image of thought," with its presuppositions of good sense, common sense, and a natural inclination of thought toward truth, and calls for an "imageless thought," but here Deleuze and Guattari propose that all thought entails an "image of thought," that is, a sense of what it means to think, to make use of thought, and to situate oneself within thought. What counts as thinking? What lies outside legitimate consideration—dreams, visions, error, intoxication, misperception, stupidity? How does one go about thinking—winnowing wheat from chaff, unfolding signs, following preexisting paths? In a 1988 interview, Deleuze clarifies that the image of thought is not "method, but something more profound, always presupposed, a system of coordinates, of dynamisms, of orientations" (PP 202; 148), and he offers as examples of images of thought the three he describes in *The Logic of Sense* (series 18), Plato's ascension to the heights of Ideas, Nietzsche's Empedoclean descent into the depths of roiling matter, and Carroll's glide along the surfaces of words and bodies. And he adds that in *A Thousand Plateaus*, "The rhizome is the image of thought that spreads out below that of trees" (PP 204; 149).

The creation of concepts presupposes a plane of immanence, but also a *personnage conceptuel*, a conceptual "persona," or "character" (as a character, *personnage*, in a novel or drama), who is "the becoming or the

subject of a philosophy, who counts for the philosopher" (QP 63; 64). When engaged in genuine thought, "I am no longer myself, but an aptitude of thought for finding itself and spreading across a plane that passes through me at several places" (QP 62; 64). Nietzsche's Zarathustra is perhaps the most obvious example of a conceptual persona, but Deleuze and Guattari argue that every philosophy is articulated under the guise of a conceptual persona. Nicholas of Cusa thinks in the guise of the *ignorans* or *idiota* (Latin: unlearned person, layman), and Descartes in another version of the *idiota*, the simple man of sound judgment, who is given the name "Eudoxe" in *The Search for Truth by Natural Light*. Kierkegaard's conceptual persona is yet another version of the "idiot," in this case the fool or madman who refuses to accept the impossible.⁴ The conceptual persona and the plane of immanence presuppose one another, the persona in one sense *preceding* the plane, plunging into chaos to determine the coordinates of a particular planar slice of that chaos, but at the same time *following* the plane, putting various concepts in relation with one another on the plane. Concepts do not arise directly from the plane, but "the conceptual persona is needed in order to create them on the plane, just as [the conceptual persona] is needed in order to trace the plane itself" (QP 73; 75–76).

Philosophy, then, is the invention of concepts on a plane of immanence. The plane of immanence provides the basic orientation of thought, and the concepts take shape within that plane as aleatory points in overflight above an absolute surface. Through the conceptual persona, thought at once opens up a given plane of immanence and follows along that plane, putting concepts in relation to one another.

Philosophy, the sciences, and the arts are all means of confronting chaos. Chaos itself is unthinkable, immeasurable, and unworkable, a perpetually metamorphosing play of shifting evanescences and dissolutions that has no consistency. Chaos "chaotizes," and common sense, received truth, orthodox opinion, good form, and so on are among the means whereby humans protect themselves from chaos. Philosophy, science, and art must struggle against chaos, concede Deleuze and Guattari, but only in order to use chaos in a common battle against the protective shield of *doxa*, the "already thought and perceived," which is comfortably recognizable and comprehensible. Philosophy plunges into chaos and cuts out a slice, a plane of immanence that retains the infinite speed of chaos but with a consistency that permits a creation of interconnected concepts,

each concept being "a chaotic state par excellence" (QP 196; 208). Science slows the infinite speed of chaotic elements, establishes limits, selects variables, and demarcates coordinates on an actual plane of reference, but always with an affinity for chaos and the infinite. Asymptotic functions, differential relations, catastrophic folds, strange attractors, are only a few of the ways in which science tends toward the chaotic and forms a "referenced chaos that becomes Nature" (QP 194; 206). And art, too, commences in chaos, with Cézanne's "iridescent chaos" out of which the painting arises, or Klee's chaotic gray point that leaps out of itself and generates a self-forming line, but only in order to wrest sensations from bodies, in order to form a "chaosmos," a composition of chaotic sensations that render chaos perceptible and make possible a passage through the finite to the infinite.

In distinguishing the philosophical concept from the scientific function, Deleuze and Guattari make it clear that the concept is virtual, whereas the function is actual. The virtual is actualized in bodies, states of things, perceptions, and affections, and these actual entities are the subject of scientific investigation. But immanent within the actual is the virtual, something extra that exceeds the actualizations of every occurrence, both something left over, perpetually in reserve, and something still about to occur, an "infinite awaiting that is already infinitely past, awaiting and reserve" (QP 149; 158). The virtual, in its actualization, or "effectuation," impinges on commonsense experience as a chaotic force, inducing disequilibrium and a becoming-other; and philosophy disengages the virtual from the actual in a movement of "counter-effectuation." What it disengages is not a chaotic virtual, but "the virtual become consistent, an entity that forms itself on a plane of immanence that cuts a slice of chaos. This is what we call the Event" (QP 147; 156). Philosophy and science, then, have qualitatively different objects of concern, one virtual, the other actual, and every effort to integrate the two only compromises and confuses each activity. But if philosophy's plane of immanence is virtual and science's plane of reference is actual, where does the aesthetic plane of composition fit in?

VIRTUAL AND POSSIBLE

In *A Thousand Plateaus*, the Spinozistic plane of consistency is a plane of becoming, labeled indifferently a "plane of immanence" or a "plane of

composition." In *What Is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guattari state that *becoming* is common to the arts and philosophy, but that aesthetic becoming is "the act through which something or someone ceaselessly becomes-other," whereas conceptual becoming is "the act through which the common event itself escapes that which is" (QP 168; 177). Art's becoming "is alterity engaged in a matter of expression"; philosophy's becoming is "heterogeneity grasped in an absolute form" (QP 168; 174). The work of art does not actualize the event, but "incorporates or incarnates it: [the work of art] gives it a body, a life, a universe" (QP 168; 174). The concept, by contrast, disengages the pure event from bodies. Art's "plane of composition," we might say, is one of embodied becoming, philosophy's "plane of immanence" one of disembodied becoming. Artworks create universes that "are neither virtual nor actual; they are possible, the possible as aesthetic category ('the possible, or I'll suffocate'), the existence of the possible, whereas events are the reality of the virtual, forms of a Nature-thought that fly over [*survolent*] all possible universes" (QP 168; 177-78).

In labeling art's universe "possible," Deleuze and Guattari are in one sense simply reiterating the common argument that art creates imaginary worlds, alternative universes of the "as if." In another sense, they are emphasizing the hope of art, the promise of something genuinely new, the possibility of escaping the intolerable and living otherwise ("the possible, or I'll suffocate"). But the possible is also the realm of signs. Deleuze and Guattari open *What Is Philosophy?* by considering the concept of *l'Autrui*, "the Other Person," a concept Deleuze first examines in an essay on Michel Tournier's *Friday* (LS 350-72; 301-21) and then develops in *Difference and Repetition* (DR 333-35; 259-61). If I see another person's screaming face, but I do not see what is causing the scream (Bacon's screaming pope, for instance), the face expresses a possible world. Until I discover the source of the scream, the screaming face remains a sign of some unspecified possible universe. In this regard, "The Other Person is first of all this existence of a possible world" (QP 22; 17). The face as sign, in Deleuze's sense of the term, is an embodied difference, an entity that enfolds something unknown and requires unfolding in order to be deciphered. The face's possible world "is not real, or at least not yet, but still it exists nonetheless: it is an expressed [*un exprimé*] that exists only in its expression" (QP 22; 17).

Art's possible worlds are not virtual in the same sense that philosophy's plane of immanence is virtual, but they do arise from and participate in the virtual. In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze says that genuine thought only begins with an external violence to thought, a jolt that forces thought out of its ordinary habits. That jolt is a fundamental encounter, a disequilibrium or deregulation of the senses "that can only be sensed" (DR 182; 139). All thought, then, begins in sense experience, in the becoming-other of the senses. That becoming-other is the sign of the passage of the virtual into the actual. It takes place, one might say in a first approximation, along the surface of the virtual's entry into the actual. If we think of a biological embryo, we can say that its self-forming form, its overall theme of development, is initially everywhere present, in "overflight," as a virtual difference (not a unity, not a preexisting blueprint, but a problem to be unfolded). As the embryo's single cell divides into two cells, a process of individuation takes place along its dividing surface. Two individuated entities are created, but the *process* of individuation, the *passage* of the virtual self-forming form into the two formed entities, precedes the entities, always along the surface of the soon-to-be-entities in formation. We may differentiate, then, between the virtual as something distinct in itself, as the self-forming form in overflight grasped independently of its actualization, and the virtual as self-forming form engaged in a process of individuation. If we extrapolate generally, we may say that the production of the actual is everywhere a becoming actual of the virtual, a process of individuation along a surface of becoming. Sense experience registers this passage of the virtual into the actual as chaos, as a jolt of disequilibrium, a becoming-other. The virtual is actualized, but it remains immanent within the actual, something left over, in reserve and still to come. Philosophy disengages the virtual from bodies and counter-effects it as Event, as a virtual that has been given consistency. Art seizes the becoming-other of the virtual's passage into the actual, wrests it from organized bodily perceptions and affections, and then renders it perceptible in artworks.

This surface of passage between the virtual and the actual, this site of chaotic effectuation and chaoid countereffectuation, is the realm of sensation. Deleuze and Guattari elaborate on this realm and its relationship to the virtual in their concluding remarks on philosophy, science, and art as modes of thought. The three domains are the daughters of chaos, "the Chaoids," and each is equally a form of thought and

a form of creation (QP 196; 208). That which thinks in all three is the brain, which they define as "*the junction (not the unity) of the three planes*" (QP 196; 208) of immanence, reference and composition. The *brain* thinks, not the human being, who is merely "a cerebral crystallization" (QP 198; 210). "Philosophy, art, science are not the mental objects of an objectified brain, but the three aspects under which the brain becomes subject, Thought-brain, the three planes, the rafts on which the brain plunges into and confronts chaos" (QP 198; 210). This brain-subject is first of all a "superject" (a term taken from Whitehead), an "I conceive" in absolute overflight. It is a "*form in itself*" (QP 198; 210) with all the characteristics of the self-forming form described by Ruyer—a self-surveying overflight, at infinite speed, of an absolute surface with a single side and no supplemental dimensions (QP 198; 210). This superject is not itself a concept, but the faculty of forming concepts, "the mind/spirit [*esprit*] itself" (QP 198; 211). At the same moment that the brain becomes superject, the concept, plane of immanence, and conceptual persona come into being. The brain is also an "I function" of scientific knowledge, an "eject" that extracts selected elements from the actual—limits, constants, variables, and so forth—while tracing a plane of reference. Finally, the brain is an "I feel [*je sens*]," a "*soul [âme] or force*" (QP 199; 211), an "inject" (QP 200; 212), a subject that is not in overflight above things (*superject*), like the subject of philosophy; nor "ejected" at an objective distance from things, like the subject of the sciences; but in the midst of things, interfused with them, *injected*.

The inject is the "I feel" of sensation, and it is no less a mode of thought than the "I conceive" of the superject. The inject of sensation conserves, contracts, composes, and contemplates. Here, Deleuze and Guattari make use of a line of reasoning that Deleuze first touches on in his early book on Hume, *Empiricism and Subjectivity* (1953), and then develops in *Difference and Repetition*. One of Hume's great insights, according to Deleuze, is that the conception of cause-and-effect relations presupposes a passive synthesis of time. For Hume, all ideas derive from impressions, and there can be no direct sensate impression that generates the idea of causality. Object A may follow object B any number of times, but if A vanishes when B appears, the two remain separate and unrelated events. Hume reasons that we do have a genuine idea of causality, and that it arises from an inner impression, an "impression of reflexivity" (Hume 165) whereby the understanding establishes the connection

between A and B. But in Deleuze's reading of Hume, there is an intermediary moment between the unrelated succession of A and B and the understanding's active reflection on A and B. Something happens in the mind (specifically, in the imagination): A is retained, or conserved, such that it is brought into coexistence with B. This retention, or conservation, takes place through no *action* of the mind, but automatically, *in* the mind, as in a container; here, a *passive* synthesis brings together one moment with a succeeding moment. Such a retention of A into B makes possible the idea of causality, but it also is the foundation of all habits, which presuppose a primary retention of a past into a present and toward a future.

In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze expands on Hume's analysis, arguing that the passive syntheses of perception lead directly to the passive syntheses of organic processes, to the "primary sensibility that we are" (DR 99; 73). Every organism is "the sum of its retentions, contractions and expectations" (DR 99; 73), its past retained in its genetic makeup and its future projected from its present in the form of need. On the ground of these fundamental contractions and expectations arise the active syntheses of such higher-order functions as memory, instinct, and learning. Every organism's contact with its environment also involves retentions and contractions, its absorption of heat, light, water, nutrients, and so on being so many contractions of elements within its ongoing self-formation. The organism's various contractions Deleuze characterizes as Humean habits, retentions that take place in a "soul," which does not actively synthesize elements but simply contemplates that which is contracted within it. For every contraction there is a contemplative soul, for which reason one must "attribute a soul to the heart, to the muscles, to the nerves, to the cells, but a contemplative soul whose only role is to contract a habit" (DR 101; 74). What we commonly call habits, the sensori-motor habits we develop as active creatures, presuppose "the primary habits that we are, the thousands of passive syntheses that organically compose us. Simultaneously, it is in contracting that we are habits, but it is through contemplation that we contract" (DR 101; 74). In this sense, Deleuze regards the thesis of Samuel Butler's *Life and Habit* as basically correct: all life is habit. And likewise, Plotinus's vision in the Third Ennead's Eighth Tractate: all of Nature is contemplation.

In *What Is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guattari make similar points, describing the "I feel" brain's sensation in terms contraction, habit, and

contemplation. Sensation is fundamentally a conservation or retention of vibrations, a contraction of vibrations that takes place in a contemplative soul, not through an action, but "a pure passion, a contemplation that conserves the preceding in the following" (QP 199; 212). The realm of actualized bodies, of mechanistic physical actions and reactions, is distinct from that of sensation, which constitutes a "plane of composition, where sensation is formed in contracting that which composes it, and in composing itself with other sensations that it contracts in turn. Sensation is pure contemplation, for it is through contemplation that one contracts, contemplating oneself to the extent that one contemplates the elements from which one arises. To contemplate is to create, the mystery of passive creation, sensation" (QP 200; 212). The flower, as sensing soul, absorbs water and sunlight; it conserves vibration after vibration of the stream of photons and water molecules it is absorbing; it contracts the light stream by contemplating that stream, and likewise contracts the water stream; it brings together the two contracted streams, composes them into a block of sensations, and then contemplatively contracts that composition; finally, it senses itself in beatific self-enjoyment, as if it were smelling the scent it exudes.

It might seem that sensation in this account is merely a behavioristic *reception* of stimuli, but sensation entails creation, "the mystery of passive creation," and the "soul" of sensation is "*soul or force*" (QP 199; 211), albeit a force "that does not act" (QP 201; 213), a force "in retreat" (QP 199; 211). In what sense is sensation "passive creation," and the contemplative soul "a force that does not act"? Deleuze and Guattari assert that "in the final analysis, the same ultimate elements and the same force in retreat constitute a single plane of composition bearing all the varieties of the Universe" (QP 201; 213), and they cite Ruyer's vitalism as a philosophy of nature that posits such a force that does not act.⁵ At first glance Ruyer seems to assert the opposite, for he stresses that self-forming forms are "essentially active and dynamic" (Ruyer 1952, 104), processes of forming activity rather than static states or completed forms. Yet in his view the dynamism of self-forming forms is different from that of the standard physics of mechanistically interacting solid bodies. The absolute overflight of a self-forming form involves a connecting or joining of elements, a process of relating parts within a single field without fusing them into an amorphous "one" or simply collecting them as aggregates, part-against-part (a simple though too

static example of this nonfusing connection being that of the individual squares of the checkerboard table top grasped by an observing consciousness). The primary form of every connection is that of absolute overflight, but that form, Ruyer stresses, is “also essentially a force of connection [*une force de liaison*]” (ibid. 113). Ruyer takes as the fundamental connection of self-forming form the molecular bond, which cannot be construed in the terms of a classical physics of solid bodies and contiguous part-to-part relations. The atoms that bond are not stable, shaped things, but activities whose forms are “virtual and dependent on forces of composition” (Ruyer 1958, 58), a carbon atom, for example, being not so much a solid tetrahedral pyramid as a quadruple orientation of possible syntheses. The electrons of a bond are not localizable or assignable to a given atom, but constitute a zone of indiscernibility between atoms; a bonding of two atoms is something like a continuous self-structuring of two regions of electronic density in ongoing vibratory resonance (though finally the exchange of electrons in a bond “is not representable, but a fundamental fact” [Ruyer 1952, 220]). The absolute overflight of a *form* and its activity as a *force* of connection or bonding are one and the same, a single process of self-forming form, and from molecules to macromolecules, viruses, bacteria, and multicellular organisms, the same molecular “temporalized structuring activity” (Ruyer 1958, 63) prevails. In this sense, an elephant is “a macro-microscopic being” (Ruyer 1952, 113), which is “more ‘microscopic’ than a soap bubble” (ibid. 227), in that the soap bubble is a static form composed of an aggregate of elements, whereas the elephant is a self-forming form comprising multiple self-forming forms (molecules, macromolecules, organs, etc.) within a single ongoing activity.

The force of classical physics is a force of macroscopic entities and molar aggregates, whereas the force of self-forming forms is molecular, the bonding between atoms representing a different mode of force, not different in nature but different in quantity and spatio-temporal manifestation. For Ruyer, “all force is mental in origin [*d’origine spirituelle*]” (Ruyer 1952, 225), in that self-forming form, in Ruyer’s definition, is consciousness, and the molecular force of self-forming forms is primary, whereas the force of classical physics is only “a macroscopic result” (ibid. 226). In his view, then, a self-forming form in absolute overflight is a virtual in process of actualization, and as process it is essentially *une force de liaison*, a force of connection or bonding, which

from the perspective of macroscopic bodies and classical physics is minuscule in quantity and mysterious in its functioning, and perhaps in this sense “a force that does not act.” It is the force of all living things (which include all self-forming forms, whether organic or inorganic), and hence a force of creation: a force of composition that operates through bonding and connection. Like Ruyer, Deleuze and Guattari see the fundamental process of creation in nature as a continuous actualization of the virtual, and they regard the absolute overflight of the virtual as entailing a creative force of composition through which the virtual becomes actual. But they distinguish between the *form* and the *force* of the virtual, between an *esprit* in overflight and a *soul* that conserves, arguing that the connections and bondings through which self-forming forms build, grow, and take shape presuppose a passive synthesis, a contraction of a past into a present within a conserving, contemplating soul. Every self-forming form in this regard is necessarily a sensing form, in that its self-forming activity presupposes a retentive contraction of past into present, and that contraction is sensation.

Ruyer’s effort is to establish the energetic continuity between molecular forces of self-forming forms and molar forces of aggregates (the forces are different in mode, not in nature), whereas Deleuze and Guattari wish to differentiate a virtual dimension of force that is immanent within the virtual’s actualization. The virtual’s actualization takes place in actual bodies as a dynamic process of individuation, a process that may be described in terms of active, physical forces, but immanent within that process is a virtual connecting, or bonding, through a process of retentive, contracting, self-conserving sensation. Immanent within the active forces of bodies in formation, then, is a passive force of the virtual. Put another way, the actualization of the virtual must be described twice, once in terms of actual bodies and the standard physics of material forces, and a second time in terms of the passive syntheses of retentive contractions that make up the condition of possibility of all bondings and connections. The actualization of the virtual is a single process, but the passage of the virtual into the actual does not exhaust the virtual; the virtual remains immanent within the actual, an excess always in reserve, and that virtual immanent within the actual is manifest as sensation.

To return to the example of the embryo: as the embryo’s cells divide, it forms increasingly complex configurations of multiplying cells. Its

morphogenesis proceeds through an internal process of splitting into more and more cells, but the process requires as well the continual incorporation of external nutrients within the internal process (and if one considers morphogenesis to extend throughout the organism's life, as Ruyer insists we must, its absorption of nutrients at various stages of its life history—in the case of humans, in the womb, in infancy, and through adulthood—must be viewed as part of a single process of growth and development). The internal multiplication of cells and external absorption of nutrients may be seen as so many bondings and connections, and those processes of internal individuation and external incorporation of nutrients may be described in terms of actual physical bodies and kinetic forces. But the processes may also be described in terms of a virtual self-forming form, in absolute overflight, differentiating itself through various internal and external connections. The form, when considered in its “dynamic” and “kinetic” becoming (the words are imprecise but unavoidable), is force, a force of connection whereby the form unfolds and constructs itself. That connecting force, however, is a passive force of retention, contraction, and conservation, not an active force. The unfolding of the virtual self-forming form is a process of actualization, each discrete state of the embryo an actual manifestation of the form, and the kinetic emergence of those actual states involves actual, physical forces. But immanent within them is the force of the virtual form itself, a purely passive, receptive force of sensation that doubles actual forces and remains within them as a perpetual reserve.

The plane of immanence is the domain of philosophy, the plane of composition, that of the arts, but both are finally planes of nature, planes of the actualization of virtual self-forming forms. The plane of immanence is that of every living form in absolute overflight, the plane of composition that of every living form in its process of ongoing embodiment. Philosophy and the arts, then, are activities that arise from and are connected to the general processes of the natural world. This is no reductive view of human action as “mere” animal behavior or physico-mechanical process. Philosophy is a highly specialized mode of engaging the plane of immanence, perhaps one that takes place only in human beings. Yet philosophy's invention of concepts ultimately is but one version of a general process of absolute overflight characteristic of all living forms. It is for this reason that Deleuze and Guattari speak of events as “forms of a Nature-thought that fly over [*survolent*]

all possible universes” (QP 168; 177–78). Likewise, the arts are quite specialized activities (although Deleuze and Guattari do see some animals as artists). The specialized function of the human arts, like the specialized function of philosophy, may be seen as a form of deterritorialization whereby an activity becomes increasingly autonomous, but finally the arts, like philosophy, remain part of a general process of natural creation. It is in this sense that art's plane is “a plane of composition of Being” (QP 179; 189) and its object, that of engaging life in an “enterprise of co-creation” (QP 164; 173).

Philosophy's domain is virtual; art's domain is possible—but finally this opposition of virtual and possible is not absolute, for the possible is the embodied virtual, the event as “alterity engaged in an expressive matter” (QP 168; 177).⁶ The world of art is a world of signs, a world of immanent, virtual forces within bodies. Its universe is that of an expressive matter that renders sensations palpable. The being of sensation is the being of the virtual as retentive, contractive, self-conserving, contemplative force immanent within the actual. Philosophy “countereffects” the virtual, “disengages an event from things and beings” (QP 33; 31), but both “art and even philosophy can apprehend [the event]” (QP 149; 158), and above all, “It is art . . . that can seize the event” (PP 218; 160).

Conclusion

Deleuze describes the problem common to the arts in various ways—as the harnessing of forces, as the tracing of lines, as the embodiment of sensation. Yet each art has its particular concerns, processes, and capacities, which cannot be transferred or translated from that art to another. For this reason Deleuze and Guattari say that “in no way do we believe in a system of the fine arts,” and that “art seems to us a false concept, solely nominal” (MP 369; 300–301). What, then, are the domains specific to music and painting? In what manner and in what matter does each art render perceptible percepts and affects? How might we frame Deleuze’s various conceptualizations of music and painting in terms of the embodiment of sensation?

SPECIFIC DOMAINS

If each art embodies sensation, music does so in a highly pliable and almost “incorporeal” matter. As Deleuze remarks in *Francis Bacon*, music indeed “deeply traverses our bodies, and puts an ear in our belly, in our lungs, etc.,” but ultimately it “rids bodies of their inertia, of the materiality of their presence. It *disincarnates* bodies” (FB 38). In turn, through the manipulation of its sonic matter, it “gives the most mental [*spirituelles*] entities a disincarnated, dematerialized body” (FB 38). In *A Thousand*

Plateaus, Deleuze and Guattari frame this power of disincarnation as a high quotient of deterritorialization. Music engages human bodies most fundamentally as a deterritorialization of the voice, and in comparison with painting, which deterritorializes the face, “music has a deterritorializing force that is much greater, much more intense and collective at the same time, and the voice a power of being deterritorialized that is also much greater” (MP 371; 302). Yet in another sense, music is perhaps the most material of the arts, the most elemental and cosmic, for its specific object is the deterritorialization of the refrain, which is manifest throughout the world of living forms. The refrain’s coexisting movements are those of the point of stability, the surrounding circle, and the line of flight. Milieus are formed out of the rhythmic interactions of various components, each a point of stability emergent from a chaotic background. A territory arises when a milieu component is extracted from the milieu as an expressive quality and possessive property. Through this action, a territorial space is circumscribed; the territory’s inhabitant asserts its possession of the space; and the component expresses the entirety of the territorial configuration of interconnected rhythmic elements. Within the territory as well is a line of flight, an opening to the outside. And it is via this line that other, nonterritorial, forms of social organization issue, along with increasing numbers of deterritorialized rhythmic components. Human musicians continue nature’s ubiquitous deterritorialization of rhythmic elements, fashioning rhythmic characters and melodic landscapes from sonic materials, their deterritorialization of refrains proceeding through diverse becomings, such as the elaborate and extended becoming-bird of Messiaen.

From milieus through territories to cosmic lines of flight, the rhythms of interacting components form interrelated refrains, which musicians engage through becomings, extract from the world, and then render perceptible in a sonic material that captures forces. In Western art music, the Classical age is marked by refrains that wrest order from chaos, each composition the musical counterpart of a milieu constructed of components in harmonic and contrapuntal accord. Romantic composers exploit territorial motifs, various mythic, regional, national, and ethnic elements inspiring works that seek a new relation between the earth and the people. The Romantics convert discretely sectional and relatively symmetrical Classical forms into a great form in continuous development, while treating sound as a moving matter in

continuous variation, thereby intensifying the deterritorializing tendencies within Classical music. Modern composers extend this deterritorializing movement, attempting through lines of flight to harness cosmic forces that range from the molecular (for example, Varèse’s sonic “crystallizations” and “ionizations”) to the geological and sidereal (Messiaen’s *From the Canyons to the Stars*). Through such cosmic refrains, modern composers render perceptible duration itself, capturing in sonic matter what Messiaen describes as “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)” (Rößler 40).

Music, then, makes perceptible the most elemental forces, but in such a way that our corporeal experience of these forces tends to “disincarnate” and “dematerialize” our bodies. Painting, by contrast, “discovers the material reality of the body, with its system of lines-colors and its polyvalent organ, the eye” (FB 38). Painting, one might say, is the most carnal of the arts, the art that most directly engages percepts and affects as they arise in human bodies. It is for this reason that painting reveals most clearly the “logic of sensation,” the affective dimension of art that allows an aesthetic material, as Bacon says, to bypass the brain and come across “directly onto the nervous system” (Sylvester 18). In Bacon’s works we have clear visual evidence of the becoming-animal of human figures. We see the vibratory forces at play in the body’s metamorphoses and in the diastolic and systolic rhythms that pass between figure and ground; we see the forces of coupling that conjoin two figures in a “matter of fact”; and we see the forces of separation that situate figures within intense, self-spacing monochrome fields. Ultimately, the force of a fluctuating time is revealed in Bacon’s triptychs, but that ethereal force remains enmeshed in the human body’s becoming.

The carnal dimension of painting is evident not simply in Bacon’s treatment of figures, but in his handling of color as well. In formal terms, the play of forces in Bacon’s paintings issues from the diagram, a point of chaos within the canvas that functions as a modulator through which the composition’s structuring relations arise. Yet Bacon is above all a great colorist, and his effort finally is to make color the generative element from which the canvases’ diagrams, figures, fields, and forces arise. All great painters repeat the history of painting, says Deleuze, and

in Bacon we can see the tactile shallow depth of Egyptian painting and the composite haptic-optic space of classical Greek art, as well as the projective space and optic play of light of Byzantine mosaics. But most important is Bacon's use of Cézanne's modulations of contrasting tones and van Gogh's broken tones, for in these practices Bacon exploits a properly haptic dimension of color. It is this tactile, palpable, sensual use of color that most patently reveals art's ability to embody sensation, to harness forces within a material, sensate world that remains close to our own corporeal existence.

The same corporeality is evident in painting's deterritorialization of the face and landscape. Music deterritorializes the human voice, but only as one means of reaching the basic goal of deterritorializing the refrain, the refrain having no privileged relation to the human body. Painting, by contrast, has as its fundamental aim the deterritorialization of the effects of facialization, through which the human face extends its encoding powers to the human body and beyond to the world at large. In the despotic-passional regime of signs, an abstract machine of faciality turns the face into a white wall-black hole system of signification and subjectification, a set of gestural expressions that combine with linguistic signs to enforce power relations. A coordinated disciplinary organization facializes the entire body, and a general facialized gridding spreads to structure the landscape surrounding the body. Painting in this regard has close ties with language and its intertwined institutions and practices, and through these ties painting assumes its political function of inventing a people by undoing the fixed codes and static grids that structure the world in conventional configurations. All the arts have the vocation of inventing a people-to-come (music's effort being evident in the invention of the "Dividual," as in Berio's *Coro*), but painting's invention of a people proceeds directly through the human body, via the "probe heads" that metamorphose faces, and thereby make possible a larger deformation of facialized bodies and facialized landscapes.

We may say, then, that sound, the material of music, has the capacity of disincarnating human bodies and granting sensations an abstract, "dematerialized body." Painting's material, the paint on the canvas, has the power of rendering visible the sensations that traverse the human body and connect it to the world. And each art in its specific fashion seeks the invention of a people through the creation of new ways of perceiving and feeling.

ELECTIVE AFFINITIES

In *What Is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guattari insist that no hierarchy governs relations among philosophy, science, and the arts. Each is a separate sphere with its own problems and objects of analysis. Yet each also has its own relation to what it is not. "*Philosophy needs a non-philosophy that comprehends it, it needs a non-philosophical comprehension, just as art needs non-art, and science non-science*" (QP 205-6; 218). Each sphere "is in an essential relation with the No that concerns it" (QP 205; 218). One might assume that science and the arts function equally as the nonphilosophy with which philosophy is concerned, and that nonart and nonscience are similarly constituted. Deleuze and Guattari do not elaborate on this point, but in scattered texts published shortly before *What Is Philosophy?*, Deleuze suggests that there is a special affinity between philosophy and the nonphilosophy of the arts, and that this affinity resides in the internal relation of the philosophical concept to art's affects and percepts. In a 1988 interview, Deleuze explains that his books on painting and cinema must be seen as books of philosophy, for "the concept, I believe, includes two other dimensions, those of the percept and the affect" (PP 187; 137). In a 1989 preface to a special issue of *Lendemains* devoted to his books on Spinoza, Deleuze notes that Spinoza is a great stylist who creates movement in the concept, yet the concept, Deleuze adds, "does not move solely within itself (philosophical comprehension), it also moves in things and in us: it inspires in us new *percepts* and new *affects*, which constitute the non-philosophical comprehension of philosophy itself" (PP 223; 164). Deleuze observes further, "Style in philosophy strains toward these three poles, the concept, or new ways of thinking, the percept or new ways of seeing and hearing, the affect or new ways of feeling. They are the philosophical trinity, philosophy as opera: all three are needed to *create movement [faire le mouvement]*" (PP 224; 164-65). Percepts and affects, it would seem, are at once inside and outside concepts, dimensions of concepts yet nonphilosophical dimensions, constituents of "the non-philosophical comprehension of philosophy itself." What this suggests is that affects and percepts are the surface or membrane between philosophy and the arts, between new ways of thinking and new ways of perceiving and feeling, yet a surface proper to philosophy itself. In *What Is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guattari wish to distinguish philosophy from the arts and hence emphasize the difference between thinking in concepts and thinking in percepts and affects, but

in one of Deleuze's last essays, *Critique et clinique's* concluding essay, "Spinoza and the Three 'Ethics,'" Deleuze implies that a properly philosophical thought in percepts and affects is also possible. In Spinoza's *Ethics*, Deleuze argues, the definitions, axioms, propositions, and so on exemplify thought through concepts, but the scholia represent a thought in affects, and part 5 a pure thought in percepts, as if "signs and concepts vanished, and things began to write by themselves and for themselves" (CC 186; 150), as if thought proceeded "no longer through signs or affects, nor concepts, but Essences or Singularities, Percepts" (CC 183; 148), direct visions of things.

The arts have a privileged relation to philosophy, for "the affect, the percept and the concept are three inseparable powers [*puissances*], which go from art to philosophy and vice versa" (PP 187; 137). Deleuze's studies of the arts engage powers that are at once inside and outside philosophy, and each art has a different affinity with the formation and movement of concepts in his thought. Deleuze, of course, is a writer of books, and as such shares with novelists, poets, and dramatists the vocation of creating in the medium of language. He often approaches literary writers as philosophers, and some of the philosophers he values most are commonly regarded as more literary than philosophical figures. Frequently, Deleuze speaks simply of "writing" when discussing literature, and much of what he says about writing seems applicable both to literature and to philosophy—especially the creative writer's problem of "boring holes in language," as Beckett puts it, a problem Deleuze himself addresses, in that much of his work is an effort to articulate the ineffable, to talk about those things that lie beyond words or along their surface. Even when Deleuze and Guattari insist in *What Is Philosophy?* that philosophy and art are different enterprises, they must concede that in some philosophers the line between philosophical and literary writing is difficult to discern. This is especially true of the distinction between philosophy's "conceptual personae" and art's "aesthetic figures." Conceptual personae, such as Nicholas of Cusa's *idiot*, Descartes' Eudoxe, Kierkegaard's knight of faith or Nietzsche's Zarathustra, are "powers [*puissances*] of concepts," unlike aesthetic figures, which are "powers of affects and percepts," yet Deleuze and Guattari observe that "the two entities often pass into one another, in a becoming that carries them both into an intensity that co-determines them" (QP 64; 66). Art's plane of composition and philosophy's plane of immanence "can slide into

one another" (QP 65; 66), and there are philosophers and creative writers who are capable of moving back and forth between domains. They do not synthesize art and philosophy, but they straddle the two, like "acrobats torn apart in a perpetual show of strength" (QP 65; 67). Nietzsche's Zarathustra is at times a conceptual persona and at others an aesthetic figure; likewise, Mallarmé's *Igitur* by turns fulfills each of these functions. And through the oscillation of their characters' functions Nietzsche and Mallarmé are able to combine the powers of concepts and affects-percepts within a single work.

Nietzsche, of course, is the exception rather than the rule, an unconventional philosopher who deliberately blurs the distinction between philosophy and literature. Yet even the most unliterary of philosophers can engage the powers of affects and percepts at the level of style, and it is in style, finally, that Deleuze finds the fundamental affinity between philosophy and literature, as well as the arts of music and painting. Literary style is a matter of stuttering in one's own language, of making words and syntax stammer. And many philosophers are also great stylists, Deleuze claims. "Style is a process of putting language in variation, a modulation, and a straining of the whole of language toward an outside," and "style in philosophy is the movement of the concept" (PP 192; 140). For Deleuze, style is above all "a matter of syntax" (PP 223; 164), and in philosophy "syntax" involves the line of development of an argument, the passage from one point to another, the "movement of the concept." Spinoza's definitions, axioms, and demonstrations unfold at a calm and even pace, but his scholia are discontinuous, violent eruptions, and in part 5 the line of proof takes "fulgurating shortcuts, functions through ellipses, implications and contractions, proceeds through piercing, rending flashes" (PP 225; 165). In Foucault, concepts at times assume "rhythmic values," at others they become "contrapuntal, as in the curious dialogues with himself with which he closes some of his books" (PP 138; 101). His syntax gathers together "the mirrorings, the scintillations of the visible, but it also twists like a whip, folds and unfolds, or cracks to the rhythms of the phrases" (PP 138; 101). It is at the level of style that literature and philosophy come closest to one another, both literary and philosophical writers putting syntax in variation, each in their own way making language strain toward an outside.

It is also at this level that philosophy and music converge, the syntactic line of an argument resembling a melodic line, each line tracing a

creative line of movement. Philosophy has a fundamental affinity with music, Deleuze remarks in a late interview: "It seems certain to me that philosophy is a veritable song that is not a song of the voice, and that it has the same sense of movement as music" (PP 222; 163). As one can see from Deleuze's characterizations of the styles of Spinoza and Foucault, the movement of concepts is an affectively charged movement, one whose dynamism has the same elemental yet abstract emotional force as music. Thus, when philosophers succeed in creating movement through concepts, we encounter "philosophy as opera" (PP 224; 165), a voiceless song that "has the same sense of movement as music" (PP 222; 163). At such moments, a new way of thinking functions simultaneously as a new way of feeling.

But Deleuze says that style in philosophy strains toward *three* poles, toward new ways of *perceiving* as well as new ways of thinking and feeling. And though Deleuze speaks of percepts as "new ways of seeing and hearing" (PP 224; 165), it is evident that for him new perception is above all a matter of vision. Foucault's syntax gathers together "the mirrorings, the scintillations of the visible" (PP 138; 101). Spinoza's style in part 5 presents essences as "pure figures of light" (CC 184; 148). The movement of the concept involves not simply the shape of an argument, but the straining of words toward that which is beyond words, and though there is much that is beyond words, for Deleuze the visible seems to hold a particular fascination. To think differently is to *see* differently, and in his works on painting, Deleuze attempts to create concepts that are adequate to visible creations that defy commonsense assimilation and categorization—to those "visibilities" that render palpable Bacon's "brutality of fact." In these studies, arresting visual images are the object of analysis, hence they constitute that which stimulates the generation and movement of thought. But the thought thereby engendered evokes its own images, the idiosyncratic "visions" of paintings that are the product of Deleuze's unique way of seeing and that he seeks to render visible through his texts. In this evocation of visions, Deleuze's writings on the visual image are thus paradigmatic of philosophy's general aim of inventing new ways of seeing—ways of seeing that form the outer limit of new ways of thinking.

Philosophy and the arts are modes of thought, the one a thought in concepts, the other a thought in percepts and affects. Thought in concepts extracts the virtual event from the actual and gives it the consistency

of a self-forming form in absolute overflight. Thought in percepts and affects disengages the virtual from corporeal experience and then embodies it in materials that render perceptible the imperceptible. Each of the arts shapes a material with specific characteristics and capabilities, sounds, colors, words, and moving images embodying sensations in discrete yet interrelated ways. The arts disclose the possible, philosophy the virtual, but ultimately both engage the becoming of the virtual in its passage into the actual. Philosophical thought in concepts and artistic thought in percepts and affects are two manifestations of the virtual, as *form in overflight* and as *passive force*. And though highly specialized activities, both are constituent elements of a general process of natural creation. Philosophers and artists think differently, yet there is a passage of powers between philosophy and the arts that forms a special bond between the two spheres. Concepts are not the same as percepts and affects, but the three constitute the "philosophical trinity" necessary for the creation of movement within philosophical thought. A writing proper to philosophy induces a syntactic metamorphosis of language; a voiceless music emerges in the affective rhythms of lines of argument; and an imagistic vision demarcates the outside of moving concepts. Philosophy does not need the arts, any more than the arts need philosophy, but the elements of the arts exist within philosophy, in the percepts and affects that animate philosophical concepts. Deleuze's thought on the arts constitutes only one dimension of his philosophy, but it is a privileged dimension that reveals philosophy's proper function as a creative, perceptive, and affective mode of thought.

15. The English edition of *The Complete Letters of Vincent van Gogh* mistakenly identifies the passage from Blanc's *Les Artistes de mon temps* (pp. 64–66) as “the French pages by Delacroix.” Van Gogh interpolates Blanc's footnote reference to Blanc's own *Grammaire des arts du dessin: architecture, sculpture, peinture*, 3rd. edition, in a parenthetical aside midway through the passage, “(See his *Grammaire des arts de [sic] dessin*, 3rd ed. Renouard.)” but in such a way that the casual reader would assume that the *Grammaire des arts du dessin* is by Delacroix (since Blanc is nowhere mentioned by name, and the immediate antecedent for “his” in “his *Grammaire*” is Delacroix). It should be noted that one of the striking passages Deleuze cites as van Gogh's is actually by Blanc: “When the complementary colors are produced in equal strength, that is to say in the same degree of vividness and brightness, their juxtaposition will raise them both to an intensity so violent that human eyes will scarcely be able to bear the sight of it” (Blanc 65; van Gogh 2, 365). Conversely, what appears to be the concluding sentence of the passage attributed by the van Gogh correspondence editors to Delacroix (and cited by Deleuze) does not occur in *Les Artistes de mon temps*: “In order to intensify and to harmonize the effect of his colors he used the contrast of the complementary and the concord of the analogous colors at the same time; or in other terms, the repetition of a vivid tint by the same broken tone” (van Gogh 2, 366). It would seem that this sentence is van Gogh's own summary comment on Blanc's passage, and that the “he” van Gogh is referring to is Delacroix.

16. Modulation is an important term for Cézanne. Among the “opinions” of Cézanne published by Emile Bernard (with Cézanne's permission) in 1904, the following are particularly noteworthy in this regard: “To read nature is to see it, as if through a veil, in terms of an interpretation in patches of color following one another according to a law of harmony. These major hues are thus analyzed through modulations. Painting is classifying one's sensations of color.” “One should not say modeling, one should say *modulation*.” “There is no such thing as line or modeling, there are only contrasts.” “The contrast and connection of colors—there you have the secret of drawing and modeling” (Cézanne 36). Gowing convincingly argues that Cézanne's famous remark about the primacy of sphere, cylinder, and cone in nature simply reflects his observation that the visual field is essentially curved rather than flat, and that the “modeling” of objects in painting consists above all in the rendering of curved surfaces. Cézanne's discovery that spectral sequences of color create movements of recession and procession allowed him to model curved surfaces through a modulated sequence of discrete strokes. As Gowing notes, when Cézanne speaks of modulation “it is difficult to know how many of the associations of the word *moduler* were intended. Perhaps all of them. The meaning of tempering, the employing of a standard measure, and the musical analogy itself may all have played some part” (Gowing 59). The musical analogy, as I understand it, is that of modulation as a movement that entails a transposition from one key to another. In this sense, the colors of the spectrum (red–orange–yellow–green–blue–violet) would correspond to the twelve notes of the musical chromatic scale, the initial hue of a particular sequence (e.g., red or yellow) to the tonic of a given key, the relationship between two sequences that commence with

different initial hues representing a transposition of keys (e.g., sequence 1: red–orange–yellow–green; sequence 2: yellow–green–blue–violet).

17. Gowing observes that Cézanne's sequences of color patches that follow the order of the spectrum “imply not only volumes but axes, armatures at right angles to the chromatic progressions which state the rounded surfaces of forms” (Gowing 66). In many of the late paintings, the color patches “create an invisible upright scaffolding around which the hues fan out like a peacock's tail” (Gowing 66–67). Deleuze relates this question of scaffolding or armature to the general problem of the ground as structuring force and its relation to individual forms. Cézanne's method raises problems in the delineation of forms, since “there is an optimum size for the units that touch off the sense of color interval. The patches must be large enough to remain perceptible in their own right—which prevents them from particularizing specific objects” (Gowing 67).

18. Deleuze offers as an example of this practice van Gogh's 1888 *Portrait of Joseph Roulin* (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston). In a letter to Emile Bernard (early August 1888), van Gogh says of this painting, “I have just done a portrait of a postman. . . . A blue, nearly white background on the white canvas, all the broken tones in the face—yellows, greens, violets, pinks, reds” (van Gogh 3, 510). One might suggest as additional examples van Gogh's *Portrait of Joseph Roulin* (collection of Mr. and Mrs. Walter B. Ford II), *Portrait of Patience Escalier* (private collection), *Self-Portrait* (1888, Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University), and *Portrait of Joseph Roulin* (Art Museum, Winterthur).

19. Bacon's use of broken tones to render his figures is not as clearly illustrated in his 1946 *Painting* as in his later works, particularly the triptychs of the 1960s and 1970s. The man of *Painting* is painted mostly in black, gray and brown. But Deleuze points out that the colorist gray differs fundamentally from the gray based on relations of value. The colorist gray is produced by the blending of equal amounts of complementary colors, red–green grays, blue–yellow grays, purple–orange grays, not through the mixture of black and white. And colorists insist that for them black and white are colors that have a function unrelated to relations of value. As van Gogh writes Emile Bernard in 1888, “Suffice it to say that black and white are also colors, for in many cases they can be looked upon as colors, for their simultaneous contrast is as striking as that of green and red, for instance” (van Gogh 3, 490).

20. As Bacon remarks, the accident that led him from a bird's landing in a field to the 1946 *Painting* was “one continuous accident mounting on top of another,” something he “gradually made,” but the accident also “suddenly suggested the whole image.” As Deleuze comments, the diagram suggests both a *series*, a compositional sequence or process, and a *whole (ensemble)*, a configuration of relations.

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. This taxonomy of sensations, of course, is a reprise of Deleuze's classification of forces in Bacon's paintings—forces of deformation, forces of coupling, forces of separation (see chapter 5).

2. I suspect that Deleuze and Guattari may have recalled Maldiney's Heideggerian meditation on the monument in developing this concept (Maldiney 174–82). The

monument is *Denkmal*, both sign (*denken* = to think) and body (*Mal* = mark; *malen* = to paint). The monolith is the simplest and most ancient of monuments, and the prototype of all artworks, a surging forth of a self-forming form. In Maldiney's analysis, nature itself forms monuments, the Matterhorn being a self-forming form that surges forth from a chaotic un-foundation (*Ungrund*), and in forming itself through a founding rhythm establishes its surrounding landscape as its foundation (*Grund*). These themes are of course central to Maldiney's treatment of Cézanne and to Deleuze's discussion of Bacon (see chapter 5).

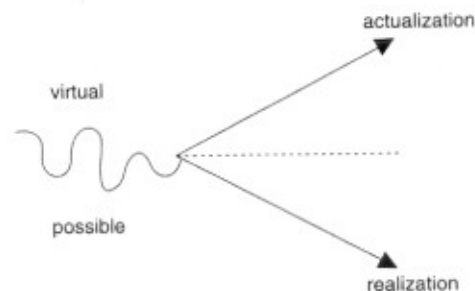
3. It must be admitted that Deleuze and Guattari's treatment of the relationship between artistic and physico-biological creation is rather cryptic. What follows is thus a somewhat speculative reconstruction of their argument. In a 1988 interview, Deleuze said that he and Guattari planned to resume their collective enterprise and produce "a sort of philosophy of Nature" (PP 212; 155). No doubt many of the ensuing points would have been clarified had Deleuze and Guattari completed such a work.

4. It is important not to mistake Deleuze and Guattari's discussion of the conceptual persona of the "idiot" for a treatment of the motif of the "idiot" in its current vernacular sense. On Nicholas's use of the terms *ignorans* and *idiota* (evident in the titles of his *De Docta Ignorantia*, *Idiota de Sapientia*, *Idiota de Mente*, and *Idiota de Staticis Experimentis*) see Gandillac, especially 63–66; on the figure of Descartes's "Eudoxe," see Alquié's commentary in Descartes, vol. 2, p. 1108; on Kierkegaard and the impossible, see Shestov's essay "Kierkegaard and Dostoyevsky," in *Kierkegaard and the Existential Philosophy*, 1–28.

5. Deleuze and Guattari's reference to Ruyer appears in the observation that "vitalism has always had two possible interpretations: that of an Idea that acts, but that is not, that hence acts solely from the point of view of an external cerebral knowledge (from Kant to Claude Bernard); or that of a force that is, but that does not act, hence that is a pure internal Sensing [*Sentir*] (from Leibniz to Ruyer)" (QP 201; 213). Deleuze and Guattari here seem to be making use of chapter 18 of Ruyer's *Néo-finalisme*, in which Ruyer criticizes Kant, Claude Bernard, and various "organicists" for explaining biological morphogenesis in terms of a directing vital "idea" that is separated from physical force. Ruyer argues that vital and physical force are one, though the microscopic manifestation of force at the level of molecular bondings "is indissociable from a true form, from a veritable domain of overflight" (Ruyer 1952; 221), and such microscopic forces differ in quantity and mode of relation from macroscopic forces. As will become evident, only in a loose sense do I see Ruyer as positing a "force that does not act." Deleuze discusses the Leibnizian notion of a force that does not act in chapter 8 of *The Fold*, concluding that "the soul is the principle of life through its presence and not through its action. *Force is presence and not action*" (LP 162; 119). For an excellent discussion of the relation of Ruyer's thought to *What Is Philosophy?*, see Bains.

6. Deleuze and Guattari offer little clarification of this issue in *What Is Philosophy?*, but I find broad confirmation of this reading in Deleuze's presentation of the Leibnizian virtual and possible in *The Fold*. Deleuze argues that for Leibniz the

virtual is *actualized* in monads, whereas the possible is *realized* in bodies: "The world is a virtuality which is actualized in the monads, or souls, but also a possibility that must be realized in matter, or bodies" (LP 140; 104). Deleuze diagrams this relationship with a wavy line that splits into two divergent arrowed lines:



This Leibnizian scheme is by no means directly applicable to *What Is Philosophy?* (Deleuze and Guattari make no parallel distinction between actualization and realization, nor do they advocate a straightforward Leibnizian monadism), but I believe Deleuze and Guattari make use of the Leibnizian notion of the possible in part to suggest a similar affinity both between the virtual and the possible and between the possible and bodies.

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