



The Refrain and Resistance: Music and Becoming-Jewish*

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abstract

History is always written, according to Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, from the point of view, and in the name of, a sedentary State apparatus, quelling all alternative paths. Based on this charge, this article seeks to attack head on the despotism of our trade; the craving the social sciences suffer for Beginnings, Unanimous Voices, and a Steady Pace. In short, the ordered organisation of a once-upon-a-time given world. Turning to Dance, Rhythm and the Refrain, the text endeavours to contribute to another vocabulary for the world at large, arguing that the world receives form from the emergence of molecular details. The ontological becoming of the world is contingent on the small, as it assembles in rhythmic zones of multiplicities. Specifically, the social world has as its initiating feature a rhythm or a refrain that perpetually throws it into ordering processes. However, from State reason and its *primas inter pares* Royal science called Organisation Studies, as well as from the ideology of Capital, only subjects, institutions, and commodifications arise. Contrary to that, the present text insists that there is always an event that offers an opening to an outside. There is always a line that takes flight, another history. These possible – or virtual – deviances are here suggested to be alternative productions of subjectivities; in every march there is the possibility of a dance, in every order-word there is always already a creative echo from the outside, and even in the history of the most rigid of fascisms, in the Holocaust, there is a becoming-Jewish. An indeed *musical becoming* by which one becomes worthy of the event.

Are we to become the professionals who give talks on these topics? ... Are we to take up collections and create special journal issues? Or should we go a short way further to see for ourselves, be a little alcoholic, a little crazy, a little suicidal, a little of a guerilla – just enough to extend the crack, but not enough to deepen it irremediably? (Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*)¹

1:1 בְּרֵאשִׁית, בְּרֵא אֱלֹהִים, אֵת הַשָּׁמַיִם, וְאֵת הָאָרֶץ.
2:1 וְהָאָרֶץ, הֵיחָדָּה תְּהוֹ וְבָהוּ, וְחֹשֶׁךְ, עַל-פְּנֵי תְהוֹם; וְרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים, מְרַחֶפֶת עַל-פְּנֵי הַמַּיִם.
(Bereshit, Genesis)²

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1 Deleuze, G. (1990) *The Logic of Sense*. New York: Columbia University Press, 157-8.

2 Bereshit is the Hebrew word that reappears in the Latin Genesis. The historically dominant, Western translation, The King James Version, is given here below. The present article will question the unambiguity of this translation, and, later, try to point towards more polyphonic expressions inherent

The most difficult moment in Tango Argentino is the beginning: how do you begin a dance?

The machismo solution – one that we will soon recognise as predominant in the Western cosmogonies, social life and organisational praxis – is simply to *begin*, producing those quasi-violent bursts connected to any forced beginning. Since it is the man in Tango Argentino³ who is supposed to literally *take* the lady in the dance, such a beginning, where the lady only realises that the dance has started because the couple empirically is moving, is far from uncommon. However, it is very unfortunate and uncomfortable, in so far as the lady is torn out of the rhythm in which she stands ('standing' is also thoroughly rhythmic, ask any soldier) and thrown into that pretty arbitrary rhythm the man imposes on the couple (different, notably, from the rhythm of the 'man').

That the machismo solution to the problem of beginning is very frequent in the praxis of this Latin American dance makes it a paradigmatic case of beginnings in many apparently diverse spheres of the world, which is, as always, the *Western* world. Also, Friedrich Nietzsche should after his death become connected, via a sister whom he did not reckon, to the fascism of unanimous beginnings: *ein Reich*.

However, this is not, I will argue, congruent with the authentic *reflexive machismo* of Tango Argentino, and neither can Nietzsche be subjected to such ideology: truth begins with two, he says. The echo of these two is found in Jacques Derrida's dictum: one plus one makes at least three.

In the cosmogony of Tango Argentino, the take with which the man should lead is not a matter of enforcing *his* rhythm or *his idea* of rhythm to both bodies in the dance, overcoding whichever rhythm or rhythmic patterns present with the major rhythm of the culturally 'stronger' body, the 'intelligent strategy' of a beautiful dance. The cosmogony of Tango Argentino is fundamentally a *question*: how would this particular lady in this particular situation of this particular dance want to begin?

The two dancers: their bodies are quite close, they don't, however, connect as man and woman, but their bodies connect via the angles of the chest and the sub-perceptible interaction of their solar plexuses. One may want to ask what it is that takes these imperceptible connections into real becomings, into the round form of movement, a spinning top or a vortical spiral.

in the Hebrew text, its creative rhythm. King James reads: "[1] In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. [2] Now the earth was formless and empty. Darkness was on the surface of the deep. God's Spirit was hovering over the surface of the waters" (Gen., 1:1-2). It will become evident that the King James Version is a version who's royal and despotic name is all too suitable.

3 The subject matter here is Tango Argentino, not tango as it is known in standard dance, the fully choreographed ballroom exercise where the movements of the dance has been trimmed down to follow bizarre machines of facialities, that is, patterns induced from abstract rules of appearances. Moreover, as was ridiculed in the postmodern breakthrough motion picture *Strictly Ballroom* (1992), subjected to perpetual competition. Seen from an outside observer, standard dance completely lacks the intensity and biopolitical intelligence of Tango Argentino.

The first claim to an answer is: music. In the beginning was the dance, says Michel Serres, and the dance begins in the middle, as an intermezzo, between the dancers.

Learning to dance Tango Argentino one has to count and repeat: 1, 2, 3,...1, 2, 3. The pattern connected to this apprenticeship is a roundabout in eight moves, where the first step is a backward move of the man and a forward move of the woman: the 'lead' the man takes is not a decisive straightforward move, but a backward move, a preliminary deconstruction of the banal and weak machismo so enjoyed by men (and confusing many readers of Nietzsche).

By stepping back the dancer more accurately steps aside, deflecting the preconfigured lead he has been given. The couple then produces the beginning together as a problematic field, the virtuality of which deprives the lead (i.e. the man) of all answers. There arises, in the most artistic and corporeal apotheosis of the dance, nothing but a sensuous receptivity for the imperceptible details of which the first move of the couple is *an echo*. An echo, namely, of 'her' desire: the real machismo is he who is able to understand the wishes of the lady, even if these are wishes unknown to both of them.



Pasos, photo by Ernesto Reich

The backward move, as illustrated above, is the creation of a void in which the echo can arise; it is a becoming. The dancer is perpetually yielding, leaving a space, relieved by rhythm, disarticulated by music:

Men and women dance together face to face, but each respective line slowly comes undone, so that each woman is placed in front of the empty space between two men and sees only it, while each man responds only to the same lack between two women. [...] The third philosophy likes mixed bodies.⁴

The machismo, believing only in the *first* philosophy, learns to count, but the dancer learns to give way. This is why Søren Kierkegaard visions the knight of faith to be a dancer, as the knight is making the movement of infinity with such an accuracy and composure that he is continually getting finitude or immanence out of it.

4 Serres, M. (1997) *The Troubadour of Knowledge*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 28.

Yet, and these are the words of Kierkegaard, a limp and, by the Copenhagen petit-bourgeois peasantry, ridiculed philosopher:

the mass of humans live disheartened lives of earthly sorrow and joy, these are the sitters-out who will not join in the dance. The knights of infinity are dancers too and they have elevation.⁵

As dancers, the knights will rise and fall, but not try to straight away leap into a definite position, a local tactics that sets them firmly apart from the striated ideology of Royal science. When the knights come down, assuming their trajectory on the plane of immanence, they cannot slip into their positions straight away: “they weaver an instant and the wavering shows they are nevertheless strangers in the world,”⁶ thus transforming the dancing life via a bodily deconstruction. The knights transform the Benjaminian moment of danger into *a way of walking*, ambulating, expressing the sublime in the pedestrian absolute, thus confirming the wavering strangeness of becoming itself.

The bodies of the dancers emerge as Plato’s *chôra*, the wax of his creational myth, bodies not yet organised into distinct entities, genders, and segments.

The Tango erupts the categorisations of State reason, and it goes without saying that both ‘man’ and not least ‘woman’ should be read in inverted commas; the Tango Argentino was invented in the nomadic shantytowns of mining suburbs of Buenos Aires, where there were no women.⁷ Hence, both characters were danced by ‘men’, opening up for very diverse sexual refrains in the performances of the dance and in the impact the dance would have in different cultural settings; so whenever gendered indexes occur in the present text, they are highly substitutable, pan-erotic and trans-sexual.

Gendered segments are also prone to prostitution, and eventually, of course, women would turn up in these Bad Lands, when a market for their services arose. The theme of commodification and repression of sexuality on account of prostitution is recognised in the Tango Argentino in, alongside the lyrics, the strict separation between what is going on above the waist, which from an external observer seems to be ‘nothing’, and what is going on below the waist, which from the same observer seems to be ‘everything’. The transformation or ‘deterritorialisation’ of common gendered practises and discourses is in a perpetual competition very often ‘re-territorialised’, that is entrenched by apparatuses of capture; here by the fluid rules, the axiomatics, of the market. A reterritorialisation that functions as a substitution for, or a fake replacement of, the

5 Kierkegaard, S. (1983) *Fear and Trembling. Repetition*. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 70. The ultimate knight of faith, and the greatest dancer is a nomad. It is Abraham. Yet, one must follow Kafka in the parable ‘Abraham’, where he says: “But take another Abraham...”, that is, *there are several Abrahams*, Abrahamic multiplicities; cf. Gil Anidjar’s ‘Introduction’ in Derrida, J. (2002) *Acts of Religion*. New York: Routledge. This is confirmed by the fact that Kierkegaard provides four different readings of the drama at Mount Moriah in the opening of *Fear and Trembling*. The knights of faith only unite in what makes them differ: the dance.

6 Kierkegaard, S. (1983) *Fear and Trembling. Repetition*. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 70.

7 Cf. Satori, R. and P. Steidl (2003) *Tango. Die einende Kraft des tanzenden Eros*. Berlin: Heinrich Hugendubel Verlag.

virtual forces that are virtually inherent in the deterritorialisation: what culture turns into something else is, as a rule, turned into a commodity.

Was not also the intermezzo of the new economy a dance, a quickstep, a *danse macabre*, or the last tango of the *Abendland*? In the hype of this new economy, the hyped book *Funky Business: Talent Makes Capital Dance* came out.⁸ The subtitle of the book indicates that also dance itself is imitated by capital, this time invigorated by ‘talent’. The morbid irony that escaped the authors should not pass altogether unnoticed: since a talent in the parable of the entrusted talents in Matt. 25 is in fact a very large amount of wealth in the barter economy of antiquity, the concept talent designates nothing else than – capital. The latest phase of high capitalism: capital makes capital dance.⁹

Yet, all great dances deterritorialise or transform gender, sexuality, as well as commodities into their molecular becomings, and what dance underpins is the fact that we are “statistically or molarly [marketable as, BMS] heterosexual, but personally homosexual, without knowing it or being fully aware of it, and finally...transsexual in an elemental, molecular sense.”¹⁰

The dancing body, the teaching body, the thinking body is perpetually deterritorialising the earth and its segmentations, calling forth (that is, *listening for*) an echo from the outside, outside the Numbers, outside Man, outside the Body.

This is why we can say, Thought dances. Thought dances when it finds and gives form to the little detail of the partner’s gravitational tremor, to the imperceptible rupture in her expectation.

This little rupture is the emergence of the *clinamen*, the least imaginable deviation from a laminar flow; a laminar flow characterised by all movement being parallel, as in Adorno’s totally administered world. The little deviation, the *clinamen*, sets another moving form free. The *clinamen* is only expressible as a differential: it is difference in itself, setting becoming in motion and instantiating the echo.

The *clinamen* arises and it can either die out or be consumed by the abyss of the undifferentiated. Abyss stems from Greek *abyssos*, bottomless, or, notably, the chaos of the old cosmogonies: *tenebrae super faciem abyssi*, darkness over the face of the deep. The little rupture dies out because of lack of reference (the partner did not listen...) or it is consumed in the unfathomably abundance of differences (other rhythms took over; he imposed his own rhythm, 1,2,3... the whole way to total administration).¹¹

8 Ridderstråle, J. and K. Nordstrøm (2001) *Funky Business. Talent makes Capital Dance*. New York: Prentice Hall.

9 Finance capital breeding on itself, cf. Jameson, F. (1991) *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of late Capitalism*. Durham: Duke University Press. Jameson’s general argument, which is that the economy has reached a volatile phase where capital breeds on capital, is recurrent throughout the book.

10 Deleuze, G. and F. Guattari (1977) *Anti-Oedipus*. New York: Viking Press, 70.

11 Serres, M. (1995) *Genesis*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 172ff.

Another possibility: it rises and re-cognises itself as an other. It produces its own difference as a relation external to 'itself', even if this latter entity is yet to emerge from the undifferentiated. It is recognised by its own echo, an echo that is also in the undifferentiated, but which nevertheless differentiates. Without each other, the rupture and the echo (or the echo and the rupture), none would persist. The relation between the imperceptible and its echo is the threshold of any 'beginning' and, for that matter, any 'end'.

Exeunt *arché* and *telos*. No archaeological truth: the dance has no origin or beginning, since it *is* the beginning and does not operate with originals; every dance is a simulacrum, a copy of a copy, no nostalgia for the lost object remains.¹² No teleology; the dance has no goal, since it is its own goal, namely beauty and joy, passage and transmutation.

The echo is the weakest of all redundancies, but also the first rhythmic event, a passage from chaos to form. The echo is the quintessential expression of a relation which is external to its terms. Paraphrasing Kierkegaard, substituting 'self' with 'echo'; The echo is a relation which relates to itself, or that in the relation which is its relating to itself. The echo is not the relation but the relation's relation to itself.¹³

This is the beginning. Yet it is not a beginning, since it was always already there. It is indeed a process, or a dance, the probing step of the infant, the legs echoing each other, not yet in rhythm, and there will be many fallbacks into the undifferentiated, fallbacks from irreversibility to reversibility. For the child, as for the two or three or N-1 dancers, action and reaction "no longer form an antagonism but compose a play of possibilities. Resistance gives way to transistance."¹⁴

Tango Argentino has no beginning, and it is only a dance if one does not recognise any beginning, any 1,2,3.... Numbers are irreversible (they progress or decrease), and only the reversible movement has rhythm, the irreversible is the end of rhythm, the dance breaks down, the infant tumbles down, every body in chaotic motion. The little child reacts by crying (from Latin *quiritare*, to make a public outcry, *Quiris* being the name of the Roman citizen), attempting to inject in chaos a rupture with the possibility of a corresponding echo. The child hears its own cry and cries *louder*, answering its own call: "A single voice raises the clamour of being."¹⁵ Clamour from Latin *clamare*, to cry out; it is a social outcry, and the echo is the beginning of the social, the beginning of the social as a rhythm or, more elaborated, as a refrain.

12 The way Baudrillard escapes what he calls nostalgia for the lost object is by letting the *text itself dance*, creating a flow of quasi-objects, *petit a*-objects; cf. Baudrillard, J. (1994) *The Illusion of the End*. Cambridge England: Polity Press.

13 Cf. Kierkegaard, S. (1989) *The Sickness Unto Death*. London: Penguin, 43. Substituting 'self' for 'echo' is an outrageous act of assassination less far fetched than one would imagine: harmony and disharmony, music and silence are abundant in Kierkegaard's analysis of life and desire.

14 Cache, B. (1995) *Earth Moves. The Furnishing of Territories*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 112.

15 Deleuze, G. (1994) *Difference and Repetition*. New York: Columbia University Press, 35.

What characterises flow as rhythmic, the social as a flow which is elaborated by rhythm? It is characterised by being a struggle between chaos and form: *turba* and *turbo*.¹⁶ Everyone, all things, are in the void in a becoming of form, between *turba* and *turbo*.

Turba, on the one hand, is a multitude, a large population, and a tumultuous void, the crowd, chaos and agitation. Imagine the singing and masturbating Bacchantes down the mountain, headlong towards exhaustion and indifference: *turbé* – a form of *turba* – is the Greek name for the ecstatic dance connected to the Bacchic festivals. *Turbo*, on the other hand, is already a form that ascends, a round form in movement, a spinning top, a vortical spiral.

The laminar flow that needs a transcendent god to become turbulent, the laminar flow that needs the order-word is in itself purely theoretical, in praxis all flows are or become turbulent.

De jure: everything linear, laminar, predictable, Maxwell's daemon, common sense, the administered world. In short: Hell.

De facto: Everything dances.

This is the creative return of *love* – the love between the dancers, between creator and creation, between speaker and listener in Karl Jaspers' *liebende Kampf* of dialogue¹⁷ – installing itself, with Antonio Negri, in

the physical and ethical context of the fall of the atoms of life, yet it breaks the linearity of their fall and so generates the common. It is the figure of the *clinamen*, but in subjective form; it is the chaos of the eternal cosmos, but brought back to subjectivity.¹⁸

For the leader of the Tango Argentino as well as for the leader of the Athenian choir, the *chorêgeô*, the question is that of a production of subjectivity congruent with the common: to produce the plane of immanence where change and transmutation can happen. It pertains to our sense of origin, and the question is then: "How do we hear ourselves at first? As an endless singing-to-oneself, and in the dance."¹⁹

Yet, the order-word of origin in our hemisphere is traditionally directly connected to the enforcing voice of God, here in the Latin version: *dixitque Deus fiat lux et facta est*

16 Serres, M. (2000) *The Birth of Physics*. Manchester: Clinamen Press, 28.

17 As developed in the later published lectures; cf. Jaspers, K. (1997) *Reason and Existenz. Five lectures*. Milwaukee Wis.: Marquette University Press.

18 Negri, A. (2003) *Time for Revolution*. New York: Continuum, 210. Unfortunately the beauty and precision of the Italian title is lost in the somewhat ideological translation. The original title, *La consituzione del tempo and Kairòs* points to the ontological aspiration, to ground transmutation in the play between the constitution of time and the event of *Kairòs*. Basically a re-creational, rhythmic pattern.

19 Bloch, E. (2000) *The Spirit of Utopia*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 34. The question is, as it were, rhythmically reiterated throughout Bloch's utopian book, getting a more and more *topic* or *geophilosophical* answer, calling for action: we can only continue singing if we move along if we dance. Consider a child in the dark singing *but not moving*. Catatonia, *Wannsinn*, the abyss.

lux...divisit lucem ac tenebras. “God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light...He divided light and darkness” (Gen. 1).²⁰ The order-word of common sense language is prioritising the *divisio* (appearing in the quote as *divisit*, divide) on the expense of the *deviare* (the deviant nature of the *clinamen*).

This first act of vision, God’s vision, is a di-vision, that is, a separation, concealing the stochastic deviation from which form did emerge: the difference between forming by breaking asunder (*divideo*, to separate) and forming by following a way (*deviare*, to leave a way). The difference between despotism and nomadism: *The Widow Makers* or a way out.²¹

The *divideo* becomes an act of founding and masculine penetration, of *Logos*; it has its echo in the Platonic Idea, of which every phenomenon are mere copies, and the resemblance or lack thereof is the criterion of being. Correspondingly, the fall of man is the fall from being copies of God with a resemblance to being images *without* resemblance. We are not copies, we are not “well-founded pretenders, guaranteed by resemblance”; we are “false pretenders, built upon a dissimilarity, implying an essential perversion or a deviation.”²²

The echo is this deviation; the *clinamen* is analogous to “that dangerous supplement” which, according to Derrida, J.-J. Rousseau tries to exorcise.²³ However, since the laminar and administered world is pure Hell, the exorcism is adequate. Yet it must rise as a positive affirmation of creation, rather than as a negative Oedipalisation in the anxious exorcism.

The echo is both a deferral, that is, a postponement in time: the a/waiting of the answer; and it is a difference, that is, a distance in space: the as/signment of a place. The differing difference is *différance*.

The echo calls forth the excluded excess; an excess which will let the totalities shake, the Derridean counterviolence of *solicitate*, to let everything tremble. It trembles because of the dangerous supplement or a disturbed equilibrium, this is what

20 The deployment of the Old Testament has, as should be apparent, nothing to do with finding traces of ancient truths or origins. Methodologically it shares configuration with the way Erich Auerbach’s uses the Old Testament as a ‘hypotaxis’, countering it to the Hellenistic myths of Homeric origin. This exercise explodes away exactly the monomaniacs of orthodoxy, and focuses the motion and movement of the Middle East literature of the time; cf. Auerbach, E. (1968) *Mimesis. The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press; as well as Fredric Jameson’s discussion regarding the connection, if only as a non-connection, between Auerbach and Adorno in Jameson, F. (1990) *Late Marxism. Adorno, or, the Persistence of the Dialectic*. London: Verso, 18ff. Using the ‘traditional’ signifier The Old Testament, is, of course, already deploying an expression of a Royal science, a theology, which presupposes a *New Testament*, and, by implication, reduces the utopian momentum of the Semitic literature. Here Benjamin’s Messianic utopianism proves an indispensable, nomadic deconstruction of the stratifications of Royal science.

21 *The Widow Makers* was the horrendous and probably suitable name for an especially dangerous US division set in action in the Second Gulf War. Likewise, it is the name of an action motion picture.

22 *The Logic of Sense*, 256ff.

23 Derrida J. (1976) *Of Grammatology*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 141ff.

characterises the pretenders: “an unfounded pretension, concealing a dissimilarity which is an internal unbalance.”²⁴ Rather than the totalitarian idea(l) of God equalling *Logos*, one turns to Martin Buber’s God, the *mysterium tremendum*, the overwhelming mystery, embodying the ‘adequate idea’, as Spinoza would have it, of the instantiation of a beginning, a beginning that is not in the beginning but in the middle. One is always in the middle of an echo, a reflection, a pretension, the relation is strictly external to its term. If one is not in the middle of a dance, one is not dancing.

It is said that in the beginning God proclaimed the first dividing distinction. This cannot be the case, already here things run astray, voices that were different from each other are dedifferentiated and the multivocality of the noise that has been reduced to a monotonous voice: the translation into English of this passage reads ‘God’, but the Hebrew reads אֱלֹהִים, which means ‘the gods’ in plural. Since God now turns out to be several, there was already quite a crowd. As the polytheisms of history would assess, the gods probably didn’t agree, and were forced to, as is the case in Horace, to operate in the *rerum concordia discors*, “the discordant harmony of things”.²⁵

Here one operates by disjoining and decentering the ideology of industrialism and administration, the ideology of *organisation*, by means of a host of peripheral movements that opens for the murmur of creation: “disjointed polytheism instead of symmetrical antitheism.”²⁶ Monotheism is connected to the myth of creation *ex nihilo*, out of nothing, but the echo does not come out of nothing, rather it relates some-thing with no-thing, not creating *ex nihilo* but *ex plico*, explicating the folds, *les plis* in French, of becoming.

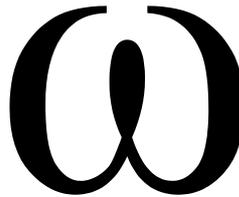
What we call noise is the quarrel of the multiplicity of gods, a quarrel that apparently reached a threshold: the Greek reads that *khaos* reigned, but in the original Hebrew text this turmoil reads תֹּהוּ וָבֹהוּ, unformed and void. The words are pronounced *tohu-wa-*

24 *The Logic of Sense*, 257.

25 Horace (1994) *Epistles*. Cambridge England: Cambridge University Press, 1,12,19. The stratification of the world is never total or unison, and in geology a discordant strata is one which lacks conformity in direction of bedding, caused by a fault or what is here called the *clinamen*, the nearly imperceptible rupture that causes bifurcations and chaotic fluctuations, drawing into Horace’s dictum the mix between State science (erecting the strata) and the nomadology (following the *clinamen*).

26 Deleuze, G. and F. Guattari (1988) *A Thousand Plateaus*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 498, where the smooth and the striated is discussed in the context of nomad art, an example of which, this article suggests, is Tango Argentino. This point also targets the obtuse academic prejudice, stronger in the years of vulgar Marxism at the universities, the idea or rather ideological doxa that monopolistic and despotic monotheism should be countered with antitheism or atheism, both of which in not few historical instances have proceeded by at least as despotic means as any religious movements, and have, as the quote also points out, only developed monotheism into its symmetrical antithesis. Daniel W. Smith provides an apt formulation of Deleuze’s stand on this issue: “Deleuze thus harbours neither the antagonism of the ‘secular’ who find the concept of God outmoded, nor the angst or mourning of those for whom the loss of God was crisis-provoking, nor the faith of those who would like to retrieve the concept in a new form. He remained fascinated with theological concepts”, cf. Smith, D. W. (2001) ‘The Doctrine of Univocity. Deleuze’s Ontology of Immanence’, in M. Bryden (ed.) *Deleuze and Religion*. London: Routledge, 167.

bohu,²⁷ an expression that is in itself auto-communicative, creating a never equalized, constantly trembling internal quasi-coherence, an autopoiesis of the *clinamen*. What is lost in the Greek translation is maintained in the Hebrew text: the audible rhythm of *tohu-wa-bohu* shows it to be its own echo. Any forced distinction between heaven and earth, night and day, system and environment is dependent on a relation that cuts across the distinction as a communication in a twilight zone, a rhythm, or an echo.



Forced beginnings implies forced ends, tying the I of the enunciation to the creation of History: 'I am the beginning and the end'. The Alpha and the Omega, the α and the ω . This historical accountability, this praxis of numbering numbers, is the Logic of Logos all the way from A to Z. Yet, in effect, everything "begins with the last letter; everything begins in a certain undecidability of the *ōméga*."²⁸

Real thinking does not need beginning and ends, as does State reason. Real thinking evoke these entities, beginnings and ends, as shadows of the undecidable, thinking would not need these points as fixations, as beginnings or as ends, since thinking is destined to disappear by being realised in these points. On the contrary, thinking needs the shadow of these points at every moment of its becoming and its development.²⁹

The 'last' letter, the ω , is calligraphically an echo of itself, closing in on ∞ , yet with an opening to the outside. Particularly, the *ōméga* shares the characteristics of all bodily cavities – the mouth, the lungs, the vagina, the penis – in that it is a fold of the outside *into* an inside.³⁰ Its undecidability has a rhythmic quality, as if the letter was dancing with itself, yielding, and opening the void.

Is *tohu-wa-bohu* a thought or a dance? Is ω a thought or a dance? A thought and a dance. A thought of the outside, outside the familiar realm of common sense distinctions. A dance of letters and atoms of which the Cabbala, as Benjamin reads it, develops a radical hermeneutic utopianism: the meaning of the text is unsettled, since

27 The rhyme is easily recognisable, also in the Hebrew letters, if they are read as intended from right to left, even more because the vocals are represented in this edition, cf. Serres, M. (1995) *Genesis*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

28 Derrida, J. (1997) *Politics of Friendship*. London: Verso, 173.

29 Cf. Deleuze, G. and F. Guattari (1994) *What is Philosophy?* New York: Columbia University Press, 218. Except when the sun is in its *mathematical* zenith – a point that both is not yet but also is already past – the shadow of a point is *more* than a point, a vortical form, the *umbra*, the Latin word for the shadow in the middle of a sunspot, reappearing in the umbrella. Thinking will evolve under this umbrella.

30 Within organisation theory the fold as a fundamental principle in organisation *per se* is shown in a decisive essay by Cooper, R. (1986) 'Organization/Disorganization', *Social Science Information*, 2(25), with, of course, inspiration from Derrida.

the radical revolutionary advent of Messiah – which is a perpetual becoming – means that each and every letter in the text will disentangle themselves from their positions and, subsequently, receive their true position. The presence of spaces between the letters is a ~~sign~~ of this.³¹

The thinker and the dancer: naked. Both the thinker and the dancer move in a zone of indistinction between noise and music, the thinker in a naked room, the dancer in a naked room. They are messengers, *angelli*.

The tango dancer becomes deterritorialised, and the traditional assumption that the Greek athletes in various degrees were naked at the gymnasium – *gymnos* is Greek for naked – is beside the point. The point is that gymnastics is a becoming-naked, a deterritorialisation of the body, of its habits and of its memories: one finds gymnastics to be a praxis that reverses time.³² The body is dedifferentiated into a pure capacity, regaining its connection to noise and the ocean.

Hermes was the god of the gymnasiums, he is said to have invented the lyre out of a shell turning the white noise of the shell into music, in some texts Hermes is accredited the very invention of music. However, to make up with Apollo after a cunning theft of some cattle, he played the stringed lyre for his beautiful counterpart, and handed over the instrument to Apollo, the god of dance. The thinker and the dancer between Hermes and Apollo; between the dark secrecy of theft and combat strategy, the aleatory,³³ and the light master of the sign and vision, the mandatory. Also, as a matter of fact, Apollo ends up as *the* god of music.

The *claire obscure* is a movement between the hermetic darkness and the clear distinction: a zone of indistinction, in which the lyre moves back and forth as an angel. The angel is a war machine, that is, a machine of transmutation, of infinite metamorphosis, nobody owns it or everybody steals it, appropriates it. It plays the slaves' tunes within the marches of the State.

Music never ceases to deterritorialise: the Tango, the music of chance, the *einstürzende Neubauten*. Music never ceases to free us from the iron cage of the Organism, the Sign, and the Subject, the administered world:

I think naked and I am no body.
I dance naked; I am nothing.³⁴

31 Cf. Eagleton, T. (1981) *Walter Benjamin. Or Towards a Revolutionary Criticism*. London: Verso.

32 Cf. *Genesis*.

33 Aleatory from Latin *alea*, a play of dice. Luck plays a role here, usually bad luck. The echo of this insight is found in the Far East, where “the genius of Japanese art was to have been able to develop an abstraction of the alea. It is a lyrical abstraction [the lyre moves back and forth, BMS] whose sign is the broken, fractal line”, cf. *Earth Moves. The Furnishing of Territories*, 83. The zigzag of the Japanese garden following the Zen principle of *fukensei*, asymmetry, versus the regularities of Versailles' imperial decor.

34 *Genesis*, 35.

Both the dancing body and the thinking body is between noise and music, always a bit ahead. For Plato education consists first of all in musical and physical training (that is, dance). In the *Republic* it is asserted that

education in music is most sovereign [*kuriôtatê en mousikêi trophê*],³⁵ because more than anything else rhythm and harmony find their way to the inmost soul and take strongest hold upon it, bringing with them and imparting grace [*euschêmosunê*].³⁶

After the deterritorialising processes of musical and gymnastic education are carried through, one should, in order to follow Plato's suggestions, commence with the training of reason (algebra, geometry, etc.), social skills and dialectics, to reach, finally, the full participation in the production of the good life in society.

To impart grace (or 'decorum') is with slight alterations what in *Phaedrus* is referred to as bringing the *paidikos*, the young lad, into a rhythm, *rhuthmos*, with the cosmic forces, or literally 'a suitable proportion or measure with the Gods', an education which is already begun in the womb of the mother, where the foetus is harnessed by 'pre-natal gymnastic' (this striking image is from the *Laws*). In Hellas, even illness and disease had rhythms that should be respected and not intercepted.

Gymnastics remained, in ancient Greece, an activity for everybody, bodies young and old, it remained the basic tactic in warding of the territorialising effect of time, time which turns the hand into an insensitive claw, the body into an old and dying animal, the thought into mere *attitude*, the perpetual *vox populi* of mediated discourse: 'What do you think?', rather than what forces you to think the unthought, well beyond 'you' and your petty little 'secrets'.

As a cosmology, Plato's fundamental concept of movement, *kinêsin*, consists of *rhuthmos* and *harmonia*, rhythm and harmony. The refrain is then what brings a certain consistency to this rhythmicity, a repetition in the flow (*rhuthmos* itself probably stemming from *rhein*, to flow³⁷), a consistency of the social.

While the refrain is the organising principle that eventually, if repeated long enough, will lead to stratification and administration, music is what enables the social to change, transform and transmutate, "bringing with them and imparting grace" (cf. Plato above). The forces are sonorous forces, from the vague rhythms between all the amorphous milieus of which chaos consists, to the veritable machinic opera that ties the heterogeneous elements of the living thing together: territorial refrains, organic refrains, sexual refrains, occupational refrains. Social refrains.

35 The Greek reads: "music is the master of nourishment for the trainee" confirming the intimate connection between music and the bodily reproduction.

36 Plato (1969) *Republic. Plato in Twelve Volumes*. London: Willian Heinemann, 401d. The term grace, *euschêmosunê*, is in Plato subsumed the more encompassing Hellenistic term *arethê*, the good character. It was to be found in the *kalos kai agathos*, the beautiful and the noble: the aesthetic rhythm between the two expressions should not go unnoticed.

37 Serres has a habit of questioning this etymology, since flow could also be strictly laminar movements of atoms, all falling with the same velocity and vector geometry. The *clinamen*, however, forces the atoms to interact, and at this instance the chance of rhythm appears on the surface of the flow.

This is why Nietzsche's first question regarding people, books, music, is "Can they walk?" and even more: "Can they dance?"³⁸ Bernard Cache comes close to this in asserting that "[we] have to learn to modulate our zones: to dance to recover a body in the envelope of the tribe, or to fade away to acquire a soul within the texture of thought."³⁹

Similarly, the well-educated person of Hellas, according to Plato, is one capable of performing the refrain both verbally and bodily, that is, singing and dancing, thus producing the social as a consistent plane,

linking us one with another by means of songs and dances; and to the choir they have given its name from the 'cheer'⁴⁰ implanted therein. Shall we accept this account to begin with, and postulate that education owes its origin to Apollo and the Muses?⁴¹

The decorum thus developed is what organises the *agora*, and the relation between the territory (or *agora*) and the refrain (the linking by song and dance) is simply that the refrain territorialises.⁴² The refrain connects the earth with the territory. Yet the emergence of territories is not simply a matter of functional components and extensive space, but also, and more importantly, the expressive qualities that the rhythmic communication that the refrain carries forth.⁴³

The refrain is a territorial assemblage, that is, a force of organising that connects elements to a territory: the bird singing its tune in the forest or in the city, de- and re-territorialising the striated spaces (trees and paths in the wood, roads and noises in the city). It may take on other functions, from the species specific through the social to the cosmic, but it retains this relation to the territory, constantly performing a reorganisation of functions and a regrouping of forces. The point is that 'the social' has no relevance disconnected to a territory, rather, as it becomes, its becoming is a becoming territorial, and it can only be understood in this relation to the territory.

It is the detail or the *clinamen* that sets the becoming of social distinctions in motion. The *clinamen* or the detail is, contrary to common sense knowledge, not marginal, even if it often is treated as negligible by State science. The detail is in the middle, and it is in the middle that things speed up.

38 Nietzsche, F. W. (2001) *The Gay Science. With a Prelude in German Rhymes and an Appendix of Songs*. Cambridge, U.K: Cambridge University Press, 366.

39 *Earth Moves. The Furnishing of Territories*, 124-5.

40 Notably, in this sentence Plato transforms *chorous*, choir or the round dance, to *charas*, joy, pointing to the very *raison d'être* of education: transforming the amorphous into a form that is capable of producing joy.

41 Plato (1969) *Laws. Plato in Twelve Volumes*. London: William Heinemann Ltd, 654a. Much later, Nietzsche was to discuss the necessity of protecting the educational process from the hustle of everyday business, since the crucial process of education – for which German features a more suitable expression: *Bildung* – develops entirely through its own movement, i.e., its rhythm and its harmony.

42 *A Thousand Plateaus*, 320.

43 Cf. part 3 of Derek P. McCormack (2002) 'A paper with an interest in rhythm', *Geoforum*, vol. 33.

The way to get to the middle is to *cut up the whole*, like William Burroughs' method of cutting up: the concept 'detail' stems from Old French *detail*, slice, piece, which comes from *detaillier*, to cut in pieces, the latter part from Latin *talea*, twig, cutting.⁴⁴

To cut up is to be specific, and the question of *specificity* in every case works away from the general towards a particularity or a singularity, *a* life, the detail of *a* life or the *clinamen* of *an* event. The philosophical critics of the 19th century, on whom the present text draws, are hardly categorisable on specific themes or problematics, they are neither – or even less – comparable on the level of remedies, solutions or ways out. But what Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and Freud⁴⁵ share, is a preoccupation with *the detail*. Never the situation *per se* but the trembling that the situation raises above the apperceptive level. What was important for Kierkegaard was not *that* he was greeted, but the manner in which the greeting was executed.

In Nietzsche: the laughter, not *what* is funny (surely dogs and cats are funny too, and the people that love them), but *how* one laughs, how the laughter is changing the laughing person and, conversely, why laughing is so seldom joyful. Freud took this preoccupation to an extreme, opening the theme for a range of 'detailists' – maybe a better term than post-structuralists – to follow: most notable was his detailed description and analysis of the slip of the tongue, the joke, and that little part of the dream which he found inter-esting, literally pertaining to the *inter-esse*, to what is between being, what is in the middle.

The detail is never alienated from the whole and music, the strongest of the arts, never loses its power of deterritorialisation, it never totally closes off the minor music working within its most institutionalised form – R&B, Country & Western – even when the dynamics of its forces have been territorialised by a refrain to the point of stratification. In Adorno's theory of music the *Schlager* signals the final commodification of the melodic expression. In the case of R&B it is race, the racial refrain, in the case of Country & Western it is nation, the national refrain that becomes stratified to the fullest.

In the road movie *Blues Brothers* the two styles deterritorialises each other. In a particular scene – and simply by cunningly substituting themselves for a real Country & Western band that has not arrived yet – The Band (a blues band) is going to play at a Country & Western joint. It is truly a *middle of nowhere*-joint, but it is immediately turned into a *now here*-joint by the owner, when she happily exclaims that 'we've got both kinds; we got Country and Western.' The Band starts playing what definitely turns out to be a minor music within: the audience (the striated organisation with the power of defining what is music and, especially, what is not) is bombarding The Band with any

44 A possible line of flight here is the notion of *bricolage*, which is a late 20th century French invention in art, but put to work in the social sciences by Claude Lévi-Strauss.

45 Freud sneaks into that century which dismissed all critique because it turned auto-critical to the point of abolition. Moreover, one might miss Marx in this pack and his oeuvre does play a special role in this line of flight. On the one hand Marx was notorious in the detailed depiction of workers living conditions, their rooms are measured with a precision that would be curious was it not for the graveness of the subject. On the other hand, he is also meta-theoretical with a bias towards utopia. This is a bias that unfortunately is shared by Deleuze and Guattari in their last joint work, cf. *What is philosophy?*, chapter 4.

moveable object available. That The Band represents a minor music is obvious, and the chicken net protecting them also demarcates inclusion and exclusion of the territory (exclusion being a function that botches deterritorialisation, returning everybody to their rigid territories. They become reterritorialised).

However, in this stalemate situation, The Band plays *Theme from Rawhide* and *Stand by Your Man*, that is, genuine Country & Western songs, with a piety that makes them, as well as the crowd, worthy of the event:

Keep movin' movin' movin'
Though their disaprovin' ...
Rawhide

The Band becomes foreigners in their own language, the dominant refrain is deterritorialised by the minor music from within, what could be termed the Outside of the refrain.

Specifically, the refrain has as its one pole the power of creating a territory (a place to play for a band), and as its other pole total stratification ('you are not one of us', *their disaprovin'*), where its initial role is lost, and the refrain is turned into an order-word.

In the work of Deleuze and Guattari, the refrain has the very three aspects which *Blues Brothers* expresses. They are all virtually simultaneous as the refrain connects to the territory, demarcating chaos in different ways, that is, cutting and redirecting flows: the refrain injects, inscribes, and intercepts. The Band injects itself into the Country & Western joint, and by way of music, it inscribes itself into the dominant refrain of the local reality, finally intercepting in the becoming of the crowd and their identity, turning rigid oppositions into biopolitical production, *Stand by Your Man*, a way out for everybody, a new solidarity of standing by, and the concert turns out to be a 'success'.

Injection: The Band in the joint is a child in the dark: the child singing a refrain so as to create a momentary centre in chaos, throwing a contemporary line out in front of her, a way through, a passage. The refrain injects redundancy in a chaotic multiplicity; this injection is the *clinamen* which allows for the unfolding of *time*. Consider the picture of the now world-historical little Jewish boy, anxious and with his hands in the air, escorted towards extinction by Nazi soldiers, chanting a speechless refrain which sets a distance in time as well as space.

The picture produces intensity: one remembers exactly this picture and this little boy, while huge amounts of other pictures documenting the atrocities pictures have been forgotten (the picture is part of such a series of the Jewish Ghetto Uprising in Warsaw, April-May 1943).⁴⁶ What the picture produces with its depiction of the raised hands, the facial expressions, contrasting the dull looking storm troopers, is an event which singularises the historical contingencies of the moment, a strategy that lets the picture continuously produce itself as event.

46 The effect of the picture has not an *a priori* necessary connection to the factual historical life and death of the individuals in the picture, although, naturally, there exists indeed such a historical life and death.

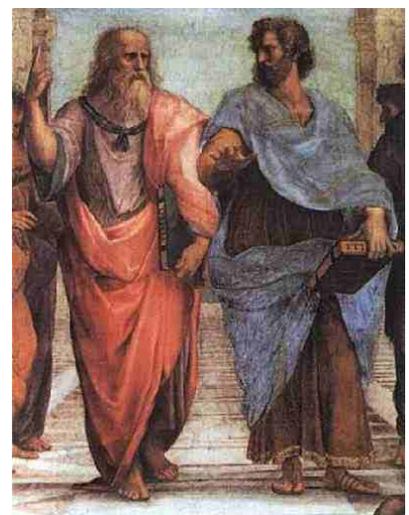
In the case of the little Jewish boy, the injecting function of the refrain serves to mark out the critical distance between two members of a species, here as a critical distance between a member of a group and chaos and disaster. The child creates a sonorous centre in the alley where the paralysing anxiety cannot rigidify his movement in terms of direction or change of speed: he walks by a rhythm, crossing thresholds, towards the void.



Warsaw, April-May 1943, photo courtesy United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

The theme has an echo in Rafael's *School of Athens*, (1510-11), a detail of which is shown below, where Plato has the role of the boy, and Aristotle the role of the German soldier in the back right. Whereas the boy and Plato points towards the outside and transformation, Aristotle and the German soldier points towards the ground, towards order and territory.

The catastrophe of *Timaeus* versus the systematic of the *Nicomachean Ethics*.



School of Athens, Rafael

The second aspect of the refrain is its capability of *inscription*. The inscription creates a territory as a geomorphic reality, a relative calm area: folding the social stratum as to create an inside and an outside.⁴⁷ Here our observation must change point of view, since the inscription process is moving towards the stratified and the signified: it takes more systematic effort and time to inscribe than just to inject. The German army inscribes, does nothing but inscribe: the soldiers with their dull movements, their weapons and the uniform fetish, the refrain and the military orchestra, the march.

Organisation – as a noun – takes place when the territorialisation of a territory is taken to its limit, when the factor of territorialisation is raised towards infinity. In the end it will lose its creative movement.

Inscription creates a home, *Heimat*, by drawing a circle and organizing a space with a firm inside/outside distinction: Arian/Jew, or, in more frequent or at least more mundane settings, member and non-member of the organisation, the logic of administration. It delimitates a space of the germinal forces of the task in question, the work that should be done, the activity, *Endlösung*, or the meetings in the office.

Inside the organised assemblage, when specialisation takes places and trades are differentiated, it is more a matter of letting live together (with specific refrains constantly de- and reterritorialising within the assemblage), than it is a matter of keeping apart.

The fact is that nothing can be kept apart: desire is present when the bureaucrats shuffle the papers and stamp the documents and laugh in the corridors as in Franz Kafka's *Das Schloss (The Castle)*. The success of the Nazi propaganda was indeed to connect directly to the bodily productions of the masses, sexually arousing the German people, raising their arms in conjunction with their passions and emotions.⁴⁸

Seen from point of view of the refrain, all assemblages are such *passages*: "I am no longer as I was before, I am swept away by a becoming other, carried beyond my familiar existential Territories."⁴⁹ Therefore, the refrain has a dynamic relationship to the territory in the sense that the refrain 'moves in the direction of the territorial assemblage and lodges itself there or leaves.'

47 The refrain creates a fold, the existential refrain connects to a fold, the latter being the configuration of individuation suggested by Deleuze, namely via his rather complicated reading of Leibniz in Deleuze, G. (1993) *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

48 It is a historical, if somewhat underplayed, fact that Adolf Hitler received millions of love letters from German women. They were certainly not just cute signs of adoration, they were fierce and erotic manifestations of devotion and lust. Also, it must not be overlooked that to other millions of German men, the Nazi cults of sports and bodily explications exploded away a host of Victorian repressions and prohibitions, not least related to homoerotic relationships, giving, of course, an even more bizarre context to the concurrent and deadly campaigns against deviant sexual behaviours and *entartete Kunst*.

49 Guattari, F. (1995) *Chaosmosis. An Ethico-Aesthetic Paradigm*. Sydney: Power Institute, both quotes found at p. 93ff.

By its third and last aspect, the refrain *intercepts*: it opens the circle, follows a tangential *clinamen*, it improvises, it is the movement of the Bergsonian *fabulation*. The interception is a radical opening of the territory assemblage towards the forces of cosmos, yet at the same time it gives these forces a new relation to the movement of the molecular, to micropolitics. It is thus the opening of the assemblage towards an outside. Accordingly, the territorial assemblage is constituted, recreated and changed by the refrain. This *dynamis*, this transformative force is never more present and forceful than it is in music: "All arts aspire to the condition of music."⁵⁰ Whereas, asserts Schopenhauer, all the other arts are only imitating the Universal will, music itself represents this will.⁵¹

What at first appears as a territorialised function may on account of the musical forces develop into a new assemblage, with a level of deterritorialisation congruent with its autonomy: deportation becoming the imminent cataclysm of the Apocalypses (from Greek *apo-* + *kalyptein*, to un-cover), only, not for the deportees but for those who deport. What is un-covered is the fact that behind the closed circles around power, under the Goth cult of the Nazis, behind the curtain in the Temple,⁵² behind the closed doors of bureaucracy, behind the walls around Kafka's *Schloss*, behind the Man, where allegedly there should be a Wo-man, behind Capital, there is nothing. There is, as K.E. Løgstrup puts it: "no reserve neither of strengths or skills behind our reservations. Empty aloofness is in a given case enough to grant authority and influence."⁵³ Max Weber points out the link between secrecy and power when he asserts that every "bureaucracy seeks to increase the superiority of the professionally informed by keeping their knowledge and intensions secret."⁵⁴

We are close to the definition of Hell, from Latin *celare*, to conceal: 'Hell is other people' was never meant to mean anything else than the threat of my echo being a void, all differences cancelled. Not ice, not fire, just the Same, Indifference, Boredom.

This development or, more precisely, this type of production, is what we could term immanent or creative critique, since it re-veals the forces already at play in the assemblage in case and the possibility of another production of subjectivity. Uncovering may still be *too Greek*, or too Renaissance, since there is nothing to uncover, and the procedure for willing the truth is rather stripping the scripture, the sign, laying bare its semantic structure, a general demystification of the *écriture general*.⁵⁵ If there are no

50 A late-Romantic dictum delivered by the English essayist and critic Walter Pater.

51 Corporate events would not work without music. The corporate party, where occupational refrains are deterritorialised by music and immediately reterritorialised by sexual refrains, 'it had to happen.' As it is the rule of reterritorialisations, the 'new' configuration extremely seldom deconstructs the ruling social machines of power and inscriptions, but reinforces them.

52 The sign and catastrophe of the Apocalypses was to be the fall of the curtain that covered the innermost room in the Temple, where the Covenant was placed. It would turn out, at the destruction of Jerusalem, that the Covenant was not there. Such is, in any case, the history from point of view of the ruling class, namely the convert/traitor Flavius Josephus (A.D. 37-95).

53 Løgstrup, K. E. (1993) *Solidaritet og Kærlighed*. Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 136.

54 Weber, M. (1946) *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 233.

55 Cf. de Certeau, M. (1986) *Heterologies. Discourse on the Other*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 160ff.

things behind, then everything can be decoded or demystified on the surface, all the cultic movements are nothing but folds of an outside, and must be considered as such. Language must be defected, laying bare the obscenity of its *production*. There will flow nothing out from the semantically erected cultic 'centres', and our respect (from Greek *re-* + *skopein*, to look back on, cf. sceptic) in regards to the loci of power and secrecy must be thoroughly sceptical.⁵⁶

Analytically, in the picture of the little Jewish boy, what is decisive is the distinction between what does not move and what moves, what does not change and what changes. On the one hand the rigid stratifications and the molar organisation and on the other hand the consistent aggregates, that is *the social in its becoming*, the difference between ideology and praxis.

The necessary tactics is to deploy a destratifying transversality that could possibly move through the elements of State and police, deconstructing the overcodings of these regimes of power. This analysis might set in motion existential refrains, which then could show the production of partial but consistent subjectivities (the little Jewish boy as a transformative war machine).⁵⁷

Since a society is not defined by its contradictions (as in traditional Marxian analysis), but by its lines of flights, that is, its fissures and breaks, imperceptible ruptures, the creative part is the construction of these lines, lines that at once transgress as well as co-construct the consistent assemblage. The refrain is what produces this consistency: evidently not as an organisation in the traditional arborescent model but, more relevant, as a line of flight, as a production of intensity.

The little Jewish boy already directing a minor orchestra; not in the striation of the Nuremberg assemblies, but in the smooth space of the pack. He has reached the final stage of decorum or gracefulness in Plato and has become *chorégeô*, become the leader of a chorus. *Chorus angelli*.

At the same time the refrain itself is also susceptible to change, to deterritorialisation, and the deterritorialisation of the refrain, its transmutation,⁵⁸ is always connected to the detail and hence to rhythmicity. The *talea*, the detail, plays a crucial part in this continuous transmutation, connecting the methodology of the detail with a longitudinal movement within history, with a series of repetition we would call continuity.

The *talea* is never entirely lost, though, and a detail always survives, a little recollection on the way to Swann, or the way to extinction, that will change the story entirely. The

56 The stronger the cult, the more devastating the emptiness, and the more prone to change a cult is, the less it has to refer to the transcendental. Religious cults were cults of praxis long before they, in the case of Protestantism, became cults of ideology, that is, cults of capital, cf. Weber, M. (1985) *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. London: Unwin.

57 *A Thousand Plateaus*, 335.

58 Transmutation is preferred to transformation, since the Latin *mutare* in itself means change: transmutation is thus both a transgression of the form, but also a change in the change itself, an indetermination which can produce both the full Body without Organs as well as the mutant and cancerous Body without Organs.

lines of flight are never straight, the lines of flight are always bent, and unfold in relation to the curvatures of the very small: “You don’t deviate from the majority unless there is a little detail that starts to swell and carries you off.”⁵⁹ Here the *talea* (the rhythm of the pack-orchestra deterritorialising the fascist stratum) designates a becoming-Jewish where also the Jew must become Jewish. This is a becoming which the establishment of the Jewish State unsurprisingly would show to ward off, as all states ward off becomings by administration: ‘it’s only a detail’, ‘it’s only a minor question’, ‘later’.

Becoming consists of these two simultaneous movements, the one in which the subject departs from the majority, is deterritorialised from the majority, and the second in which the subject, now as *medium or agent*, rises up from the minority. There is a boy exploded out of a majority, a nation, and made both agent and medium of a becoming minoritarian, becoming-Jewish, yet without being reterritorialised.

The subject of the becoming only exists as a deterritorialised part of the majority: the becoming is immanent to the field in question. The subject of the becoming only functions as a medium or agent of a becoming as a deterritorialised variable of a minority, a variable that is set free by deterritorialisation.

However, both majority and minority are aggregates or states, molar sedimentations; the point is constantly to become minoritarian, not to constitute yet another minority. The becoming minoritarian is a pure process or a movement with infinite speed, a molecular transmutation that goes from the subject towards a line of flight. Towards, as Leonard Cohen has it, the crack in everything which is where the light comes in. This becoming goes from the established subject of enunciation to the infant, it is a becoming-speechless in the midst of a silent tremor.

The silent dancer, Abraham, on Mount Moriah, with the raised knife: in Kierkegaard tremor is the almost non-perceptible rhythm of the body that deterritorialises body and spirit and sweeps them up in the indefinite striving (‘infinite resignation’ in the case of the knight of faith⁶⁰), a perpetual becoming, trembling is existence repeating itself, trembling is difference. In the hour of death for the little Jewish boy, his tremor is what enables a way out, turning him into a war machine: between the capture of sign potential that the State performs and the transmutation realised by the constant production of difference or the repetition of an interceptive refrain.

Whenever an assemblage such as the event of deportation is deterritorialised, a machine is released, and machines “are always singular keys that open or close an assemblage, a territory.”⁶¹ As such, the assemblage opens up to what Guattari calls universes of values, in connection to which the assemblage regains its creative force: these universes are given in a moment of creativity, outside linear time, reaching out towards the singular.

59 *A Thousand Plateaus*, 292.

60 *Fear and Trembling. Repetition*, where the earlier mentioned four series on Abraham and Isaac are played out.

61 *A Thousand Plateaus*, 334, emphasis in original.

Also, war machines, that is, forces of metamorphosis, are released, capable of transversing the rigid strata.⁶² *The Third Reich*, with its constructed history of linear causality (Greek, Roman, German), their hierarchies of orders, titles, and symbolic powers versus aggregates of consistency where extremely heterogeneous elements are consolidated, “orders that have been short-circuited.”⁶³ The analysis of the little Jewish boy as a war machine capable of producing nomadic subjectivities does not imply the interpretation of *symptoms* according to a pre-existent, latent content, but implies the invention of new catalytic centres susceptible of bifurcating experience. The boy is such a catalytic centre, a singularity, a rupture in sense, a cut, a fragmentation, the detachment of semiotic content. We know about the millions crushed as they were running through a world that has lost its meaning, but *he*, the cherub of life, will keep us insomniac the rest of the passage through the *tenebrae super faciem abyssi*, the darkness over the face of the void.

What the refrain produces, in other words, are such a-signifying blocks of subjectivity or a-signifying ‘partial subjectivations’, pure intensities, all pointing to the original production of mutant centres of subjectivation.⁶⁴ In an important sense, these blocks are *fragments*, and the question of the deconstruction of a western, centralised subject ceases to be central (and it never really was central to any of the poststructuralists, they left it). What is critical is sensitivity towards the detached nuclei of intensity devoid of content, the *talea*, since:

flows of intensities, their fluids, their fibres, their continuums and conjunctions of affects, the wind, fine segmentation, microperceptions, have replaced the world of the subject.⁶⁵

In Adorno, the wind is defining the subject more than the other way around: the way one hears the wind is the way one lives. Either one hears the frightening and hallowing storm that raises the spectres and brings melancholy. Or one has met its forces and conquered them, made the wind a friend that effectuates openness to its intensities, its inspirations, and brings transformation. The wind as a faint rumour of a melancholic void and nothingness; or as a rhythm of the solar plexus. Not only society, but also nature itself precedes the subject.⁶⁶

The refrain singularises these affects or intensities: they are *folds*, and deconstructive expressionism is the art of unfolding and refolding these folds. Rather than remaining occupied with the plane of organisation, the schizo is *out for a walk*.

62 In Paul Patton (2000) *Deleuze and the Political*. London: Routledge, war machines are called machines of metamorphosis. It is enlightening, and to be sure, Deleuze and Guattari – on p. 513 of *A Thousand Plateaus* – attest that the State apparatus divests the war machine precisely of its “power of metamorphosis”. Still I prefer the tenor of the original expression, although, of course, contrary to the State apparatus, which captures the war machines to turn them into demolition machines, the nomad war machine has *everything but* war as its object.

63 *A Thousand Plateaus*, 337.

64 Guattari, F. (1996) *The Guattari Reader*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 200.

65 *A Thousand Plateaus*, 162.

66 Cf. Adorno, T. W. (1990) *Negative Dialectics*. London: Routledge, 126.

Allow yourself a moment to perceive the picture of the little Jewish boy as a picture of a schizophrenic out for a walk. He turns disaster into catastrophe: what we perceive as pure, irreversible disaster, the schizophrenic turn into a reversible catastrophe.⁶⁷ Whereas disaster departs from Old Italian, *disastro*, from *dis-* + *astro*, star, designating an unfortunate constellation of the astral bodies, the sound of inevitability,⁶⁸ catastrophe, on the other hand departs from the Greek *cata*, down and *strephein*, turn, pointing to that rupture in the drama when the drama turns against itself.

This point is the Heideggerian *Kehre* of the *Ereignis*, “*Die im Ereignis wesende Kehre*”, the turn of the event, “the radically inverted meaning of being, grounded in finitude, that stands over against the metaphysical ideal of being as full presence and intelligibility.”⁶⁹ *Kehre* is that inner movement of the event in which a clearing is opened in being where entities can rise, the *Kehre* is the problem as it appears in virtuality, where no thing is inevitable, but every thing is in becoming.

To find the catastrophe of one’s time is to produce the problematic, *die wesende Kehre*. The drama turns against itself, the cata-strophe: the gist in the eyes, the raised hands, “I know myself to be a threat, so I raise my hands”; “I imitate, only better and more precise than you do”; “You don’t look like soldiers.”⁷⁰ The boy does not carry weapons, but is deterritorialising his own body, turning his empty hands into weapons: karate, from Japanese, *kara-* + *te*, empty hand. The Japanese feudal proletariat was not allowed to carry weapons, so they were imitating the ruling strata at night, at the sandy beaches of Okinawa: ‘My hands are empty.’

67 My sister was a schizophrenic in the last fifteen years of her life, never ceasing to turn mere disasters into real catastrophes, doing it with an insurmountable creative materiality.

68 “Do you hear that, Mr. Anderson? That is the sound of inevitability. That is the sound of your death. Goodbye, Mr. Anderson.” Agent Smith in *The Matrix* (2002). This scene in the subway station draws heavily on the motion picture adaptation of Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina*, where in the latter, of course, the train/modernity is the sound of inevitability, and Anna is killed/kills herself. Not so in the virtualisation of modernity in *The Matrix*: The little Jewish boy is the Heideggerian *Kehre* between Anna and Neo, between the palindrome and the anagram. Even if Anna is annA, Neo is not new, just another One. Between that, a boy with no name.

69 Sheehan, T. (2000) ‘Kehre and Ereignis: A Prolegomenon to the Introduction to Metaphysics’, in G. Fried and R. Polt (eds.) *A Companion to Heidegger’s Introduction to Metaphysics*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 3, cf. also page 263, note 2.

70 Ani DeFranco’s slogan ‘Every tool is a weapon if you hold it right’ – found as the epigraph of Hardt, M. and A. Negri (2000) *Empire*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press – is a slogan that also could work in reverse: the Nazi soldiers in the picture carry their weapons as peasants would carry their tools, turning the weapons into useless gadgets because they don’t hold them right. They are still capable of killing, yet they kill at random, sometimes the enemy, sometime the brother in arms. The Nuremberg assemblies were, on account of the Versailles Peace Treaty, performed with hoes and spades and not guns and rifles: many of the soldiers carrying out marginal or supporting functions, like occupying Denmark or performing ethnic cleansing never turned into real soldiers, they remained peasants and administrative errand boys. Without the refrain of the soldier, the ethos of war, various atrocities could be carried out on pure bureaucratic terms. This, in any case, is the argument of Zygmunt Baumann and Hannah Arendt.



A master doing *Kata*⁷¹

This is in line with Plato's educational theory, where both the musical and a very hard physical training should enable the young boy to dance *and* fight, and also master all the movements between, i.e. life. Altogether, the body and the war of the body is partaking in a "shared line of flight of the weapon and the tool: a pure possibility, a mutation."⁷²

The martial arts subordinates weapons to speed, in the catatonic yet imminently rhythmic movement of the *Ka*, the trainee, who waits and releases affects as thunderbolts, but even more in the absolute speed of the corresponding and immanent supreme mental effort, the lightning. This implies a *method*, from Greek *meta-* + *hodos*, following a way, the 'Ways' of the Asian warriors, a way out which is a decoding: in fact martial arts is less a matter of turning the body into a weapon as it is a matter of learning to 'un-use' weapons, decode the capture of the State and Oedipus. The State overcodes the warrior, God, King, Country, and Oedipalizes affects by turning them into emotions, displaced and retarded, disgraceful even to the point of extinction: 'our' sons and daughters, who are really the blacks and the trash proletariat.

This overcoding calls for a perpetual decoding, which is a learning process where one learns to undo things and to undo oneself, and it is proper to the war machine: "the 'not-doing' of the warrior, the undoing of the subject."⁷³

The ways of martial arts are still occupied with displacement of *Tanden*, the gravitational centre of the body, but in their spiritual training they continue beyond the domain of gravity and necessity, transcending towards that smooth space which knows nothing of weight, only speed and slowness, longitude and latitude, taking it to outer space, where all childhood and metaphysical speculation was first dispersed, to the immense freedom of weightlessness and omnipotentiality.

71 Gold winner in *Kata*, Barbara Chinen. Photo from the 19th Annual Traditional Karate Tournament International, Women's Individual Kata, Las Vegas, 1999.

72 *A Thousand Plateaus*, 403.

73 *A Thousand Plateaus*, 400ff. As said, I find the connection between the nomadic principles and martial arts especially interesting. Here, possibly, the body-mind fighter is turned into a war machine.

Tanden becomes an event of the middle where it picks up the absolute speed of the thought brain. But the little Jewish boy already produces this; he is far beyond suspense, immobility, attacks and counterattacks. The gloomy feeling of stillness in the picture is turned into a productive difference, a difference we might term an 'act' – yet it is devoid of intention and devoid of subject. It is an act of *radical disengagement*.⁷⁴ The act is the very act I perform when "Planet Earth is blue / and there's nothing I can do", as is the case for Major Tom in David Bowie's *Space Oddity*, embracing weightlessness and cosmic silence. Bowie's own method of writing texts and subsequently cutting them up and rearranging them allows him, in a radical way, to *work in the middle*.

What is confirmed by the little Jewish boy, is Giorgio Agamben's prescription that man should not lament "the loss of experience, the weakening of mutual presence and self presence, the expropriation of our linguistic nature, and our consequent alienation."⁷⁵ Rather man should become-alien, affirming the fact that humankind was *always already expelled and expropriated* from the Organism, from Language and from the Self.

The horrifying gospel of depth and its intimidating interest in truth: What is the deep truth about fascism? What is the deep truth about the signifier? What is the deep truth about self, or, even more confused, *my* self? All these questions are questions of Oedipus, in itself the alleged deep truth about our desires.

But the *question* is wrong, the problematic is false, and the point becomes the way out, which is not an excavation of a deep truth but an explication of what was already there and what is already here: *a fold of the outside*. It is a moving musicality, never a judgment. As Michel Foucault says, suitably with Deleuze as proxy:

The outside is not a fixed limit, but a moving matter animated by peristaltic movements, folds and foldings that together make up an inside: they are not something other than the outside, but precisely the inside *of* the outside.⁷⁶

Hence, to produce a new subjectivity is, in Foucault's words, to fold the outside into an inside. The boat on the sea is the refrain in chaos: its territoriality is an inside only insofar as it is a folding of the outside.

Kierkegaard puts it dryly: in the very centre of the little girl is despair,⁷⁷ or, one can add, the unthought. To produce a new subjectivity is to turn the imprisonment of being into a becoming: the refrain creates a momentary centre *in* chaos, the little boy throws out in front of him a temporary line, a way out, a passage. Only, he is already in the void, he is beyond the scream, beyond good and evil. Contrary to the boy, Nazism was never

74 As a correction to the concept of 'radical passivity' analysed in Wall, T. C. (1999) *Radical Passivity. Levinas, Blanchot, and Agamben*. New York: State University of New York Press, where it is constructed from Giorgio Agamben's philosophy of biopolitics.

75 *Radical Passivity. Levinas, Blanchot, and Agamben*, 155.

76 Gilles Deleuze (1988) *Foucault*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 96.

77 This is not an indication of the all too commonly alleged pessimism of (Kierkegaardian) existentialism. The despair in Kierkegaard is like a refrain out of tune, viz., the disharmony points to the fact that the life of the child has yet to become truly free and to form its own home with its specific connections and contributions to the Cosmic.

beyond good and evil, and in no way does this deterritorialisation revise the dispersion of roles in the atrocity. Hannah Arendt and Primo Levi documented to the full the banality of evil, and the radical disengagement of the victims can mean any 'engagement' in what happened.

The picture explodes away our categorisations and victimisations, and in this de/composition of the deportation,

the image is not defined by the sublimity of its content but by its form, that is, by its "internal tension," or by the force it mobilizes to create a void or to bore holes, to loosen the grip of words, to dry up the oozing of voices, so as to free itself from memory and reason: a small, alogical, amnesiac, and almost aphasic image, sometimes standing in the void, sometimes shivering in the open.⁷⁸

The image ascends into the indefinite towards a pure celestial state, the event, not anymore *the* little boy, but *a* little boy, not anymore *the* Jew, but the becoming-Jewish, fundamentally, of all, also the perpetrators themselves.

The image ceases to be an object and becomes a process in which energy is released, the bullet of the assassin. The silence before the assassin releases the bullet does not annul the labor of the refrain, and the boy's manner of walking, dancing, is no less carried by a refrain than is the music played in the awaiting death camps to help the perpetrators survive in *their* chaos, proving the fact that slaves (the Nazis) can be as evil as alleged masters (the Nazis in their imaginary self).

Music is that sonorous image which opens up to the void or the silence, the hiatus or the leap unto 70,000 feet: how could we ever distinguish vision and sound?⁷⁹ The holes, "to create a void or to bore holes": in the midst of confinement a 'holey space' is produced, a 'porous body'.

The boy faces the inevitability of deportation, the inability of avoiding; avoid stemming from Latin *vacare*, to be empty. To avoid is to empty, and the unavoidable is only transgressed by *already being in the void*, by emptying one's hands, one's signs and one's subjectivity, undoing the Self, going much further than Edward Munch: "My whole life has been spent walking by the side of a bottomless chasm...and there I shall walk until the day I finally fall into the abyss."⁸⁰

The little boy is already in the abyss, avoiding the unavoidable by being beyond gravity, turning pure affect into a weapon, a devastating lightning. Undoing the code of the State apparatus, finding a way out of its capture, not by fleeing but by staying in the void, as

78 Gilles Deleuze (1997) *Essays Critical and Clinical*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 159, referring to Samuel Beckett's authorship.

79 *Essays Critical and Clinical*, 172. Cf. "Of the harmonies I know nothing, but I want to have one warlike, to sound the note or accent which a brave man utters in the hour of danger and stern resolve, or when his cause is failing, and he is going to wounds or death or is overtaken by some other evil"; *Republic. Plato in Twelve Volumes*, 399a.

80 Quoted in Hughes, R. (1991) *The Shock of the New. Art and the Century of Change*. London: Thames and Hudson, 281.

in Herman Melville's *Bartleby the Scrivener*, where Mr. Bartleby simply "would prefer not to."⁸¹

The evitable is what one is capable of avoiding, a move from the Greek abstract normativity in regard to a good life towards the practical rules in the Stoic formulae of life.

The little boy taking this final move into the abyss via a radical disengagement within the empire of extreme danger, expressing a becoming-minoritarian that is necessary for all.

the author

Bent Meier Sørensen has now passed brown belt graduation in Okinawa Goju-Ryu Karate, the last level before black. However, as he feels happy with his achievements in this feudal exercise, he might, while finishing a PhD thesis, entertain hobbies that are less constructed as an eternal examination. Like Tango Argentino. Do mail if you want to tag along while passing Copenhagen.
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81 *Essays Critical and Clinical*, 68.