

# NOMADIC TRAJECTORIES

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# I TRAVEL





V as in *Voyages*:  
A Letter from *L'Abecedaire*  
**Gilles Deleuze with Claire Parnet**

Overview prepared by  
**Charles J. Stivale<sup>1</sup>**

Parnet announces this title by saying that it's the demonstration of a concept as a paradox because Deleuze invented the concept, nomadism, but he hates traveling. Why, first of all, does he hate to travel? she asks. Deleuze says he doesn't like the conditions of travel for a poor intellectual. Maybe if he traveled differently, he would adore traveling, but intellectuals (Deleuze laughs), what does it mean for them to travel? It means going to conferences, at the other end of the world if needed, and all of that includes a talking-before and a talking-after with people who greet you quite kindly, and a talking-after with people who listened to you quite politely, talk talk talk, Deleuze says. So, for him, an intellectual's travel is the opposite of traveling. Go to the ends of the earth to talk, that is, to do something one can do at home, and to see people and talking before, talking after, this is a monstrous voyage.

Having said this, Deleuze says he feels very kindly (*beaucoup de sympathie*) for people who travel, it's not some sort of principle for him, and he says he does not pretend even to be right, thank God. He asks what is there for him in traveling? First, there is always a small bit of false rupture, the first aspect that makes traveling for him quite unpleasant. So the first reason: it's a cheap rupture (*rupture a bon marché*), and Deleuze feels just like Fitzgerald expressed it: a trip is not enough to create a real rupture. If it is a question of ruptures, Deleuze says, there are other things than traveling because finally, what does one see? People who travel a lot, and perhaps are proud of it, someone said it's in order to find a father (Deleuze laughs). There are great reporters who have written books on this, they all went to Vietnam and other places, seen everything, and in their fragments they all were in search of a father (Deleuze laughs). They shouldn't have bothered. . . Traveling can really be Oedipal in a sense, he says laughing. Deleuze concludes: I say no, that's not right! (*Ca ne va pas!*)

The second reason relates to an admirable phrase from Beckett that affected Deleuze greatly, who has one of his characters say, more or less - Deleuze cites poorly, he says, and it's expressed better than this: people are really dumb (*con*), but not to the point of traveling for pleasure.<sup>2</sup> Deleuze finds this phrase completely satisfying: I am dumb, he says, but not to the point of traveling for pleasure, no, not to that point (*quand même pas*).

And a third aspect of travel: Parnet stated the term "nomad," and Deleuze admits that he has been quite fascinated with nomads, but these are people quite precisely who don't travel. Those who travel are emigrants, and there can certainly be perfectly respectable people who are forced to travel, exiled people, emigrants. This is a kind of trip that it is not even a question of ridiculing because these are sacred forms of travel, forced travel. But nomads don't travel, says Deleuze. Literally, they stay put completely (*ils restent immobiles*), all the specialists on nomads say this. It's because nomads don't want to leave, because they grip hold of the earth, their land. Their land becomes deserted and they grip hold of it, they can only nomadize on their land, and it's by dint of wanting to stay on their land that they nomadize. So in a sense, one can say that nothing is more immobile than a nomad, that nothing travels less than a nomad. It's because they don't want to leave that they are nomad. And that's why they are completely persecuted.

And finally, says Deleuze, nearly the last aspect of traveling - there is a phrase from Proust that is quite beautiful that says: after all, what one always does when one travels is to verify something, one verifies that a color one dreamed about is really there. And he adds something important, Deleuze insists: a bad dreamer is someone who doesn't go see if the color he dreamed about is really there, but a good dreamer knows that one has to go verify if the color is really there. Deleuze finds this a good conception of travel.

Parnet says that this is a fantastic progression, and Deleuze continues: there are trips that are veritable ruptures. For example, Deleuze says, the life of J. M. G. Le Clézio at the moment seems to be a way in which he operates a kind of rupture. Deleuze says the name Lawrence (T. E.) . . . then says that there are too many great writers that he admires who have a sense of travel. Stevenson is another example, Stevenson's travels aren't negligible, he says. So Deleuze insists that what he is saying has no generality, but that for his own account, someone who doesn't like to travel probably has these four reasons.

Parnet asks if this theme of travel is connected to Deleuze's natural slowness, and Deleuze says no, that he doesn't conceive of traveling as slow, but in any case, he feels no need to move. All the intensities that he has are immobile intensities. Intensities distribute themselves, he says, in space or in other systems that aren't necessarily in exterior spaces. Deleuze assures Parnet that when he reads a book or hears music that he considers beautiful, he really gets the feeling of passing into such states and emotions that he never would find in travel. So, he asks, why would he seek these emotions in places that don't suit him very well, whereas he has the most beautiful of them for himself in immobile systems, like music, like philosophy. Deleuze says that there is a geo-music, a geo-philosophy, that he considers to be profound countries, and that are his countries. Parnet says, foreign lands, and Deleuze continues, his very own foreign lands, that he does not find by traveling.

Parnet says that he is the perfect illustration that movement is not located in displacement, but she points out that he did travel a little, to Lebanon for a conference, to Canada, to the USA. Deleuze says yes, but he has to say that he was always dragged into it, and he no longer does it because he should never have done all that, he feels he did too much. He also says at that time, he liked walking, and now he walks less well, so travel no longer happens. But he recalls walking all alone through the streets of Beirut from morning to night, not knowing where he was going. He says he likes to see a city on foot, but that's all over. (Deleuze nods his head)

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> *Editor's note:* This is a summary of one 'letter' from Deleuze and Parnet's eight-hour series of interviews that were filmed by Pierre-André Boutang in 1988. This has been prepared by Charles J. Stivale, who writes, "Rather than provide a transcription and translation into English, I try to provide the main points of the questions posed by Parnet and Deleuze's responses, and all infelicities and omissions are entirely my responsibility." The entire collection of summaries (A-Z) can be found at: <http://www.langlab.wayne.edu/romance/FreDeleuze.html>

<sup>2</sup> *Editor's note:* See Samuel Beckett, *Mercier et Camier*. Beckett's own translation of this phrase reads "We are not faring for the love of faring, that I know of [. .]. Cunts we may be, but not to that extent." This phrase

is also discussed by Deleuze in *Negotiations: 1972-1990*, trans. by Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), p. 78. See Joughin's footnote, p. 195, to which I am indebted.

# Theory of the Dérive

## Guy Debord<sup>1</sup>

Among the various situationist methods is the *dérive* [literally: ‘drifting’], a technique of transient passage through varied ambiances. The *dérive* entails playful-constructive behaviour and awareness of psychogeographical effects; which completely distinguishes it from the classical notions of the journey and the stroll.

In a *dérive* one or more persons during a certain period drop their usual motives for movement and action, their relations, their work and leisure activities, and let themselves be drawn by the attractions of the terrain and the encounters they find there. The element of chance is less determinant than one might think: from the *dérive* point of view cities have a psychogeographical relief, with constant currents, fixed points and vortexes which strongly discourage entry into or exit from certain zones.

But the *dérive* includes both this letting go and its necessary contradiction: the domination of psychogeographical variations by the knowledge and calculation of their possibilities. In this latter regard, ecological science - despite the apparently narrow social space to which it limits itself - provides psychogeography with abundant data.

The ecological analysis of the absolute or relative character of fissures in the urban network, of the role of microclimates, of the distinct, self-contained character of administrative districts, and above all of the dominating action of centers of attraction, must be utilized and completed by psychogeographical methods. The objective passional terrain of the *dérive* must be defined in accordance both with its own logic and with its relations with social morphology.

In his study *Paris et l’agglomération parisienne* (Bibliothèque de Sociologie Contemporaine, PUF, 1952) Chombart de Lauwe notes that “an urban neighbourhood is determined not only by geographical and economic factors, but also by the image that its inhabitants and those of other neighborhoods have of it.” In the same work, in order to illustrate “the narrowness of the real Paris in which each individual lives . . . within a geographical area whose radius is extremely small,” he diagrams all the movements made in the space of one year by a student living in the 16th arrondissement. Her itinerary delineates a small triangle with no

deviations, the three apexes of which are the School of Political Sciences, her residence and that of her piano teacher.

Such data - examples of a modern poetry capable of provoking sharp emotional reactions (in this case, indignation at the fact that there are people who live like that) - or even in Burgess's theory of Chicago's social activities as being distributed in distinct concentric zones, will undoubtedly prove useful in developing *dérives*.

Chance plays an important role in *dérives* precisely because the methodology of psychogeographical observation is still in its infancy. But the action of chance is naturally conservative and in a new setting of variants, and to habit. Progress is nothing other than breaking through a field where chance holds sway by creating new conditions more favorable to our purposes. We can say, then, that the randomness of the *dérive* is fundamentally different from that of the stroll, but also that the first psychogeographical attractions discovered run the risk of fixating the *dériving* individual or group around new habitual axes, to which they will constantly be drawn back.

An insufficient awareness of the limitations of chance, and of its inevitably reactionary use, condemned to dismal failure the celebrated aimless ambulation attempted in 1923 by four surrealists, beginning from a small town chosen by lot: wandering in the open country is naturally depressing, and the interventions of chance are poorer there than anywhere else. But the mindlessness is pushed much farther by a certain Pierre Vendryes (in *Médium*, May 1954), who believes he can put this anecdote in the same category with various probability experiments on the grounds that they are all supposedly involved in the same sort of antideterminist liberation. He gives as an example the random distribution of tadpoles in a circular aquarium, adding, significantly, "It is necessary, of course, that such a population be subject to no external guiding influence." In these conditions, the palm really should go to the tadpoles, who have the advantage of being "as stripped as possible of intelligence, sociability and sexuality," and consequently "truly independent from one another."

At the opposite pole from these imbecilities, the primarily urban character of the *dérive*, in its element in the great industrially transformed cities - those centers of possibilities and meanings - could be expressed in Marx's phrase: "Men can see nothing around them that is not their own image; everything speaks to them of themselves. Their very landscape is alive."

One can *dérive* alone, but all indications are that the most fruitful numerical arrangement consists of several small groups of two or three people who have reached the same awakening of consciousness, since the cross-checking of these different groups' impressions makes it possible to arrive at objective conclusions. It is preferable for the composition of these groups to change from one *dérive* to another. With more than four or five participants, the specifically *dérive* character rapidly diminishes, and in any case it is impossible for there to be more than ten or twelve people without the *dérive* fragmenting into several simultaneous *dérives*. The practice of such subdivision is in fact of great interest, but the difficulties it entails have so far prevented it from being organized on a sufficient scale.

The average duration of a *dérive* is one day, considered as the time between two periods of sleep. The times of beginning and ending have no necessary relation to the solar day, but it should be noted that the last hours of the night are generally unsuitable for *dérives*.

But this duration is merely a statistical average. For one thing, the *dérive* rarely occurs in its pure form: it is difficult for the participants to avoid setting aside an hour or two at the beginning or end of the day for taking care of banal tasks; and toward the end of the day fatigue tends to encourage such an abandonment. But even more importantly, the *dérive* often takes place within a deliberately limited period of a few hours, or even fortuitously during fairly brief moments; or over a period of several days without interruption. In spite of the cessations imposed by the need for sleep, certain *dérives* of a sufficient intensity have been sustained for three or four days, or even longer. It is true that in the case of a series of *dérives* over a rather long period of time it is almost impossible to determine precisely when the state of mind peculiar to one *dérive* gives way to that of another. One sequence of *dérives* was pursued without notable interruption for around two months. Such an experience gives rise to new objective conditions of behavior, which bring about the disappearance of a good number of the old ones.<sup>2</sup>

The influence of weather on *dérives*, although real, is a determining factor only in the case of prolonged rains, which make them virtually impossible. But storms or other types of precipitation are rather favorable for *dérives*.

The spatial field of the *dérive* may be precisely delimited or vague, depending on whether the activity is aimed at studying a terrain or at emotional disorientation. It must not be forgotten that these two aspects of the *dérive* overlap in many ways so that it is impossible to isolate one of

them in a pure state. But the use of taxis, for example, can provide a clear enough line of demarcation between them: if in the course of a *dérive* one takes a taxi, either to get to a specific destination or simply to move twenty minutes to the west, one is concerned primarily with a personal trip outside one's usual surroundings. If, on the other hand, one sticks to the direct exploration of a particular terrain, one is concentrating primarily on research for a psychogeographical urbanism.

In every case the spatial field depends first of all on the point of departure - the residence of the solo *dériveur* or the meeting place selected by a group. The maximum area of this spatial field does not extend beyond the entirety of a large city and its suburbs. At its minimum it can be limited to a small self-contained ambiance: a single neighbourhood or even a single block of houses if it's worth it (the extreme case being the static-*dérive* of an entire day within the Saint Lazare train station).

The exploration of a fixed spatial field thus presupposes the determining of bases and the calculation of directions of penetration. It is here that the study of maps comes in - ordinary ones as well as ecological and psychogeographical ones - along with their rectification and improvement. It should go without saying that we are not at all interested in any mere exoticism that may arise from the fact that one is exploring a neighborhood for the first time. Besides its unimportance, this aspect of the problem is completely subjective and rapidly disappears in the process of the *dérive*.

In the "possible rendezvous," on the other hand, the element of exploration is minimal in comparison with that of behavioral disorientation. the subject is invited to come alone to a specified place at a specified time. He is freed from the bothersome obligations of the ordinary rendezvous since there is no one to wait for. But since this "possible rendezvous" has brought him without warning to a place he may or may not know, he observes the surroundings. It may be that the same spot has been specified for a "possible rendezvous" for someone else whose identity he has no way of knowing. Since he may never have even seen the other person before, he will be incited to start up conversations with various passersby. He may meet no one, or he may by chance meet the person who has arranged the "possible rendezvous." In any case, particularly if the time and place have been well chosen, the subject's use of time will take an unexpected turn. He may even telephone someone else who doesn't know where the first "possible rendezvous" has taken him, in order to ask



for another one to be specified. One can see the virtually unlimited resources of this pastime.

Thus a loose lifestyle and even certain amusements considered dubious that have always been enjoyed among our entourage - slipping by night into houses undergoing demolition, hitchhiking nonstop and without destination through Paris during a transportation strike in the name of adding to the confusion, wandering in subterranean catacombs forbidden to the public, etc. - are expressions of a more general sensibility which is nothing other than that of the *dérive*. Written descriptions can be no more than passwords to this great game.

The lessons drawn from the *dérive* permit the drawing up of the first surveys of the psychogeographical articulations of a modern city. Beyond the discovery of unities of ambiance, of their main components and their spatial localization, one comes to perceive their principal axes of passage, their exits and their defenses. One arrives at the central hypothesis of the existence of psychogeographical pivotal points. One measures the distances that effectively separate two regions of a city, distances that may have little relation with the physical distance between them. With the aid of old maps, aerial photographs and experimental *dérives*, one can draw up hitherto lacking maps of influences, maps whose inevitable imprecision at this early stage is no worse than that of the first navigational charts; the only difference is that it is a matter no longer of precisely delineating stable continents, but of changing architecture and urbanism.

Today the different unities of atmosphere and of dwellings are not precisely marked off, but are surrounded by more or less extended and indistinct bordering regions. The most general change that the *dérive* leads to promising is the constant diminution of these border regions, up to the point of their complete suppression.

Within architecture itself, the taste for *dériving* tends to promote all sorts of new forms of labyrinths made possible by modern techniques of construction. Thus in March 1955 the press reported the construction in New York of a building in which one can see the first signs of an opportunity to *dérive* inside an apartment:

“The apartments of the helicoidal house will have the form of slices of cake. One will be able to augment or diminish them by shifting moveable partitions. The half-floor gradations avoid limiting the number of rooms, since the tenant can request the use of the adjacent section on either upper or lower levels. This system permits the transformation of

three four-room apartments into one twelve-room apartment in less than six hours.”

*(To be continued.)*

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> *Editor's note:* This work first appeared in the second issue of *Internationale Situationniste* (December 1958) and a slightly different version was published in *Les Lèvres Nues*, 9 (November 1956) along with accounts of two *dérives*. This translation first appeared in *Situationist International Anthology*, ed. by Ken Knabb (Berkeley: Bureau of Public Secrets, 1981), pp. 50-54. This text is anti-copyright and may be freely reproduced.

<sup>2</sup> *Knabb's note:* “The *dérive* (with its flow of acts, its gestures, its strolls, its encounters) was *to the totality* exactly what psychoanalysis (in the best sense) is to language. Let yourself go with the flow of words, says the analyst. He listens, until the moment when he rejects or modifies (one could say *detourns*) a word, an expression or a definition. The *dérive* is certainly a technique, almost a therapeutic one. But just as analysis without anything else is almost always *contraindicated*, so the continual *dérive* is dangerous to the extent that the individual, having gone too far (not without bases, but . . .) without defences, is threatened with explosion, dissolution, dissociation, disintegration. And thence the relapse into what is termed ‘ordinary life,’ that is to say, in reality, into ‘petrified life.’ In this regard I now repudiate the Formulary’s propaganda for a *continual dérive*. Yes, continual like the poker game at Las Vegas, but continual for a certain period, limited to Sunday for some, to a week as a good average; a month, that’s a lot. In 1953-1954 we *dérived* for three or four months; that’s the extreme limit, the critical point. It’s a miracle it didn’t kill us.” (Ivan Chtcheglov, ‘Letters from Afar’, *Internationale Situationniste*, 9 (1964), p. 38.)

## **II ORGANIZATION**



# Homes: Meshwork or Hierarchy? **Manuel de Landa<sup>1</sup>**

## I

Imagine having just landed a corporate job which demands that you move to a new city. In this urban environment the corporation has already found you an apartment and, following the tradition of its great corporate culture, it has had it decorated so that it embodies the aesthetic and functional values for which the firm has become famous. No doubt, when you finally move to this new place it simply won't feel like home, more like a hotel suite, despite the fact that it offers you shelter and even luxuries that you did not enjoy before. Does this lack of 'home feeling' stem from the fact that everything around you has been planned to the last detail? Would it feel homier if you shared the corporate values that informed the planning? Wouldn't you have to live for a while in this place, interacting with its walls and table surfaces by placing a souvenir here, a momento there, before something like a sense of home began to emerge?

These questions can also be raised even if we eliminate from our scenario the intrusive presence of an outside planner. Would a place feel like home if every expressive or functional detail had been exhaustively planned by yourself? No doubt all of us think about the decoration of our home environment, but do we always have an explicit reason why certain things are placed where they are? Don't we often place them in a given location because it feels like that is where they belong, as if our souvenirs and sentimental possessions arranged themselves through us?

Answering these questions in the case of human beings is rather hard because of the extreme variability of human culture and, even within a given culture, the great diversity of human personalities. Besides, I am not aware of any systematic study of these questions regarding human homes. We do have some information, however, about the creation of home territories by certain species of animals which throw some light on the question 'Are homes planned or self-organized?' In particular, I would like to begin my exploration of these issues with a brief examination of bird territories and the role that the expressive qualities of song and color play in their formation.

When the question of how birds create a home territory was first raised (by ethologists like Lorenz and Tinbergen) the answer given to these questions was ‘Homes are planned’, with the remaining controversy gravitating around the issue of ‘Who does the planning’, genes or brains. Are the planned strategies pieced together by genetic evolution or are they learned in the bird’s lifetime? In either case, the formation of a home territory was seen to derive from an internal territorial drive or instinct, with a precise central location in the brain. Out of this ‘territorial center’ commands would then be issued to other centers in the brain (a nesting center, a courtship center) and out of this hierarchical mental structure a correct set of actions would then be implemented and the borders of the territory would then be appropriately marked.

More recently, however, this line of thinking has been increasingly criticized. Philosopher Daniel Dennett, for example, has convincingly argued that to postulate ‘brain centers’ is to simply move all the original questions about an animal’s behavior to an ‘animalculus’ inside the head. Unless this animalculus is ‘stupid’ enough that it does not need to interpret representations or perform other complex cognitive functions, we are simply answering one question (How are territories organized by an animal?) with another one of equal complexity. (How are territories organized by an animalculus?). Philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari have raised essentially the same point, adding that home territories should be conceived not as emanating from an internal drive but as emerging from the interaction of a non-hierarchical set of brain functions and the expressive qualities of the territorial markers themselves, for instance, the color of certain leaves or stems which some birds use to attract females, or the musical properties of bird songs, or even faeces or urine scented with the excretions of special glands.

## II

The recent development of theories of nonlinear dynamics and of processes of self-organization has given these critics a boost. While before the 1960’s it was virtually impossible to imagine the emergence of order without a central agency behind it, today we are familiar with a growing body of knowledge about the spontaneous generation of ordered structures in inorganic as well as organic (and even social) processes. For the purposes of understanding the issue of home territories, it will be useful to

trace the effect of these new ideas in the current confrontation between symbolic Artificial Intelligence (which retains a hierarchical organization of centers) and the new connectionist school, based on nonlinear dynamics and a decentralized conception of the mind. An ‘artificial bird’s brain’ designed with symbolic AI would typically contain representations of the world (coded in bird mental language) forming a cognitive map of the animal’s surroundings. Creating a territory would then consist in symbolic operations performed on these representations and only later implemented as actions in the real world. A connectionist approach, on the other hand, would be to generate a population of neural nets, each of which is dynamically connected to the outside world. In other words, without using mental representations each neural net in the bird’s brain is in a nonlinear stable state (or attractor) which is associated with a similarly stable pattern in the animal’s environment. A pattern outside (such as the expressive qualities of a territorial marker) can then be recognized by the animal without forming an explicit internal symbol to stand in for the pattern.

Neural nets have indeed supplied us with a concrete technological paradigm of how brains could function without internal homunculi. Unlike symbolic AI which has only scored successes in the modeling of evolutionarily late skills (such as playing chess or proving theorems), connectionist designs have succeeded in capturing some more basic abilities, such as face recognition. And yet, for our purposes here, not even this novel branch of cognitive science has gone far enough. The real breakthrough to understand how home territories could self-organize through brains and outside expressive qualities comes from an even younger branch of AI: behavioral-based AI (or as it is sometimes called, the animat approach). The differences between behavioral and symbolic AI have been very lucidly expressed by Pattie Maes, and we may summarize them as follows: Symbolic AI decomposes minds into relatively large functional modules (perception, execution) interfaced together by central representations (beliefs, desires, intentions). The activity of the modules and the representations form a static ‘model of the world’, and the effects of learning are conceived as the operation of reformulating this model. Behavioral AI, on the other hand, does not involve high level general modules (which as I said, almost always embody homunculi) but low level specific modules (such as ‘collision avoidance’). High level skills emerge out of the interactions of these micro-modules, none of which can be said to possess the skill. More importantly for our present purposes, behavioral AI does not aim at the

internal generation of a world model, but rather, it situates its robotic animals in the real world so that the objective features of the environment can be used as a form of external memory. This modeling strategy is sometimes expressed with the phrase: ‘The world is its own best model’.

One useful way of explaining this rather cryptic phrase is by using some insights from the ecological theory of perception developed by James Gibson in the 1960’s. Gibson elaborated the crucial idea that the environment provides an animal with meaningful constraints which he called ‘affordances’. For instance, solid ground supplies animals with (or ‘affords’ them) a surface to walk on. On reaching the edge of a swamp an animal’s ‘muscular intelligence’ tells it automatically that the ground there does not afford suitable support, and the animal reaches this ‘conclusion’ without the need for an internal ‘world model’ which includes representations of dry and wet land. Similarly, a hole in the ground of suitable size affords an escaping animal a place to hide, and twigs afford the bird nest-construction materials. An open environment affords locomotion in all directions, while a cluttered one affords it only at certain openings. And, of course, what a given part of the world affords depends on the animal: water, due to surface tension, affords a walking surface to a small insect but not to a large bird, to whom it affords at most a gliding surface. The point of all this is that the world possesses a kind of intrinsic ‘proto-semantics’, which are meaningful to animal minds in a functional way.

In terms of behavioral AI this means that, a simple module for collision-avoidance (so simple it does not contain a homunculus) together with the obstacles afforded by a room’s walls can generate the complex behaviour of ‘wall following’ without an internal representation of the room. But the layout of surfaces in the environment is only one source of affordances, the behavior of other animals is too. Prey afford predators nutrition, while a territorial bird affords another competition. Animals may also afford one another opportunities for co-operation. This idea has also been exploited by behavioral AI in designs where novel intelligent behaviors emerge not only from the interaction animal-environment, but also from the interactions between the animals themselves. Hence the idea of building not expensive single robots, but teams of relatively inexpensive ones. This has the advantage that the solution to a given problem emerges out of the interactions of the whole team, with no single member being essential to the task. In this way, the inevitable breakdowns and



malfunctions that plague any real life applications do not cripple the entire enterprise, as would be the case with the single robot approach.

By now it should be clear what I am getting at. Home territories self-organize through a complex interplay between male and female birds and the expressive affordances of their environment. For example, the male satin bowerbird builds a stage decorated with bright blue objects of different kinds with which he tempts a female to stop by. Then, as the courtship begins, he will grab a yellow flower in his beak and alternately display it and hide it in a species-specific ritual. The home territory of the couple may be seen as emerging from simple in-the-head components (which are partly learned, partly inherited) and the optical affordances of the blue and yellow objects. Now, is it possible to extend these remarks to human beings? Is it possible that our own homes self-organize in this way, with the expressive affordances of our cherished possessions playing an active role too?

Although I would like to answer this question affirmatively, there are other aspects of the problem that we must consider first. In particular, unlike birds we possess also linguistic abilities, and hence a greater propensity to form representations and plans inside our heads. It may be, as philosopher Andy Clark has suggested, that our minds are a kludge (or bricollage) of different kinds of intelligence: some intelligent abilities arise out of decentralized and parallel processes, others from centralized and sequential ones. One useful way to think about this is to view the evolution of the human mind as involving a similar process as symbolic AI, only in reverse. Let me explain. When the first AI programs were written, programming languages and computer hardware were very hierarchical and sequential. In the 1970's when symbolic AI switched to the creation of expert-systems, the need for flexibility forced them to create programming languages which simulated parallel processing even while running in sequential hardware. Andy Clark's idea is that our evolution may have involved a similar, though opposite, solution: we began with a highly parallel and non-hierarchical hardware (like birds) and at some point our brains began to simulate a sequential and centralized mind: the stream of linguistic consciousness with which we are familiar through introspection.

If our minds are thus hybrids of two or more computer-types then we should expect our homes to be also complex mixtures of self-organized and planned components, or to use the technical terms, of hierarchies and meshworks. Hierarchies are structures in which components have been sorted out into homogenous groups, then articulated together. Meshworks,

on the other hand, articulate heterogeneous components as such, without homogenizing. A bird's territory is more meshwork than hierarchy, while the hypothetical pre-furnished corporate apartment I mentioned at the beginning of this paper, has more hierarchy than meshwork elements in it. Our homes can then be seen as mixtures of self-organized and planned components: certain objects will occupy a space and fulfill a function which we deliberately assigned to them while others will be located where they meshed well with their surroundings. And in these terms, the feeling of home could be derived from how well we mesh with the objects and expressive affordances of this private environment.

The concepts of meshwork and hierarchy have become one of the cornerstones for the application of nonlinear dynamical simulations to social and economic questions. Hence they are very useful in analyzing not only the structure of our private spaces, but also that of public spaces. That is, they help us thinking not only about our homes but also about the home of our homes: the city. From this point of view our individual homes become households, one of several types of institutions housed by our home towns. These institutional populations are also complex mixtures of meshworks and hierarchies, of markets and bureaucracies, for example. Pre-capitalist markets, like those which existed in medieval Europe, in China or India, or indeed in many small towns even today, are structures that emerge out of a decentralized decision-making process which brings heterogeneous needs and offerings together. In modern nonlinear models, markets have very little to do with the 'invisible hand', involving complex processes of self-organization and not just demand and supply. Behavioral AI (as well as other forms of nonlinear cognitive science) sometimes use market-like structures (such as bidding schemes) to replace centralized decision-making in the robot's mind.

### III

On the other hand, cities are also the home of governmental, commercial, religious and other hierarchies, in which decision-making is centralized, and the effects of decisions travel through well defined chains of command. At every level of this chain, that is, at every rank, the human components are very homogenous: the very process of rising through the ranks performs a sorting operation which results in more or less uniform behavior within each level. Indeed, the correct functioning of a command

chain assumes this uniformity and predictability. And yet, here as elsewhere, when we actually study a given hierarchical structure we are bound to find mixtures of meshwork elements, even if only in small proportions.

Moreover, as markets grow in complexity they can generate hierarchies and vice versa. Take for example, the big fairs that existed in Europe from the 13th century on: at the top they had the money markets, followed by luxury goods markets, while at the bottom we find food and other elementary goods. Hence these fairs were veritable hierarchies of meshworks. Similarly, when we analyze the interactions between governments, large commercial monopolies and oligopolies, ecclesiastical, medical and military authorities we find that they usually interlock in varying ways, complementing one another without losing their individual differences. Since no 'super-hierarchy' is controlling this process of mutual accommodation, the overall process suggests a meshwork of hierarchies.

Drawing some analogies with biological processes may be as useful in analyzing home towns as it was in exploring individual homes. Some evolutionary biologists have suggested, for example, that any entity that replicates itself, regardless of the nature of the process, can evolve in the exact same way as creatures with genes do. The first candidate for a non-genetic replicator was, of course, Richard Dawkin's 'memes': patterns of behavior that replicate themselves across a given animal population through imitation. The best studied example of memes is bird song. Although the basic structure of the song, an impoverished skeleton, is genetically hard-wired, the full song with all its flourishes, harmonies and counterpoints is not. Individual birds must be exposed to actual full songs by other birds of their species in order to develop their own. Since bird songs form local dialects and change over generations, they are indeed a replicator as much as genes are.

Human beings, on the other hand, are the home of other replicators. While we house memes just like birds do, for example most fashions and fads are propagated by imitation, we also speak languages and these do not replicate by imitation but by enforced repetition. When people learn the sounds (or phonemes) of English, for example, they do not imitate them: they shoot for a norm, they attempt to repeat a standard sound, and they must do so if they want to be intelligible to the rest of the English speaking community. A similar point applies to both vocabulary and syntactical rules. They are replicators but not memes. It is thanks to this

flow of norms through human populations that all our languages have evolved.

Now, to return to our main subject, economists Nelson and Winter, authors of the very influential theory of evolutionary economics, have suggested that the institutional inhabitants of cities are replicators too. They claim that the daily routines of a given institution, together with whatever formalized regulations the institution may have, form a kind of 'organizational memory'. When a commercial organization, for example, opens a new branch outside of its home town, and sends some staff there to preserve continuity, informal routines as well as formalized procedures become replicated, and in an important sense, the institution itself has given birth to an offspring. A similar process occurs when a given city colonizes foreign land and replicates its governmental and religious institutions there. Since the copying of routines (and even rules) is subject to alterations and local adaptations, there is here enough variation that some sorting process equivalent to natural selection can use as raw materials for evolution. Since our private homes are part of this population of institutions, some of the details of their architecture as well as the daily routines that make up our lives may have evolved in a process like this. So considering the two lines of my argument, the self-organization of expressive affordances as well as the evolution of institutions via routine and rule replication, our homes are like bird territories in more than a metaphorical sense.

The main problem with what I have said so far is that I have concentrated exclusively on the informational aspects of the problem. That is, I discussed expressive affordances and genetic, memetic and normative patterns and pretended for a while that that is all that mattered. But, of course, bird territories and human homes involve more than just information. In particular, they need a constant supply of matter and energy in order to work. The function of territories is, indeed, that of creating a protected source of food supplies. Urban homes too, have always been connected to local markets where they draw their supplies. Perhaps the best illustration of the crucial role played by matter-energy is provided by the action of genetic replicators. As is well known, all individual genes do is to code for enzymes (and other proteins) which are large molecules capable of accelerating or decelerating chemical reactions, and thus, of being used as control agents for metabolic functions. This catalytic function of enzymes may be described as the ability to force systems of molecules to switch from one stable state (called an attractor)

to another. But as is well known in contemporary thermodynamics, it is the flow of energy through a system that creates the stable states in the first place.

Catalysts without a flow of matter-energy are powerless. In order to perform their magic, genes and their control products depend on the flow of biomass through the food webs that characterize ecosystems. A bird's territory is as much a genetic and memetic structure, as it is an energetic and material one, and so are our homes. Not only were they always connected to food webs via markets, the first other public connection that they established was with sewers, that is, the same nutritional flow from the other side. True, it was later traversed mostly by informational flows, telephone, radio, t.v., and networked computers, but as before, these flows of catalysts can only perform their magic on energetic materials capable of self-organization. We tend to forget not only the flow of food but also the flow of electricity into our homes, as well as the electric and hormonal flows in our bodies which play such crucial role in the 'feeling of home'. And we tend to talk of the 'information age' without realizing that the future is as much about energy and materials as it is about information. The common dependency on matter-energy between territories and homes is, I believe, another respect in which they are alike beyond metaphor.

Biological metaphors have been used in the past, many times with terrible results. For example, positivist philosophers in the 19th. century compared cities and organisms and concluded that both have homeostatic mechanisms to keep them in internal harmony. This embodied a very romantic view of both nature and society, which disregarded friction, conflict and other nonlinearities that make simple self-regulation impossible. Today, nonlinear models are more sophisticated than that, and more importantly, have revealed that the friction exorcised from those romanticized views is essential to the self-organization of meshworks. A similar point applies to 'invisible hand' economics, where perfect rationality and perfect competition are supposed to benefit society automatically. Nonlinear simulations of market formation include not only bounded rationality, that is, a realistic limited degree of problem-solving skills, but also delays, bottlenecks and other sources of friction which are also key to their self-organization.

Thus, we have learned to draw better analogies and to discover more realistic metaphors. But the question now is, are they still mere metaphors? The answer to this is that some are and some are not and the ones that are not give us a good idea of how to get rid of metaphors

altogether. For example, when we compare genes, memes, norms and routines we are not, I believe, thinking metaphorically any longer. What we are saying is that, any replicator which is coupled to a sorting device (a selection pressure of any kind) results in a kind of ‘probing head’ capable of exploring a virtual space of possible forms. These forms may be animal bodies, bird songs, human languages or urban institutions, but all are evolved through a blind probing and groping in the space of possibilities. In a way, coupling a replicator and a sorting device results in a ‘virtual searching device’ which may be incarnated in different material and energetic physical supports. This abstract ‘probing head’ has in fact been incarnated in computer software: the famous ‘genetic algorithm’, which can be used to breed other software programs. Genetic algorithms, for example, are used to implement some of the non-homunculi modules of behavioral AI.

Let me use another example to illustrate this crucial point. When we say, as Marxists used to say, that ‘class struggle is the motor of history’ we are using the word ‘motor’ in a metaphorical sense. But when we say that a hurricane is a steam motor we are not: we are saying that it embodies the same engineering diagram as a steam motor, that is, that it runs on a reservoir of heat, that it operates through thermal differences, and that it runs matter and energy through a Carnot cycle. Thus, the difference between metaphorical and literal uses of a term consists sometimes in the difference between embodying a purely linguistic analogy and an engineering working diagram. The comparison of genes and memes or norms is clearly a diagrammatic (not a linguistic) one: all three embody an abstract searching device. What about comparing human homes and bird territories? Are there abstract machines behind the formation of meshworks and hierarchies that would allow us to make the comparison in a diagrammatic way?

As a matter of fact I believe there are, although a discussion of them would take me into areas hardly related to our theme here. All I can say now is that it is one and the same process (or rather different processes embodying the same abstract machine) which results in entities as different as human hierarchies, the bodies of animal species and even sedimentary rocks, all of which are structures in which homogenous elements are articulated together.

Similarly, markets, ecosystems and even igneous rocks are all structures where heterogeneous elements are linked together without imposing uniformity over them. As it is clear from the history of AI, that

is, from the domination of hierarchical symbolic thinking and the obstacles which connectionism found to become a legitimate branch of cognitive science, humanity finds it much easier to think in terms of articulated homogeneities rather than articulated heterogeneities. But it is the latter, I believe, that hold the secret for a better future. Perhaps we can learn from birds, and why not even rocks, the secrets of non-homogenous thinking.

### **Note**

<sup>1</sup> *Editor's note:* This paper was first delivered at the *Doors of Perception 2 @HOME* Conference, 4-6 November 1994.





# A Social Topology of Control: The Labour to Consume **Jon Rubin**

“All history does is to translate a coexistence of becomings into a succession.” *A Thousand Plateaus (ATP)* 430

“But in order to give positive meaning to the idea of a ‘presentiment’ of what does not yet exist, it is necessary to demonstrate that what does not yet exist is already in action, in a different form than that of its existence.” *ATP* 431

“We define social formations by *machinic processes* and not by modes of production (these on the contrary depend on the processes) ... But precisely because these processes are variables of coexistence that are the object of a social topology, the various corresponding formations are coexistent.” *ATP* 435

These three propositions define both the problematic and to some extent the solution for this paper. It becomes impossible to privilege any sphere, even “the economic” as *the* (only) driving force of history. Nor is it any longer possible to write history (if by writing history we aim to produce a linear succession of events, with an equally linear sense of causation) with a straight face. Deleuze and Guattari’s formulations leave a whole new problematic that they call social topology that whilst it may seem to be attempting to redescribe the phenomena that were previously the province of history, works with very different tools.

This article will be attempting to sketch out a social topology. Its aims will be threefold: Firstly: to show how, by describing the abstract machine that dominated/defined the nineteenth century it is possible to see how the succeeding machine was indeed already in existence, but “in a different form.” Secondly: to describe a path by which this “succession” of one abstract machine by another can be described without any recourse to any kind of dialectical determinism, economic or otherwise. Thirdly: to show in what ways this new machine functions.

## From Discipline to Control

There are three homologous ways of describing the difference between 19<sup>th</sup> century capitalism and 20<sup>th</sup> century capitalism. This difference is normally described in terms of a shift of the dominant problematic from one of supply in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to one of demand in the 20<sup>th</sup> century; a shift from classical to Keynesian economics, or a shift from Labourer to Consumer.

If one accepts Deleuze and Guattari's alternative formulations then this kind of description is no longer possible. In *Apparatus of Capture* one of their many targets is the conception of some kind of "social evolutionism." Although they limit their critique to the movement from non-State to State apparatuses, it is clear that it is not limited to this particular problem but also applies equally strongly to all other so-called economic or social shifts including those within capitalism itself. This means that the kind of simplistic, reductionist linear narrative whereby capitalism's first problem is one of increasing productivity, then once markets begin to be saturated, the problem becomes one of increasing demand, is no longer tenable *and neither is any other kind of linear narrative that depends, however remotely, on this schemata.*

"[T]he ideal project of these environments of enclosure: . . . to concentrate; to distribute in space; to order in time; to compose a productive force within the dimension of space-time whose effect will be greater than the sum of its component forces. But what Foucault recognized as well was the transience of this model."

### *Postscripts*

What Deleuze points to here is that one of Foucault's projects in *Discipline and Punish* was to describe the building of the disciplinary abstract machine upon which capitalism's expansion of production was dependent. The expansion of demand is an *emergent* phenomenon coming as it does from the confluence of a multitude of new assemblages resulting from crossed thresholds (i.e. the solution of problems) which are the *details* of *Discipline and Punish*. If therefore we have a new phenomenon: the expansion of demand (consumption is also an emergent phenomenon), then we must look for a new abstract machine and this is what Deleuze outlines in *Postscripts*: a new abstract machine of control, 3Ci (command-control-communication-intelligence). This particular symbolic formulation

is from Virilio's *War and Cinema*, (Haraway describes the same machine as C<sup>3</sup>I in *A Cyborg Manifesto*). 3Ci is an appropriate symbol for the new abstract machine of control for several reasons. Firstly, as I discuss later in this paper, its emergence is directly traceable to the crossing of a threshold by the British imperial war machine. Secondly, 3Ci is very different from the Panopticon in that it is not reducible to an architecturally inspired diagram. 3Ci does not differentiate between an "inside" and an "outside" that is a necessary feature of any architecture. 3Ci attempts to organize bodies with complete indifference to their location. The Panopticon identifies people by where they are. If you are in school, then you are a component of the teacher-child assemblage; if you are in a factory then you are a component of the labourer-overseer assemblage, etc. This is not how 3Ci operates. All identities of enclosure have become increasingly over-coded by identities of consumption. The Panopticon was a regime of subjection. 3Ci is a regime of enslavement, although the Imperial transcendent unity has been replaced by an immanent axiomatic<sup>1</sup> (see the last section for an example of the different axioms in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> and twentieth century capitalism). Bodies are produced as components of information processing assemblages and as data to be processed.

After sketching out a "then and now" there are two initial problems. The first is how to avoid reducing "a coexistence of becomings into a succession", i.e. how to avoid creating a not so very new narrative which instead of describing the evolution of supply orientated capitalism into demand orientated capitalism now describes the evolution of the disciplinary machine into the abstract machine of control. The second problem, which is in part a solution to the first, is how to isolate and describe the apparatuses which co-existed with(in) the disciplinary abstract machine which now form the abstract machine of control.

One way of analysing the disciplinary machine has been in terms of a circuit of discipline  $\longleftrightarrow$  resistance. These are not oppositional terms but mark out two poles between which bodies circulate.<sup>2</sup> The two poles mark out not just discipline and resistance apparatuses but also *prevention*  $\longleftrightarrow$  *anticipation* assemblages. What the disciplinary machine wards off is none other than the abstract machine of control. *The assemblages that function as means of resistance to the disciplinary machine become the assemblages that make up the abstract machine of control.* The discipline  $\longleftrightarrow$  resistance poles also function as, and therefore are, anticipation  $\longleftrightarrow$  prevention mechanisms:

<u>prevention</u>	$\longleftrightarrow$	<u>anticipation</u>
discipline		resistance

The Panopticon attempted to limit the scope for resistance (prevention) but it was the apparatuses of resistance that were to form the next abstract machine (anticipation), i.e. it was the attempt to limit the efficacy of the resistance apparatuses that now form the abstract machine of control that was the anticipation  $\longleftrightarrow$  prevention mechanism of the disciplinary abstract machine. It is this feature that allows one to agree with Deleuze and Guattari that all there ever is is a “co-existence of becomings.”

Another way of characterising the discipline  $\longleftrightarrow$  resistance circuit is by describing the set of order words characteristic of the disciplinary pole and the set of passwords characteristic of resistance to discipline.<sup>3</sup>

One characteristic of disciplinary societies is its organization of space.

“The different internments of spaces of enclosure through which the individual passes are independent variables: each time one is supposed to start from zero, and although a common language for all these places exists, it is analogical.” *Postscripts*

Although one abstract machine, the Panopticon,<sup>4</sup> organized the different spaces of enclosure, the similarity of organization is analogous. This is tied to a set of incorporeal transformations of the bodies within these spaces. First you are a child, then a worker, maybe a convict or an invalid. It is the set of watch-words governing bodies within these spaces and the incorporeal transformations necessary to move from one space to another that determine a disciplinary society.<sup>5</sup>

Resistance to the disciplinary machine came with the utilization of *pass-words*. Because the Panopticon attempted to organize bodies in space by means of making them perfectly visible there were (at least) two methods of resistance utilised against this tendency. The first was to create spaces within the enclosures (the school, the factory, the prison) that were unseen. What this means is that the Panopticon always operated as an “ideal type” - abstract machines are always found in concrete mixes - skewed by the resistance to its vision. The second was to create alternative spaces outside of disciplinary spaces. At an *abstract* level these two spaces are the same since both are organized by resistance to the

Panopticon. Whether actually inside a factory or outside of it, they both operated to create spaces that were outside of the Panopticon.

The early history of British trades unionism was one of suppression, sometimes through legal means, sometimes through pressure from bosses. This constant repression meant that membership of a union, even when they were legal was inherently risky. Membership often had to be *secret*, *invisible*. As with membership in a lodge, entry was governed by *passwords*, only those who possessed the right word were allowed in. It was this ability to communicate, to organize, to permit or refuse entry, based on the possession of *information* that was a key component of the resistance assemblage in disciplinary societies. It was the *ability* to communicate unseen, independent of an all-seeing vision that became the *necessity*, the main component, of the succeeding abstract machine of control.

The abstract machine of control did not “evolve” from the disciplinary machine even if evolution is only taken to mean descended from. Most social evolutionary theories do indeed only involve descent,<sup>6</sup> which removes from evolutionary theory its most important component, namely selection through competition driven by scarcity. There is no sense in which the anticipation  $\longleftrightarrow$  prevention poles *compete*, nor does scarcity have any sense in this kind of context. *Contagion*, the co-existence of becomings, the “arrival from without”- not filiation, or succession in any form is the rule governing social change. If anticipation  $\longleftrightarrow$  prevention poles are to have any meaning then they must work! Which means that change *must* come from without. Anticipation  $\longleftrightarrow$  prevention cannot be reconciled with dialectics.

### “Nothing Ever Died of a Contradiction”

This thought is at the heart of Deleuze and Guattari’s attack on dialectical accounts of history. It is not problems that cause social changes, but solutions. Problems mark out only limits, whereas a solution marks a crossed threshold. A solution is never *the* solution and it is this contingency of the threshold in respect to the limit that undoes any necessary account of history.

From this brief pre-amble it should come as no shock that it was not the inherent problems and limitations of the Panopticon as a machine of

organization that were to cause its demise but rather the contingent solution to a problem encountered outside of the Panoptic State.

The difference between a limit as marking out a problem and a threshold as marking out not just a solution, but also the entry into a new assemblage can be demonstrated by the consideration of two different military assemblages stemming from one innovation. The conoidal bullet was to create two radically different military assemblages: one of which never functioned as anything other than a limit, a problem; the other marked out a threshold that when crossed ended the Panopticon.

The first assemblage arrived with the American Civil War: the machine gun-trench assemblage. Trenches might seem to mark a break from the Panoptic method of organizing armies but in truth, as Virilio (*Speed and Politics*) points out, the ideal of infantry squares confronting each other whilst surveyed from on high by the generals rarely held as often as Foucault might lead one to think. As soon as Napoleon invaded Russia and the front spread over hundreds of miles, it is clear that the ideal of one all-controlling gaze is not being adhered to. Yet both the dispersal of armies and their entrenchment did not change the ideal of the military engagement. This ideal was to reach its bloody apotheosis at the Somme where “perfectly” regimented lines marched into bullets. Machine gun casualties and battle field dispersal mark only problems or limits for the Panoptic abstract machine: although they would prove to be incredibly expensive in terms of casualties, wars could still be won.

### **Invisible Foes, Invisible Friends**

“A young English officer asked [during the second Boer war] what Boers looked like replied, ‘Can’t say ... been fighting ’em for six months but haven’t seen one yet.’” *Victoria’s Enemies* p. 56

During Victoria’s reign the British army fought in more than 400 pitched battles in over 60 campaigns. They lost only one of these wars: the first Boer War of 1880. It was not a particularly intensive war, compared to the campaigns in Northern Africa, Afghanistan, or India, but still the British lost. Casualties were almost as one-sided in the Boer’s favour as they normally were for the British.

“[A] Boer commando unit ambushed a small detachment of white-helmeted British redcoats, marching behind their band across the open veld. The Regular’s volleys of rifle fire that invariably blasted natives from their path had little effect at long range *against concealed Boer marksman* who brought down 155 out of 259 men in ten minutes ...” [my emphasis] *Victoria’s Enemies* p. 48

As an irregular army (“a bunch of farmers”) they wore no uniforms but their normal hunting clothes - the Boers were experts at killing with a minimal chance of being killed, something that stood in complete contrast to the British way of fighting. Concealment and marksmanship: the rifle-connoidal bullet + camouflage<sup>7</sup> meant that long range killing was possible without retaliation.<sup>8</sup> It was not the casualties that were to force a change of uniform but the lack of reciprocity of casualties that camouflaged snipers created. It was not that the British casualties were so high, but that the Boer’s were so low that forced the abolition of the redcoat as a field uniform.

“The Afrikaner states formed the purest kind of the nation-in-arms.”  
*Military Aspects of the War* p. 68

A distinction needs to be made between the Boers, who were sedentary farmers and the Boer war machine. The Boers were not nomads but whilst fighting the British, their war machine displayed nomadic traits. It was their incapability of separating the two (the indirect Boer civilian casualties were much higher than the casualties suffered in the field) that was to contribute to their defeat: they remained a “*nation-in-arms*.” It was the incursion *from outside* of the British State that was to cause the shift from the disciplinary machine to the abstract machine of control. (“We see the flash of the war machine, arriving from without” *ATP* 353) It was the encounter with a new war machine, one that was *outside* of the British State that was to begin the construction of the abstract machine of control.

The first Boer War was the last war in which a regiment’s colours were carried into battle. In 1896, three years before the start of the second Boer War the traditional redcoat uniform was abolished and khakis introduced.<sup>9</sup> It is hard to know how to describe the change to a camouflaged uniform given that in some respects it was to have little effect in the way the British army was to fight the second Boer war. It would be more accurate to say not that Khaki clad soldiers cannot be organized

Panoptically, but rather that *invisible* soldiers cannot be so organized. The British campaign took little advantage of their new uniforms. In fact their campaign after 1900 can be seen only as a reaction against the Boer's invisibility. It is only possible to be invisible in smooth space such as the veldt. The British response to their inability to bring the Boer's to regular engagement was a process of massive striation by means of the blockhouse system where they attempted, successfully enough, to cover the entirety of the veldt with outposts so that the Boer's could not move undetected.

None of this is trying to produce some kind of *Hey Presto* social theory, whereby the abstract machine of control springs into shape fully formed and operational. What is needed is some kind of new conception of genealogy that takes into account Deleuze and Guattari's brutal one-line dismissal of history. It is better not to say that the introduction of camouflage *ended* the disciplinary machine but rather that it marked the beginning of the construction of the abstract machine of control. Abstract machines are *machines* and as such take time both to dismantle and to build. In the building of the abstract machine of control each component needs to be accounted for.

It may seem odd that this uniform change was to mark the beginning of the end of Panoptic organization. Yet the change to khaki marks the crossing, however reluctantly, of a threshold. A new organizational principle needed to be appropriated from somewhere. A camouflaged soldier is a soldier that is not meant to be seen; if effective, *is not seen*. What camouflage creates is the new space in which a commander's soldiers *are not meant to be seen*. Camouflage in its introduction is more significant than the conoidal bullet. The rifled bullet created "merely" a problem for armies: victories were from now on going to be incredibly expensive in terms of manpower. The machine gun operated as a limit, not a threshold to how warfare could be conducted. Camouflage on the other hand is not the introduction of a problem but a solution - the putting into place of a whole new assemblage. It was not the killing power of the rifle that created the first change to warfare but the inability of organizing men Panoptically that opened a new smooth space for war. A new axiom comes into play: *invisible soldiers cannot be organized Panoptically*.



### Advertising: the Continuance of Sales by Other Means

The introduction of khaki uniforms marked the beginning of the construction of the abstract machine of control. How, though, do we get from khaki uniforms to adverts? Why, just because the disciplinary machine organized the increase in the productive capacity of docile bodies (i.e. the production of production), should the abstract machine of control organize the production of demand? Why, and this is really the same question, do we go from the Labourer to the Consumer? However, to ask these questions is to totally misunderstand the phenomenon of emergence.

The disciplinary abstract machine and the abstract machine of control utilise different regimes of signs. A regime of signs is not produced by an abstract machine but their relative mixtures, which regime of signs is dominant, is determined by the abstract machine. The disciplinary machine determined that a representational-signifying regime was dominant in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The abstract machine of control utilises an affective-simulational regime of signs. It is this change in the make-up of the mixture of regime of signs that *allows for* the advert-Consumer assemblage as an emergent phenomenon. Additionally the abstract machine of control does not differentiate between spaces, nor time in the way that the disciplinary machine did. The abstract machine of control *allows for* the phenomenon of perpetual uninterrupted control/sumption and sees no difference between work and leisure.<sup>10</sup> We are all always consuming or producing demand. It is this (and others) collision of virtualities that is actualised as the consumer society.

Within traditional explanatory schemes, the shift from production to consumption is a phenomena that appears inexplicable, or unnoticeable (there is not much difference). This is because traditional Marxist formulations see consumption as the Other of production. But nothing lies outside of production. Consumption is always a problem of *the production of consumption*. The formula of delayed gratification, which was Weber's contribution to a theory of the birth of capitalism, is nothing other than a sketch of a topology of desire. Desire moved within a circuit of the production of production.<sup>11</sup> Desire knows nothing (of utility or need). If the phenomenon of the Consumer requires an explanation then it must be within the terms of a different topology. A different "spirit" - souls are bodies too. Delay gratification, this is an *axiom*<sup>12</sup> - gratification will be delayed. As such it was an integral part of capital's organization of the decoded flow of labour. With the consumer, this axiom has not become

redundant nor has it been simply reversed as it is part of a nest of axioms organizing credit and debt that control consumption.

Although it is now apparent in Western societies that consumption has *nothing* to do with need or utility (a bigger, faster car to move nowhere in a traffic jam) the realization that consumption has therefore *never* been driven by need or utility seems a long way off. Just as the Labourer marked out one topology of desire, so the Consumer marks out a different one.

“Advertis[ing], in its modern and proper meaning, originated with the massive breakthrough around the turn of the century of consumer society and its huge markets for consumer goods ... The step from *announcement* to *advertisement* came with the recognition that making the product known to people formed an integral part of sales; or, to paraphrase Clausewitz, when this was recognised as a continuation of sales by other means.” *The Genealogy of Advertising* p. 85

Advertising did not truly exist before the twentieth century and the phenomena that we might otherwise mistake for advertising were only announcements. How are we to interpret such a claim? It is not that I disagree with it, I was delighted to find someone making such a distinction, one that I had not thought of. The announcement exists only to channel an already existing desire, i.e. it does not *produce* a demand, it channels a pre-existing demand, whilst the advertisement produces demand. If advertising did not exist before the twentieth century this can only be because neither did consumption;<sup>13</sup> this merely repeats the formula that advertising is the production of consumption. The production of consumption is a purely machinic process. A process that routes desire into consumption circuits of which adverts are the relays. Clearly we can reject the anthropomorphic assumption that the creation of advertising was caused by a “recognition”, rather it should be said that the production of advertising is a result of the building of a new machine. Advertising is a new component; one that is made possible only by the deterritorialization of desire out of the production of production and its reterritorialization onto the production of consumption. This is the first half of an argument against representation being a useful concept in the analysis of advertising and therefore a demonstration that advertising is part of an affective-simulational regime of signs. The second is a gift from Spinoza:

“we do not endeavour, will, seek after or desire because we judge a thing to be good. On the contrary, we judge a thing to be good because we endeavour, will, seek after and desire it.” *Ethics* (III S9)

No other quote could better describe the inhuman and immanent nature of desire. What this means is that conceptions of good, or utility as the motor of motivation are totally topsy-turvy. “The good” = “the snark” for theories of motivation, always just out of reach and totally fantastic. Good has no explanatory power for motivation.

What this means is that an advert cannot work by representing something as good, so that we will desire it. So when an advert gets us to buy something it is not, cannot be, because we believed it to be good. On the contrary it is only after we have bought something that we will then justify the purchase.<sup>14</sup>

“The precondition for the birth of modern advertising . . . was the expansion of consumer goods markets as well as the formation of a specific mode of information, in which entertainment and more generally, the ‘spectacular’ was to assume an important role . . . mass culture transformed experiences into marketable products and advertising turned marketable products into . . . experiences again. In other words, the consumption of experiences and the experience of consumption . . . have been interlinked from the very outset.” *The Genealogy of Advertising* p. 100

Like much else of Falk’s this would be basically correct, if it were turned on its head. Therefore :

1. The precondition for the birth of the Consumer was the construction of the abstract machine of control of which various advertising assemblages were/are inextricably linked, i.e. the production of the Consumer logically precedes the possibility of the expansion of demand

2. The formation of a specific mode of information: what this recognises is that the particular regime of signs utilised by the Panoptic system of organization is superseded by a new regime where affect is more important than signification.

The Panopticon formed a specific milieu of interiority:

form of content	prison/Panopticon
substance of content	carceral bodies
form of expression	delinquency
substance of expression	laws, newspaper articles, belief in rise of crime

As a different abstract machine 3Ci produces a different milieu, a new strata:

form of content	commodity relationship, 3Ci
substance of content	consumers
form of expression	advert as affective relay
substance of expression	spectacle, not announcement

The regime of signs expressed by the abstract machine of control is *spectacular*, not *significant*. Its function is not to produce meaning but to produce consumption. It is affective-simulational not signifying-representational. Debord wrote of the Society of the Spectacle as an essentially representative phenomenon;<sup>15</sup> the Spectacle is a representation. But (following Baudrillard) representation is a second-order simulation so Spectacle cannot be representative which is why I have appropriated it as an *affective* process. But 3Ci is still a machine of organization. This point needs making because Baudrillard seems to write as though with the end of the dominance of the Panopticon, “the masses” were free from organization. *In the Shadow of the Silent Majorities* analyses the negative effects of the end of the disciplinary regime, the end of the social and sociology, the end of the political, the end of representation. But the reality of all these “ends” does not translate into the end of organization - the end of the acceptance of representation as a useful analytical tool which is superseded by simulation merely marks a new means of organization, not the end of organization itself. Deleuze, too, notes the end of the usefulness of the opposition mass/individual but actually examines the new method of organization:

“In the societies of control, on the other hand, what is important is no longer either a signature or a number, but a code: the code is a password ... The numerical language of control is made of codes

that mark access to information, or reject it. We no longer find ourselves dealing with the mass/individual pair. Individuals have become ‘dividuals,’ and masses, samples, data, markets, or ‘banks.’” *Postscripts*

The signature on a cheque is totally different from the signature on a credit card. A cheque promises that the money is there, a credit card says only that the money will be - probably - and it is this probability that marks the biggest difference. A cheque is a marker of individuality whereas a credit card is absolutely statistical. Credit cards are not given on an *individual* basis (in the way, a cheque-book historically was) but a purely *dividual* i.e. statistical basis. A credit history is only the input-data of a statistical simulation of credit worthiness. “I am credit worthy,” is not a representation but a pass-word into consumption.

Once, an overseer was something that was hated because he was there to ensure that people worked. Now “we” no longer want someone peering over our shoulder, not so that we can cease to work so hard but so that (with breathtaking sincerity) we can *work harder*. Clearly something has gone seriously wrong.

“I am not a number. I am a human being.” This forlorn cry from the TV series *The Prisoner* is a late hang-over from the Panopticon but a modernised, “I am not a code. I am a human being,” would be just as pointless. As Deleuze and Guattari note, we have the privilege of undergoing both subjection and enslavement. As we ricochet between numbered subjection and coded enslavement do not look for either of these regimes to be destroyed by an appeal to humanity - *they are what makes us human*. We are always human, all too human, *that* is the problem. “[L]iberation is never *of* the human, but only *from* it.”<sup>16</sup> Is this the solution?

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> See *ATP* pp. 456-459 for a full treatment of the distinction between subjection and enslavement.

<sup>2</sup> It is the existence of this circuit, or resonance between poles that may have led many writers to believe in the impossibility of resistance uncontaminated by complicity with control.

<sup>3</sup> Deleuze's discussion of the mot-d'ordre is scattered although his fullest elaboration comes in *Postulates of Linguistics* with Guattari. This scattering is not helped by the various translations of mot-d'ordre including order-word, watch-word and percept. When discussing them in general I will use the term order-word. When discussing the particular set or regime of order-words produced by the disciplinary machine I will use the term watch-word. When discussing the regime of order-words that resisted watch-words that were later to form the organization of the abstract machine of control, I will use the term pass-word. This last use does run against its use in the last part of *Postulates of Linguistics* but too bad.

<sup>4</sup> *Disclaimer*: this note will be I hope more preventative than informative. "It is not a new idea that any given era can be understood as structured by a specific dominant logic" *The Return of Dionysus* p. 21. This not-new-idea is one that I utterly disagree with for two main reasons. It is totally misleading to (1) suggest that an era has either structure(s) or (2) that they possess a *logic*. Abstract machines do not have a *structure* nor do they possess a *logic*. So any appearances that this article might affirm this not-new-idea are just that: appearances. This paper does trace only one pathway from one particular machine to another but this is a limitation of space and ability - it is in no way meant to suggest that the Panopticon was the only machine operating in the eighteenth or nineteenth century nor that discipline  $\iff$  resistance was the only circuit. Such a belief would run completely contrary to Deleuze and Guattari's analyses of various co-becoming abstract machines in *ATP* or to Foucault's conception of *microphysiscal* analyses of power and the differences between Panoptic forms of power and biopower (which in certain ways is similar to the abstract machine of control). There is never just one plan(e) of organization nor is there ever just one creative line of flight.

<sup>5</sup> The Panopticon is not the only feature of disciplinary societies. Also important are the methods of normalisation and hierarchisation that Foucault describes in *Discipline and Punish*. It seems clear that these micro-assemblages have not ceased to function in Societies of Control, whereas, as Deleuze claims, "We are in a generalised crisis in relation to all the environments of enclosure" *Postscripts* i.e. Panoptic assemblages.

<sup>6</sup> Though not meme-theory; though this is itself a seriously flawed theory.

<sup>7</sup> The Boers used smokeless gunpowder, so that there was no smoke to give away their positions.

<sup>8</sup> The effects of snipers continued beyond the abolition of the redcoat after the first Boer War: “After 1900 [during the second Boer War] the Royal Fusiliers relived officers of their swords and provided them with rifles and bayonets ‘so as not to distinguish them from the men’. Such measures to make officers ‘look like the men’ did not, of course, constitute a sudden desire by the army to democratize its relationships. The motive was the more pragmatic one of attempting to reduce the high mortality rate among officers who were becoming the favourite targets of Boer sharpshooters.” William Nasson “Tommy Atkins in South Africa” p. 127.

<sup>9</sup> Khaki is an Urdu word meaning sandy or dusky.

<sup>10</sup> Try not to consume at work: don’t eat, don’t drink, and take off those designer labels.

<sup>11</sup> Theories which use choice, need or utility remain unable to account for phenomena which deny the necessary utility of *any* product including the so-called necessities of food and shelter.

“The mouth of the anorexic wavers between several functions: its possessor is uncertain as to whether it is an eating-machine, an anal machine [bulimia?], a talking-machine, or a breathing machine (asthma attacks).” *Anti-Oedipus* p. 1

<sup>12</sup> Obviously this process was not controlled by just one axiom, I am merely picking out the best known.

<sup>13</sup> Consumption is only one form of expenditure. Consumption is opposed to utilisation (where consumption is a phenomena of the production of demand).

<sup>14</sup> This is born out by studies of “impulse-buying”, where the justificatory rationale for the purchase is always post-hoc. But what these studies disguise is that all buying is “impulse-buying”, i.e. it is driven by desire not by need or lack.

<sup>15</sup> Although Debord writes of the Spectacle as “not a collection of images, but a relation among people, mediated by images” *Society of the Spectacle* par. 4, this is wrong on two counts. Firstly there is no relation as this implies a stability of “something” that does not exist and secondly there is no mediation - affects are not mediated, nor are they tied to images. It is this stress on mediation and image that makes Debord’s conception of the Spectacle essentially representative.

<sup>16</sup> *First and Last Emperors* p. 167

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Metamorphics:  
Pragmatics and Production in *A Thousand Plateaus*  
**Justin Barton**

... we have no system, only lines and movements

‘Of the Refrain’, *A Thousand Plateaus*<sup>1</sup>

A transcendental philosophy of forces is something that you ‘stumble into’, in the sense of stumbling into the space beyond a doorway, where you thought there was a wall. Kant stumbled into what Deleuze, in talking about his work, calls the ‘prodigious domain of the transcendental’<sup>2</sup> - in this sense of a transcendental philosophy of forces, or of *production* - and very much to his credit he explored it in a sustained way through the *Third Critique*, despite the fact that he was simultaneously trying to find ways of re-closing the door that he had somehow opened. On the far side of the ‘slip’ into this way of thinking the world of matter is no longer as substantial (although it is immensely more intricate) and the world of the transcendental is now part of the world of matter (or of forces). Matter has become a shifting wave-front consisting of endlessly varied *relational bodies, or zones of production* (Deleuze and Guattari would call these abstract machines, becomings, stratifications, haecceities...), and the pragmatics of a transcendental philosophy of forces has precisely become one of these relational bodies. What was supposed to be the ground (or the non-ground) has turned out to be the surface as well. The abyss turns itself inside out. The unifying subject that Kant tried to invoke to shore up the ‘gap’ turns out to be in connection only with a suppressive zone of production which is ‘alongside’ the creativity of multiplicities (the move from unity to multiplicity; from identity to schizophrenia, in the non-pathological sense of a composition or production made up of different elements), and the world of areas studied by conventional empirical work turns out to be a field that is sliding and slipping on the field of zones of production (Nietzsche calls this ‘the Will to Power’, Deleuze and Guattari tend to call it ‘the Body without Organs, and Bergson was working in this direction with the idea of ‘Duration’). In turn, there is a splitting in two of the field of engagements that has been referred to in terms of ‘thought’. It

is a split, on the one hand, into a zone of modes of analysis that weave a web of connections that gets in the way of ‘becoming-active’, and, on the other, a field of modes of engagement that intensify action - that in fact, *are* an intensification of action. These are all ways of getting at the idea of a transcendental philosophy of forces. But this idea is of something which is one ‘side’ of an engagement, so that there is no question of a definition that treats a philosophy of production as separate *from* production. The key idea to be taken from this opening summary, and to be used for the purposes of beginning to engage with this field through the two volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, is the idea that the field of Deleuze and Guattari’s strategies in these books (which they give several names, *pragmatics* being one of them) is itself to be conceived in detail in terms of production.

The two initial questions therefore are the questions of *zones of production* and of *pragmatics*. As has been said, the questions are immanently related. The world for Deleuze and Guattari is a field of zones of production, where a zone of production is always to be thought of *as a line or web of engagement stretched between two or more component fields*. A process of co-transformation between two species is a zone of production, as is the relation of engagement between a field of chemistry and a field of chemical materials. And in turn, to repeat, a philosophical pragmatics is itself a zone of production. This means that it is impossible to talk about what Deleuze and Guattari mean by pragmatics through analysing a field of methodological elements, in that this is to deal with only one ‘pole’ or ‘element’ of a zone of production. This is not a trivial point. To lay out the elements of Deleuze and Guattari’s pragmatics is to lay out a field of real or immanent connections between elements of their work and a field composed of assemblages, abstract machines, deterritorializations ... (what is meant by these terms will be explained in the course of this paper). The question of their pragmatics is simultaneously a matter of epistemology and ontology.

The idea of a zone of production can be connected to the idea of a *faculty*, in that ‘faculty’ can be seen as a term for an element of one kind of zone of production. The German word for faculty is *kraft*, which carries the sense of ‘a power’, as in a power of acting. What needs to be connected up with this idea is, in each case, the field of processes and differences which forces this power into action in the first place, and subsequently drives it over thresholds (and which in turn can come to be

‘trans-figured’ by the functioning of the faculty-element). For example, the faculty of hearing pertaining to animals is a relation between elements of the world (bodies and waves passing through the air) and organs of hearing. When a transformation takes place here, with a species (say with the emergence of ‘sonar’ hearing with the bat species) there has been an incursion on the part of the other element of the zone of production. When a baby’s brain encounters the field of processes and differences of music this field is one ‘half’ of the zone of production that has the baby’s emergent faculty of music as its other side, and later, if the baby becomes a composer, the points of emergence in the faculty will be the points when the composer has been ‘struck’ by some element of the field they are connected with as composer (as with the Japanese composer Takimitsu being captivated by the rhythms of a curtain moving in the wind). Again, finally, when a society acquires a faculty or power, say mathematics, it is because elements of this society have been ‘struck’ or captivated, by another field of elements, this field making up the other component of the new ‘machine’ or zone of production, and being initially unquestionably the driving component (it can be asked, but how can the elements of this other field be the driving component if all they do in relation to the mathematicians is just ‘be there’?, but this is the same as asking ‘but how can the sun affect the bodies that encounter it and revolve around it, if it does nothing?’). The term ‘faculty’ therefore should be kept within the field of a mapping that takes up a faculty always as a component of a zone of production. It is not that the idea of faculties is too abstract, and needs to be linked up with concrete, chunky aspects of the world, it is that it is *not abstract enough* (to echo what Deleuze and Guattari say about Chomsky’s linguistics<sup>3</sup>), and needs to be taken over a threshold and made into an aspect of an idea of a kind of zone of production. Instead of this, in any particular case, being an articulation of a faculty with chunky empirical fields, it is an articulation of the faculty with a specific field of processes and differences, or a specific field of *other powers*. As a field of processes and differences - or of powers - the field forming the other component of the zone of production is a field which is paradigmatically *more* abstract than the areas of formed materials with which faculties are normally related. This has been a ladder up to the idea of zones of production, which are ‘machinic’, in that they are fields of production made up of different components, and yet are objects of an empiricism which has had to become a ‘transcendental-empiricism’ to engage with them, in that they, and their components, are powers, such that they are

intensive, rather than being made up of formed, structurally or extensively analysable elements.

It needs to be pointed out that this account of faculties as elements of a kind of zone of production has, of necessity, been dealing with faculties only with reference to that ‘exercise’ or ‘functioning’ of faculties which takes the form of an emergence or transformation. In other words this account has not been dealing with faculties in their ‘prevailing’ or easily analysable mode where they are ‘idling’, between periods of emergence. Take the case of the faculty of sight in a child who has always been blind, but who is operated on to give them sight. There is the initial shock and disturbance of the impinging of the modulations (or real differences) of light-waves - that is to say, the shock of the initiation of the faculty of sight (people to whom this happens report that the experience is intensely disturbing<sup>4</sup>). And then beyond this there are the ‘paradoxical’ points where the faculty passes over thresholds: learning depth perception, learning to see certain kinds of fast and subtle movements (animal movements, or human facial movements); learning to ‘see’ pictures, or to see hidden figures; learning to see subtle gradations of colour and of distribution... Between these stages there are acts of recognition, where the faculty ‘goes through the motions’, in the sense of going through the motions that have already been learned. This functioning of the faculty belongs to the field of the aspect of the exercise of faculties which is properly empirical, or ‘repetitive/structural’. Rather than this form of functioning, it is the ‘emergence’ mode of faculties that is at stake here. This mode, in the case of any faculty, is the faculty’s ‘transcendental form’. The following passage is from *Difference and Repetition*:

The transcendental form of a faculty is indistinguishable from its disjointed, superior or transcendent exercise. Transcendent in no way means that the faculty addresses itself to objects outside the world but, on the contrary, that it grasps that in the world which concerns it exclusively and brings it into the world.<sup>5</sup>

The way in which the idea of faculties is functioning here (that is, as a way of explaining the idea of zones of production) also has another difference from the more usual form of the idea. This lies in the fact that the extension of the term has been widened to include the powers, or ‘faculties’ of societies. If three or four members of a ‘primitive’ society wander off into the hills and happen to discover that horses can be tamed

and ridden, then these three or four people are the initial form of a new faculty of their society - the riding and using of horses. Deleuze, again in *Difference and Repetition*, begins to make the shift toward this idea of faculties, by beginning to take up the idea of faculties such as language<sup>6</sup> - the idea of faculties which would normally be indexed, *anomalously*, somewhere between 'action' and 'thought'. Language is the thin end of the wedge of a field of 'powers', which demand to be mapped in relation to social fields, and in relation to *particular* social fields, such that faculties come to be understood as having a dimension of emergence at the level of societies (or of *assemblages within societies*), as well as at the level of individuals. The question of the transcendental functioning of the faculty of Western classical music at the turn of this century is one which involves a whole field of people on the edge of atonal composition, rather than one particular composer. This shift does not constitute an abandonment of what is at stake in the Kantian project of analysing what he might have called the 'higher powers' of the human mind. On the contrary it arrives at these fields by a different route. In the case, for instance, of 'imagination' there can be no question that this is being left untouched in a process of mapping the zones of production that are the overall fields of artistic and scientific formations (etc.), and of the ways in which, they are in 'becoming' with each other. What seems to be a move to a lower level of abstraction, is again the opposite.

The idea of mapping zones of production has brought the focus of attention back in the direction of the question of pragmatics. What sort of faculty is the pragmatics of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*? The answer has to a certain extent already been set out, but it can now be given in greater depth. Pragmatics in this sense is a faculty in engagement with fields of zones of production, that is, with relational bodies. Which is to say that it is being drawn into action, and is acting back upon, a field of zones of production (which, as has been seen are zones which have to be engaged with transcendently, rather than through conventional empirical strategies). In the first few lines of 'Rhizome' there is the statement "There is no difference between what a book talks about, and how it is made"<sup>7</sup> which, in this context serves to help make the point that the pragmatics of *A Thousand Plateaus* is being drawn into action by the fields with which it is an engagement. The point about the acting back of pragmatics, reciprocally onto the fields it is engaging, can be made by setting out the fact that pragmatics in this sense is a process of transcendental 'delineation' (it would be misleading to call it 'mapping', because

mapping is at one point distinguished from ‘diagramming’ and ‘tracing’<sup>8</sup>), where the intricacies of the processes of delineation function separately and in combination as *guide-lines* to new modes of thought and activity. Furthermore there is a direct reciprocal relation between the zones making up the sides of the zone of production. This transcendental delineation is to be understood as processes of ‘drawing out’ the connections that make up the zones of production, which can for instance, be either creative or inhibited processes (stratifications), or can be emergences or becomings (deterritorializations, abstract machines). Here the term ‘drawing out’ is intended to be neutral in relation to the senses of charting, discovery and creation.

In ‘Rhizome’ Deleuze and Guattari open up a set of equivalences for ‘pragmatics’: “RHIZOMATICS = SCHIZOANALYSIS = STRATOANALYSIS = MICROPOLITICS”.<sup>9</sup> And to focus on just one of these connections, they set out the idea of schizoanalysis, in *Anti-Oedipus*, as a process of drawing out ‘immanent criteria’ for engagement in relation to particular zones:

Analysis termed transcendental is precisely the determination of these criteria, immanent to the field of the unconscious, insofar as they are opposed to the transcendent exercises of a ‘What does it mean?’ Schizoanalysis is at once a transcendental and a materialist analysis.<sup>10</sup>

The ‘immanent criteria’ are the guide-lines that are produced by (as) the process of delineation. The delineation is the drawing out of guide-lines. But a better way of saying this, is that *the guide-lines are being drawn into action* by the zones and networks of zones that make up the other ‘side’ of the transcendental engagement. The guide-lines taking the form, in terms of writing, of inter-meshed zones of uses of terms, of explicit statements of guide-lines (‘postulates’, ‘axioms’), of pictures, of numbers, of diagrams.

The idea of the transcendental is here being brought more deeply into focus. To work transcendently is to be a zone of ruptured, transformed functionings. It is to be the transcendental functioning of a faculty, which is being drawn or forced into action by the zones of processes and differences (singularities, powers, intensities) making up the other side of the relational body. This is the idea of the ‘disjointed’ exercise of a faculty (disjointed as in ‘taken off its hinges’, or as in ‘the



time is out of joint’<sup>11</sup>) which Deleuze was setting out in the passage quoted from *Difference and Repetition*. In the same section he says “Something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but of a fundamental encounter.” He goes on to say “It is not the gods which we encounter: even hidden, the gods are only the forms of recognition. What we encounter are the demons, the sign-bearers: powers of the leap, the interval, the intensive and the instant.”<sup>12</sup> The idea of working in the form of drawing out, or practicing a transcendental philosophy of forces is now being given a sharpened sense through the idea of the dis-jointed, ‘emergence’ functioning of a faculty (its transcendental functioning), rather than the sense just being simply that this drawing out is an immanent engagement with zones of production or relational bodies. It is not surprising that the writing in *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* can seem disjointed or bizarre, or can seem as if it is written by foreigners to the language; or that the writing is a field of anomalous and rare uses of terms, and constructions. In fact, far from it being surprising, this is the only thing that could be happening. It is the same situation (although in different ways) with large parts of the writings of Nietzsche, with *The Ethics*, with much of Kant’s critical work, with *The Waves*, with *Naked Lunch*...

The process of pragmatics is a transcendental *materialism* because it is an engagement with networks or zones of *forces*. The whole field of these zones of forces is what Deleuze and Guattari call the Body without Organs. The whole field, spread through this, of zones of forces that are emergences, or intensifications, is the field which they call the Plane of Consistency. Matter is not entirely what it used to be... The idea of abstract machines can be brought in to take this line of thought further. Abstract machines are elements of the Plane of Consistency - along with other elements, such as deterritorializations (or becomings), and haecceities. Abstract machines can be intricately mutating relational bodies in the form of inhibitory zones of ‘growth’, in that they constrict and block the intensifications or the deterritorializations of all the fields with which they are connected. The ‘regimes of signs’ of ‘subjectivity’ and ‘signification’ are components of two abstract machines. But abstract machines can also be *trans-mutations*; emergences in the strongest sense. Alongside the ‘diseases of the earth’ there are the viral web-zones of intensification which are not transforming inhibitably and therefore only in response to outbreaks of becoming in the fields around them. In Nietzschean terms, alongside the ‘shadows’ there are also the freely

transmutating zones, child-demon ‘wanderers’, self-propelling wheels. An abstract machine has a field of functionings (a Faculty, or Diagram) on one ‘side’ and a field of ‘matters’ (a Phylum) on the other (but it is not really a question of two sides any longer, instead it is more a question of what Spinoza called ‘attributes’). In the case of an abstract machine involving language it is a question of the field of functionings being zones of functionings of language, and the field of ‘matters’ being the field of zones of forces forming the other ‘side’ of the abstract machine: the Diagram and the Phylum. This is a model of any abstract machine of language, but in particular, in this context, it is important that it is the model of a philosophical pragmatics in the field of language, of a transcendental materialism. The following passage from ‘On Several Regimes of Signs’ pushes forward many of these points’:

We define the abstract machine as the aspect or moment at which nothing but functions and matters remain. A diagram has neither substance nor form, neither content nor expression. Substance is a formed matter, and matter is a substance that is unformed either physically or semiotically. [...] A matter-content having only degrees of intensity, resistance, conductivity, heating, stretching, speed, or tardiness; and a function-expression having only ‘tensors’, as in a system of mathematical, or musical, writing. Writing now functions on the same level as the real, and the real materially writes.<sup>13</sup>

As has been said, in the case of a transcendental materialism, it is a question of guide-lines being drawn out, of guide-lines being drawn into action. Which is to say that it is question of whole densely inter-meshed fields of the delineatory production of what Deleuze and Guattari call ‘pass-words’. Guide-lines that draw forward, drawn out on the part of an abstract machine of pragmatics. Matter is not entirely what it used to be, and nor is the subject. There is no subject that uses transcendental materialism (the real materially writes, and we are zones of this process of writing), but there is a neurotic functioning that gets in the way of creativity, and for good reasons this can be called subjectivity.

Who are nomads? Perhaps, they are those who engage with matter in terms of zones of consistency, and in terms of forces. Those for whom engagement with matter is a rigorous pragmatics, and a fluent production.

What is nomadism in relation to philosophy? This is a better, more specific question, and therefore it is more difficult.

The answer is perhaps best given in relation to language, given that philosophy as a zone of production functions through language. Nomadism in relation to philosophy would be the taking of the regular patterns of language as irrelevant, other than as zones for studying inhibitory functionings of social fields ('order-words'), and as 'algorithmic' devices. And secondly, it would be a question of starting with material zones (zones of consistency) in a way where words are not seen as separable from these zones - in a way where individual terms are seen as 'micro-faculties', or to be more specific, as elements of abstract machines. What is the differential field of the term 'diagram'? - what are you in touch with when you encounter the term 'group', or 'mathematics'; or 'dance'; or 'horses'; or 'wolves'; or 'space-time'; or 'music'; or 'dream'; or 'schizophrenia'...? To look at grim examples, what are you in touch with when you encounter the words 'interpretation' and 'subjectivity'? Deleuze and Guattari respond to this last pair of questions by setting out the fact that predominantly you are respectively in touch with the field of language and the field of human bodies, and by saying that these terms are notably connected with these fields as elements of inhibitory regimes of signs - the two neurotic regimes of paranoia and ceaseless analysis, and of obsessive, passional struggling toward fixed goals (there are abstract machines within abstract machines, some abstract machines are transmutational, some are inhibitory). Terms are faculties. When they appear in a generative composition of language, they are not parts of regulatively or normatively constructed blocks of language, but are dropped into place in 'transduced' ways according to immanent factors, so as to function at the end as elements of one plane or constellation of engagements (fixed sequences and fixed functionings are no longer important, it is more a question of juxtapositions, and of repetitions with a difference). In this form ('plateaus'; 'aphorisms') combinations of terms break open complex continua of connections or engagements. And the crucial elements are terms and compositions of terms, without reference to correct patterns of use, or to specific tenses etc.

If language is not a starting-point in a strong sense for nomadic philosophy it is only because words have become immanent to the field of zones of consistency. They have become part of a plane of intensities. What is at stake is the diagramming or plotting of emergences, the drawing out of guide-lines, the marking out of the lines stretched between different

zones in whatever form. The deterritorializations can be in the functioning of groups, can be in movement, in language, in music, in mathematics, in dreams, in writing, in painting... The deterritorializations are always molecular, are always dance.

Plane of intensities. Nomads. Tribes. States. Capitalism. Zones, some with dates, some with names, some with verbs. A space filled with lines, with movements. She arrives, and draws coloured diagrams that shift according to complex rhythms. The rhythms swarm like bees, and her smile is not a legitimate use of a face. The tiny machines that are suddenly everywhere have snake-bodies that stretch into the past, which is now part of the present. In the distance, there are horses.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi (London: Athlone, 1988), p.350.

<sup>2</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. by Paul Patton (London: Athlone, 1994), p.135.

<sup>3</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi (London: Athlone, 1988), p.143.

<sup>4</sup> Oliver Sacks, *An Anthropologist On Mars* (London: Macmillan, 1995), p.134.

<sup>5</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. by Paul Patton (London: Athlone, 1994), p.143.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p.143.

<sup>7</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi (London: Athlone, 1988), p.4.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p.146.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p.22.

<sup>10</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane (London: Athlone, 1984), p.109.

<sup>11</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Kant's Critical Philosophy*, trans. by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (London: Athlone, 1995), p.vii.

<sup>12</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. by Paul Patton (London: Athlone, 1994), p.145.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p.148.

## Mechanomics

### Nick Land

Start in the State (it insists): organicist technospecialism, pedagogic authoritarianism, and territorial sectorization that culminates in mass innumeracy. Irrespective of its configuration as educational crisis, the suppression of popular numbering practices is both result and presupposition of institutionalized mathematics. State-culture - however modern or even postmodern - is modelled upon an ideal despotic voice (Logos). The word from on high drafts the signifying chain, with all its essential features: unique enunciator, semantic interiority, consecutive signs, formally anticipated conclusion, global application, and interpretative redundancy. When the entropic semiology of senescent States multiplies enunciation, referentially displaces interiority, remarks graphic spatiality, localizes applicability, and infinitizes interpretation, it does so under the sign of an unperturbed ineffable Logos; confirmed all the more crushingly by discursive specialism, rigid professional accreditation, allusive criteriology, and linguistic fetishism, as also by the contemptuous mockery of an autopiloted megapower, now crystallized into exact science.

Numeracy affines to an irreducible popularity which no literacy - however global - can approach. Numbering practices emerge spontaneously within any population that becomes an effective multitude. Games, music, money, and time-marking practices<sup>1</sup> all betray the contagious influence of a primary numerical element. Calculation mobilizes a thinking that is directly and effectively exterior, indexing the machinic dispersion or anorganic distribution of the number. No sooner in the head than on fingers and pebbles, counting always happens on the outside. A population is already a number, mixed into irreducible hybrids by counting techniques and apparatus (counting-board, abacus, currency tokens, and calendric devices). Even when socially depotentiated by sedentary societies number, evidences a residual affinity with concurrence, asymmetry, and immanent criteria. A mechanically repotentiated numerical culture coincides with a nomad war machine.<sup>2</sup>

The number is distributed within itself between two principal poles. On the Planomenon it exists intensively, as sheer ordinality, or nonmetric envelopmental series.<sup>3</sup> Semiotic consistency with this intensive side of the

number involves nothing but sequencing ciphers, indifferent between naming-numbering, marking degrees of heterogeneous continuum (nested singularities). Notational elements are flat or nomadic, lacking organic linkage to coding or zoning agencies. They are assembled diagrammatically, from directly expressive traits distributed differentially in a flat-space of 0-dimensionality (nomos), and comprise a nonredundant order of differences (unsequenced sequence), immanently producing variation of absolute speed-temperature and curvature (vortex).

In its Oecumenic aspect, number undergoes complex interlocking modification, through which it acquires qualitative generality and quantitative magnitude (cardinality).<sup>4</sup> A simultaneous intensive transformation (stratocapture) proceeds through twin extensive splitting: cancelling difference in one registry (resolvable quantities) by constituting a second registry (qualitatively different) which is in turn defined by the uncanceled or problematic component. The difference in-itself of the intensive number is converted into a residuum, allocated to a higher number-type, whose metric regularity is established by the displacement: a construction of the identical quantitative unit by qualitative relay of problematic.<sup>5</sup>

Oecumenon is multiply twofold: expression and content, each dichotomized recursively within itself. In each case, expression deals with relatively deproblematized elements of a lower numerical type, exhibits a higher degree of consolidated cardinality, and operates a selection of comparatively tractable instances. Content deals with elements of greater typal-generality and numerical complexity, for which it requires a relatively heterogeneous semiotic, involving varieties of algebraic, indexic, probabilistic, and anexact components. In one direction content has a merely quasi-stable boundary; a fuzzy (uncompletable) limit that opens onto unsorted elements crossed by diagonals. In the other it relates to a superordinate expression, which defines it with qualitative reciprocity, and from which it draws a principle of metric standardization, providing a regulative norm for the quantitative determination of problems. There is a complementary differentiation or real inter-relativization of a mathematical and calculative pole, the former characterized by a superior power of semiotic globalization (unity of expression), the latter by a greater plasticity of function and diversity of method (comprehension of content).

Stratification at any level (not only anthropomorphic or ethoplastic) requires processes effectively equivalent to this double-seizure of the number, with production of an extensive substitutability by scale/type, split

articulation, and displaced problematic. Stratic differentiation is at once an intensively singular and an extensively segmented occurrence, by way of which the Oecumenon consolidates an overall distinction from the Planomenon by internally bifurcating itself. The abstract machine is drawn into the Oecumenon by a stratically coherent diplo- or schizothesis, effectively recomposing the problem of consistency (intensive difference) at the level of content but in the terms of expression.

The number in-itself is exterior to the Oecumenon, even when seized by it (an external relation of capture is always precursory to the organization of internal relations). A preliminary indicator is provided by the semiotic variability or polynotational cohesion that characterizes the number in its Oecumenic aspect. At the anthropomorphic level, the most inert numeric system is instituted by linguistic signs, combining a vocabulary of number-names, and a set of rules to construct partial-sentences (or complex words) isomorphic with all rationals. If these signs are to provide even rudimentary completeness they must necessarily undergo considerable decoding (abstraction of rules for local construction, tokenization of signs). They are also marked by high levels of indexization (zonal functions), formal or informal algebraism (notional problematic, or indicative signs), and anexactitude (partitives, approximations, margins of inaccuracy, uncertainty, and error, etc). There is a reciprocity between logicization of the number and numerical decoding of language, entangling regional consolidations of identity (mathematical-theorematic) with complementary movements of disorganization through external relations (calcular-problematic).

The general denigration of those (hazily conceived) modes of linguistic arithmatization classified as 'numerological' is often assumed to be the effective closure of an exotic but inconsequential cultural episode. The sterile and formulaic character of most modern numerology - its random esotericism and theatrical aura<sup>6</sup> - reinforces this conclusion. It is in such terms that the strange metamorphosis of Greek numeracy during the 2nd century BC, when the Attic numerals were replaced by an alphabetical number system,<sup>7</sup> is both radically marginalized, and overtly uncomprehended by modern historians of mathematics. Similarly, the ordinal numeracy instantiated by Roman<sup>8</sup> and Modern Latin alphabets is generally excluded from accounts of arithmetic culture, where the contest between Roman and Hindu-Arab numerals is given overwhelming predominance.<sup>9</sup> This entire pattern of evaluation requires substantial correction. The unmistakable trend towards an eclipse of cardinality

(intrinsic arithmetical value) in alphabetic numeracy does not imply the termination - or even a weakening - of its numeracy. That such a conclusion is drawn owes much to the overt secular triumph of cardinality over ordinality within Occidental civilization: the effective outcome of programmatic metricization, associated with the relative ascent of money and descent of the calendar as cultural factors. Far from denumerizing the alphabet, progressive decardinalization reinforces its numeric function. By eliminating quantitative interference it induces a superior actualization of pure lexicographic numeracy, meticulously assembles socially distributed ordinal competences, and increasingly installs itself in digital electronic processes (alphabetic and alphanumeric sorting). Lexicographic ordinality effectuates an actual nonlanguage and potential antilanguage. It is indifferent to phoneticism and to signification, even to coding and decoding. It consists of ordinal indices (zone-tags) that effect zonings and dezonings - intershufflings, groupings, insertions, and extractions - operated according to concrete rules for nonmetric cuttings, and characterized by rigorous anexactitude.

This mass ordinal-numeric latency contrasts starkly with strato-mathematics, which hurtles through ever subtler spheres of angelic metanumber, and beyond . . . This ascent through higher and higher general types of number - even into purportedly nonnumeric abstract sets and groups - conforms to intensive amplification of stratification, correlative to increasing metric rigidification of lower number-types. Cardinality is no more essential to the lowest number-types than the highest. On the contrary, it is precisely the calcular indefiniteness of highly general numbers that leads most directly to the suppression of numerical autonomy, by encouraging the subordinations of concrete numeracy to superior dimensions that logicize or geometrize it. Valorizations of analog subtlety and unrepresentability - by contrast with digital binarism and reduction - remain yoked to a stratic program. It articulates itself within terms that are on both sides only pseudo-autonomous, since they comprise machinically complementary segments of an overall stratification. In its relation to the intensive number, digital-analog differentiation operates as an integrated syndrome. On one hand, an ever closer approximation to a digital-ideal is realized through systematically interlinked massive iteration and resolution of discrete minima, both regularization of qualitative microsegmentarity, and quantification into abstract data. On the other hand, the correlative analog-ideal of homogeneous continuum is tuned in complementarity with deepened discretizations at a number of levels,



organizing the separation of qualitative variation by digitally coded topic (domain), and drawing upon compensatory formalizations of discrete notational elements to program its application (such as algebraic designators and generic terms used in the semiotics of real numbers, technical vocabularies supporting the function of metres, read-outs, and adjustments).

Mathematico-calculative segmentation of the Oecumenon mutually stabilizes and interactively consolidates systems of expression and content, in accordance with the divisional functions of an abstract machine that remains unsegmented - as intensively divisional singularity - on its Planomic pole. Mechanomic zygogenesis of the numbering number composes a counter-mutuality, desolidarization, disengagement, and dislocation of stratic interdependence, twinned to a flat fusional convergence that collapses segmentarity. It mixes a decomplication in the direction of the subnaturals (primes, and hyper-prime orders) with a Planomic flattening of cardinality onto nonpunctual tropics (cosmic Nomo-magnitudes condensing equatorially, as intensity degree-0 of the megamolecule).

Multiplicative arithmetical operations take on a strictly ordinal function when used within abstract pragmatic systems of nonmetric numerical composition. Multiplex aggregation and disaggregative factorization are the keys to an intrinsically bivalent (or zygonomous) ordinal numbering practice, employing a small number of consistent and reversible conversions to machinically potentiate primes as singular (or non-substitutable) ordinal parts. The susceptibility of each natural number to unique factorization (and reaggregation) realizes a basic modal difference internal to it, and engages it with a heterogeneous external system. Both procedural implex (compacted factorization schema), and interordinal linkage (matrices of prime-natural cross-sequencing). It is this double ambivalence that connects the number to the secret, and makes of primes the principle components of cryptographic systems, in which they function as keys: abstract operators for the (aggregative) locking and (disaggregative) unlocking of multiplicities.

The distinction between the modes of the number - aggregated/disaggregated - is purely semiotic (though nonsignifying). It concerns notational ambivalence with consistent designation, switches in compositional phase of a single heterogenous magnitude. In contrast, the difference between prime series (traits of content) and its ordinates (traits of expression) is real, regulated by an alogical distribution without

correspondence or conformity, and complying with a difference in register, between rigorously interconnected heterogeneous series. It is only by way of its (aggregate or disaggregated) ordination(s) that the number switches its capacity for modal conversion into a synthetic power, effected each time a member of the prime series becomes determinable as such by passing into the register of a different series. Such ordinal dezonings and rezonings upon the natural number series occur each time a compositional number disaggregates into singular parts (effecting codings and decodings as surplus values), or a prime transfers itself to the ordinality that itemizes it into the potential factor of another number.

Incorporeal transformation of 1931: the cultural initiation of Gödel-coding<sup>10</sup> potential produces an instantaneous Planomic mutation slanted towards nomadic multiplicities: virtually enveloping Oecumenic segmentarity into a side-process of flat numerical systems. Gödel-numbering accomplishes a revolutionary redirection of kantianism - according to a nomad rather than a copernican schema - by turning it towards the operationalization of transcendental synthesis as method, and away from the programmatic exhaustion of a self-limiting analytical endeavour. It converts the kantian discovery of numerical synthesis from doctrinal commitment to procedural machinery: subsuming philosophy into transcendental arithmetic, with annihilating critique of the Hilbert programme as surplus product.

Gödelization sets arithmetical diagram against axiomatic model, shattering semantic interiority by infecting organizational overcodings with numerical difference (synthesis or external relations). It anorganically systematizes an arithmetical counterattack against axiomatization: a methodical re-flattening of applied isomorphy (code and metacode) onto metamorphic potential (number). From the perspective of transcendental arithmetic, Gödel-coding nests within Gödel-numbering, where it is produced as a coherent supplementary subsystem of numerical polyfunction (surplus value of code).

On its sheerly numerical side, Gödelization produces, compacts, and deploys a heterogeneous aggregate on the sequence of natural numbers, where it enters solely into external syntheses with ordinal characteristics. Simultaneously - and as surplus product - it installs a virtually disaggregated assemblage of unlimited potential, composed of consecutively decompacted numerical singularities marked in another register (as ordinally-tagged prime factors sequenced by ascending values). Each Gödel number is produced as an intrinsic twinning of

aggregated numeric particle and disaggregative polysemiotic freight (abstract virus).

How much pattern exists in the prime number series? Gödelization renders this question Oecumenically critical, by definitely indicating that inexplicit number pattern constitutes undelimitable surplus values potentially realizable as synchronic decodings. It also makes the question absolutely cryptic, by using a fragment of this surplus - a disaggregative macroparticle functioning as decoding appendix - to trigger Planomoseismic virtual envelopment of all Oecumenic tracings (including any axiomatic number theory). Any number of natural numbers might potentially disaggregate into systems of lateral antilogic that effectively scramble axiomatizations.

When Gödelization codes the number (on the side) it is in order to produce - or to reach - an absolute decoding and destratification (nomos). A numerically extraneous coding-model - more precisely, an exemplary instance of executive isomorphy (or nuclear stratosemiotics of the most exalted kind) - induces cosmic transition at the level of the abstract machine. It marks a passage in intensity, concurrent with the comprehensive envelopment by surplus pattern of Oecumenic-order. Numeric engulfing of Oecumenon, crashed segmentarity, and laterally disrupted codings and axiomatics (at any level), fold together in a single immense catastrophic event, fully realized in Planomic-potentials on the Outside.

On one side the number flees from cardinality, innovating poly-ordinal machineries and semiotic surplus-values that outflank overcodings. On the other side - but simultaneously - the number opens a line of flight that escapes metrics towards cardinality: compressing it to absolute (uncountable) magnitudes. A compositional-numeric scrambling of expression (Gödelian transcendental arithmetic) virtually interoperates with a diagonal-diagrammatic disruption of content (Cantorean planotectonics). Both start from the Strata: isomorphically interlocked segmentary metastases with complementary dynamics. Gödelization turns isomorphism into side-process virus, unlocking metricization by dismantling superordination of expression. Cantor-diagonals run isomorphy the other way, down through Oecumenon into vague cataspaces of problematic content, where it hystericizes against continuum (metric collapse into planomic hyper-densities).

Make of cardinality itself a measure of isomorphic potential. The result is a transfinite analysis of sets - flush with torsional nomos - where

orders of containment are topologically disinteriorized by an absolute warping. According to metric intuitions (conformity with finite strata), a set that contains another within itself evidences superior cardinality. The natural number series is the crucial case. It is clearly not the first countable infinity, but the  $n$ th, where  $n$  is itself an infinite number. Innumerable infinities are nested by the naturals, amongst which preeminence belongs to the primes (demonstrably endless since Euclid).<sup>11</sup> Since primes consist of a proportionally diminishing selection from the set of naturals, projective finite metrics confidently anticipates their cardinal subsumption.

Introducing isomorphy makes sense at first. Why not get infinities to count each other? Produce abstract counting criteria by virtually interzipping unending series. What draws things onto a line of flight is the missing piece. A criterion is required, for differentially estimating the cardinalities of subnatural infinities. Nothing turns up.

The problem is compounded when a definition is needed for the threshold of infinity. How to determine the first transfinite set? The naturals provide a model for countability: the capability to execute an abstract count - even endless - by exhaustive steps. Use another infinity to count through the abstract machine for you, as long as it doesn't miss any steps. If the end is already there, from the perspective of infinity, then extensive prolongation loses its prominence. The first nonfinite set must already be intensively infinitized: introducing sufficient recursion as the principle of transfinite magnitude. For a set to avoid being outcounted - relegated to finitude - a minimum of recursivity is required. The first transfinite set must be isomorphic with a subset of itself (first recursion to an infinite power).

Cardinality melts into schizophrenia precisely here. Every countable set crossing into transfinite recursion threshold flattens onto a single hypervalue: Aleph-0. Primes do it (and anything doing it does it to a transfinite power (so an infinite number of prime subsets do it (which each in turn ((( ( . . . )))))). When the transfinite happens it feeds straight into itself, becomes instantaneously transfinitely larger than itself . . . then diagonals click in.

Arithmetical consistency (e.g.  $(1 \div 3) \times 3 = 1$ ) implies the equation  $1 = 0.999 \dots$ ,<sup>12</sup> and thus a necessary expanded form for each number, expressing it with as many decimal places as there are numbers in a countable infinite series (Aleph-0). An ordered set of such numbers draws a matrix, which has two sides, defined by diagonals which function as cutting edges: defining a boundary by crossing it (in the direction of

consistency). They count as Leibnizian monads, each reduplicating the universe inside itself (the complexity of each being no less than that of the whole). Equally, they count Spinozistic bodies, whose intrinsic latitudes map extrinsic relations, constituting the strict parallelism between intensive and extensive cosmos.

When cartography charts bodies by latitude and longitude it construes them as diagonalizable. Diagonals are lines of flight. They connect to elements outside the totality, drawing trajectories between the absolute crossings marked by hypertense Oecumenic and Planomic magnitude. Diagonal method activates an inexhaustible innovative potential. It exploits capabilities no greater than those presupposed by a prospective completion, which it then subverts, by finding an extraneous item relative to any list, even an infinite one. It does so by constructing a number that varies from the  $n$ th already listed number in its  $n$ th decimal (or fractional-modular) place (at least). This is most economically exemplified by a deterministic diagonalism, produced when all numerical values are expressed in binary (mod-2) notation. The series of diagonal variations will then be strictly programmed by simple alternation (flip 0 to 1, and inversely). By recursively including each new number in the exceeded list and rediagonalizing, the entire (transfinite) set of extranumerated items generates itself automatically.

What has been discovered? Transfinite cardinality number-2: Ultimate Continuum, an absolute edge, touched diagonally - as what comes next - after Oecumenic totality has finished in intensity. At cardinality  $C(\text{ontinuum})$  magnitude becomes countless, disengaging metrics from comparative countability. Cantor slides across schizophrenia, *nomos nonzone*, magnitude is occupied without being counted.<sup>13</sup> A smell like something burning in the Superstratum.

Outside it's Planomic Now, and the numbers are swarming. Aleph-0 vaporizes on the plane of consistency.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Calendric systems provide a partial and stasized model of the war machine (which cannot enter history without collapsing it). Both work compositionally, and involve ordinations (rather than quantities) the  $n$ th (of the  $n$ th . . .). In both cases, the convention of ascending values indicates a proximity to the subjectivity of the numbering number, opposed to the

global perspective of the State expressed by the descending values of standard place-value allocation. Calendric ordinality finds itself increasingly cardinalized by chronometry under capitalist conditions.

The next Calendar is Millennium Time-Bomb, which dates (AD1900 = 00, but so does AD2000).

An economical protocol for prolonging this dating system beyond the millennium modifies and expands it to K-Time (K-Space- or Kilo-time) by prefixing an additional zero. AD1900 = K-000, AD2000 = K-100, etc. postponing its notational crisis until AD2900. (Dr. Melanie Newton).

<sup>2</sup> The war machine processes destratified intensities through numerizing multiplicities in affinity with disorganization, intercultural traffic, biomechanical hybridity, pragmatics, and turbodynamics. It reproduces itself by way of two complementary operations, both numerical: a subtractive dezoning that marks its escape from State organization, and an arithmetical decoding that maintains its fluidity against recrudescing tribal lineages. The two together regenerate eccentric convergence of the war machine: problem-in-process sustaining consistent disunity.

<sup>3</sup> Even a metricized intensive scale substitutes the 0th intensity for the 1st cardinal value of the system considered (n-1). This characteristic is shared by the prime ordinate (1 = P-0).

<sup>4</sup> 'Identical unity is not presupposed by ordinality, but arises through cardinalization and the cancellation of difference in extension.' (Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 233)

<sup>5</sup> 'In the history of number, we see that every systematic type is constructed on the basis of an essential inequality, and retains that inequality in relation to the next-lowest type.' (Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 232)

<sup>6</sup> Occultists as insightful as Aleister Crowley and Kenneth Grant regularly fall into a merely mechanical and pseudo-traditional use of Gematria. The attempt to reproduce the values and consequences of Hebrew gematria without renewing its systematic cultural function is largely responsible.

<sup>7</sup> The Ionic or Alexandrian (alphabetical) numbers had completely replaced the Attic numerals by the end of the 2nd century BC. The basis of the Attic system was a more rigorously decimal precursor to that of the Roman. Its core elements were the signs I (1), Δ (10), H (100), X (1000), M (10 000), although more complex signs for a small number of intermediate values also existed.

<sup>8</sup> The standard modern estimation of the Roman numerals as fundamentally incompetent - interesting exclusively as the exemplary inferior antecedent

to place-value decimal - overlooks a theoretically crucial nomad residuum. This is best exemplified by their superior affinity with (ancient and current) cash-money, deriving from similar exigencies, and associated with relatively dezoned space. In the case of the Roman numerals this stems from intense proximity to the numeric functions of the war machine, evident from numerous historical records, and most clearly in the numerical appellations of Roman military units and personnel. The later allocation of a subtractive relation to series of ascending numerical values ultimately compromises their mobility, providing an index or rigidifying State-civilianization, with a growing predominance of bureaucratic and financial (rather than logistical) imperatives.

<sup>9</sup> The organicist-segmentary conclusion drawn from the semiotic specialization of the Hindu-Arab numerals can be problematized in numerous ways. Particularly noteworthy is the evidence of continual interchange between numerals with linguistic signs (Gokhale 1996), the persistent arithmetization of the Sanskrit alphabet even after it had supposedly acquired an exclusively linguistic status, and the algebraic usage of letters as token arithmetic elements (itself deeply intricated in the history of Indian mathematics). An evolutionary interpretation (stages of alphabetical numerology, then arithmetic with numerals, then algebraic abstraction) seems no more plausible than its mechanotypic alternative (a State-segmentarization of the initially fluid semiotic algebraism drawn from nomad influences).

<sup>10</sup> The code is comprised by a small set of mappings between numerical values and nuclear overcoding notations (metamathematical theorem jargons). The size of the numeric-coding set is nonfinite in principal, but constrained pragmatically. The relevant values are realized in the factorial disaggregation of a composite number, which produces them as blocks of reiterative factors (sheer numerical difference, arithmetically isomorphic with the series factor powers). The Gödel code makes explicit an implicit isomorphy between arithmetical side-products and metamathematic formal systems, thus eliminating all principled difference between logical metastatements (expression) and the number theoretic object (content). Numbers obtain the undelimitable virtual power of insinuation, drawn from a reservoir of flat numeric surplus-values, and are able to actualize this explicitly to make overcoding systems talk about themselves (in way they cannot anticipate). The introduction of a liars paradox into the *Principia Mathematica* number theory is the concrete way that version-1 Gödel code wrecked its logical competence.

<sup>11</sup> Euclid's prime number theorem inaugurates number theory by proving the nonfinitude of the prime series. Its basic conceptual ingredient is the factorial of  $n$  ( $n! = 1 \times 2 \times 3 \times \dots \times n$ ), comprehending all possible divisors under and up to  $n$ . Whichever way  $n! + 1$  is divided (other than by 1), it necessarily leaves 1 as a remainder. If any divisors for  $n! + 1$  exist - therefore - they must be greater than  $n$  itself, so that  $n! + 1$  is either prime, or a multiple of some prime greater than  $n$ . Since no number less than  $n$  can be the last prime, and  $n$  can be any number, no number can be the last prime. It is notable that this abstract demonstration shares a crucial feature of diagonal argument: that of unlimitable constructive innovation through rigorous exhaustion and permutation, producing a surplus item indicating noncompleteness.

<sup>12</sup>  $1 = 0.999\dots$  (mod-10), or (mod-2):  $1 = 0.111\dots$

<sup>13</sup> Nomos - unsectioned space or 'pasture' (however scant) - supports a population in continual transit, tolerates nothing but exploded totalities. By destacking all organizational levels into turbular dynamics, nomos ensures a perpetual conversion of redundancy into differential process, effecting a collective counter-memory as vortical momentum (torque).

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# III NOMADOLOGY



## Nomadic Wisdom: Herodotus and the Scythians

### John Sellars

“The Scythians are nomads. They have no city and hence are not civilized: they [. .] possess no theoretical excellence. Nevertheless, Herodotus ironically calls them the wisest of observed peoples in the most important human respect. [. .] Their wisdom consists in this: they cannot be captured in war, while their enemies necessarily perish in the act of pursuing them. This “wisdom” is due to the fact that the Scythians live on horseback, which is also the cause of their permanent lack of wisdom in the Greek sense. Having no city, they are completely mobile. Since they are themselves always in motion, they cannot be destroyed by the motions from which cities decay. [. .] The appearance of barbarism, of excessive motion, contains a deeper, more serious level, a level of “wisdom” that surpasses the wisdom of the civilized Greeks. There is a tension between the wisdom of motion or *travel*, and the city or political affairs.”<sup>1</sup>

This passage from Stanley Rosen introduces three things. The first is the use of the Scythians to illustrate the nomadic way of life, the second is the opposition between this nomadic existence and that of the city-state, and the third is the suggestion that due to their way of life the nomads have a wisdom superior to that of the civilized Greeks.<sup>2</sup> Our aim here will be to use the first and second of these in order to explore the third. So our first question will be this: what is this *nomadic wisdom* that is attributed to the Scythians by Herodotus?<sup>3</sup> In order to help us answer this we shall use the work of Deleuze and Guattari<sup>4</sup> insofar as it clarifies the distinction between the ways of the nomads and those of the city-state. We shall then move on to ask whether it is possible to practise a *nomadic wisdom* when living in the city.

#### *Background: Who Were the Scythians?*

The conflict between the nomadic way of life and the “modern historiographical insistence on the documented ‘facts’”<sup>5</sup> has led to the Scythians being almost completely ignored by modern historical research. This seems particularly harsh when one begins to learn

just how powerful a force they were in the ancient world. The Scythians were a number of loosely organized tribes, originating in the east,<sup>6</sup> that dominated the southern Russian steppe during antiquity. We are told that, by the seventh century BC, “the Scythians were feared throughout Asia Minor”<sup>7</sup> and that by 500 BC “they constituted one of the most powerful military forces in the known world.”<sup>8</sup> Thucydides (2.97) comments that “if the Scythians were united there is not even in Asia a race that could stand up to them by itself.”<sup>9</sup>

The extent of the success of this *nomad war machine* can be illustrated almost endlessly. At their height, they destroyed the entire Chinese empire in the East,<sup>10</sup> they raided Europe as far west as France,<sup>11</sup> and they went far enough south to confront the Egyptian army in Palestine, with their further advance into Egypt only halted by bribery from the Egyptian king.<sup>12</sup> The Scythian peak period was roughly 700 to 300 BC.<sup>13</sup> However, depending upon how one wants to categorize such a fluid congregation of tribes, one could quite justifiably cite their presence on the steppe from c. 900 BC to c. AD 200,<sup>14</sup> a period that exceeds the lifetime of the Roman Empire.

## I. What Differentiates the Life of the Nomad from Life in the City?

### 1. *Nomos*

Deleuze and Guattari cast the distinction between the nomads and the city-state in terms of “*nomos* against *polis*.” (MP 437/353) While *polis* relatively clearly refers to an ancient Greek city-state, *nomos*, having had at least thirteen different senses isolated, is a little less clear.<sup>15</sup> Among these various uses of *nomos* there is a clear distinction between two main forms and this is indicated by accents: *nomós* (νομός) and *nómos* (νόμος). The first refers to the pasture or steppe, while the second is usually used to refer to habitual practices or customs.<sup>16</sup> A literal translation of this second form might be *norm*, emphasizing a prescriptive aspect that is often said to be central to its meaning.<sup>17</sup> This second form later gave rise to a third form meaning law, in the sense of prescriptive customs that have become codified. These two main forms of *nomos* share a common root in *némō* (νέμω) which means to deal out, dispense, or distribute.<sup>18</sup> This root term can also be used to describe the act of herdsmen grazing their flocks or

driving their animals to pasture.<sup>19</sup> Although it is the second form of *nomos* that is more widely known, via the *nomos-physis* debates of the Sophists, Deleuze and Guattari use the term in its earliest form; *nomos* as pasture or steppe.

The much later third use of *nomos* as law has been described by one Greek scholar as a “denigration.”<sup>20</sup> Its second use as custom had a less arbitrary connotation than law, denoting the common way of behaving, the normal or proper way in which things were done.<sup>21</sup> If we were to try to sketch an evolution of *nomos*, from its use as pasture to this prescriptive notion of custom, then we might want to note that life on the steppe involved a “one-to-one correspondence between nature and custom”<sup>22</sup> that made drawing a distinction between the two almost impossible. In other words, the way of life of the nomads is completely determined by the geography of the steppe, from the necessity of a continual movement in search of new pasture, right down to the form of their clothes and their methods of cookery.<sup>23</sup> Given this, it does not seem too implausible to suggest that the earliest Greek term for custom might have originated in the term referring to what would have been the most common way of life, the life of the pasture. If we wanted to understand the origin of the prescriptive aspect of the later use of *nomos* we could say that the harsh conditions on the steppe would have demanded a very specific way of life if its inhabitants were to survive. In this sense we might say that the first use of *nomos* as pasture involves an implicit prescriptive element that came to be exploited later on. Living on *nomos* demands a certain mode of life. (Here we use the term *prescriptive* in its broadest sense, including not only authority grounded in custom but also medical acts of prescription that direct one to take medicine *x* if one wants to overcome illness *y*.)

This can all become a little confusing when we bear in mind that *nomos* stands in opposition to the *polis* and its prescriptive laws, leading to the rather unhelpful position of *nomos* against *nomos*, that is, *nomos* as unregulated pasture against *nomos* as law. The distinction that Deleuze and Guattari want to use is that between the carefully controlled city and the unregulated expanse of the steppe. For them, *nomos* “stands in opposition to the law or the *polis*, as the backcountry, a mountainside, or the vague expanse around a city.” (MP 472/380)

## 2. Nomads

The *nomads* (νομάδοι) are simply those that live on the steppe, those that roam around for pasture, the shepherds that *distribute* their flocks across

the landscape.<sup>24</sup> The Herodotean scholar François Hartog has suggested that one way we could define the Scythian nomads is as *apolis*.<sup>25</sup> The Greek word *apolis* (ἄπολις) refers to someone without a city or a state, an outlaw.<sup>26</sup> This implies someone without a home, whereas the nomads do have a home; the pasture. It seems to be a mistake to try to characterize the nomads as in some way lacking a *polis*, defining them in purely negative terms in relation to the city-state, rather than in positive terms as those actively living on *nomos*. According to the Greek, a *nomad* is defined simply as one who lives on *nomos*, someone who *distributes* a flock across the pasture, and no reference at all is made to the *polis*.<sup>27</sup>

### 3. *Nomadic Distribution*

It is this notion of *distribution* that is the key to the distinction between *nomos* and *polis*. The mode of distribution in operation in the *polis* is a distribution according to *logos*. Deleuze defines this, in *Difference and Repetition*, as involving dividing up that which is distributed according to fixed determinations. This is opposed to the *nomadic distribution* of *nomos* that is “a division among those who distribute *themselves* in an open space.”<sup>28</sup> These differing modes of distribution operate using the opposing systems of numbering and geometry. A nomadic numbering number is not a means of counting but a means of moving. This is in opposition to geometry that divides up the space itself. Numbering numbers applied to livestock can move across *nomos* while geometrically divided plots of land remain static. Geometry is the royal science of the *polis* and is of little use to those living on *nomos*. (See MP 485/389) The former distributes the territory to the people, the latter distributes the people on the territory. On *nomos* “space is occupied without being counted” while in the *polis* “space is counted in order to be occupied.” (MP 447/362)

#### *Example 1: Scythians and Egyptians*

Herodotus illustrates these differing modes of distribution at work in the divergent habits of the Scythians and Egyptians. While the Scythians distribute their livestock across the steppe, the Egyptian King Sesostris is described as having “divided the land into lots [. . . allocating] everyone a square piece of equal size, from the produce of which he exacted an annual tax.” (Hdt. 2.109) Herodotus presents this activity as being “the way in which geometry was invented.” (Hdt. 2.109) In this Egyptian model “one closes off a

surface and ‘allocates’ it according to determinate intervals, assigned breaks.” (MP 600/481) On the *nomos* of Scythia, on the other hand, the vast expanse of the steppe existed before the coming of the nomads. “Scythia is a natural landscape which came to be inhabited; Egypt is a landscape radically reconstructed by habitation.”<sup>29</sup> Unlike the Scythians who *follow* the terrain of the steppe in search of pasture, the legal model in operation in Egypt *reproduces* the same social structures between individuals and the land after each annual Nile flood “according to a set of constant relations.” (MP 461/372)<sup>30</sup>

#### 4. War Machine and State Apparatus

In a number of respects this Scythian-Egyptian opposition is more illustrative than an opposition with the Greek *polis*,<sup>31</sup> especially given that, as Deleuze and Guattari note, the State apparatus was first invented in Egypt. (See MP 562/450) While the Scythians are the youngest of nations (Hdt. 4.5), *they have no history only geography* (MP 490/393), the Egyptians claim to have the greatest antiquity. (Hdt. 2.2) Herodotus notes the Egyptian practice of “keeping records of the past,” making them “the most learned of any nation” of which he has visited. (Hdt. 2.77)<sup>32</sup> He also mentions their calendrical innovations.<sup>33</sup> This obsession with recording information illustrates the fact that a “central concern of the State is to conserve.” (MP 441/357) Indeed, the *State apparatus* is defined by its conservation and perpetuation of its organs of power. The chief mechanism limiting the growth of such concentrations of power is the dispersive function of war, hence the *State-war machine* antithesis.

In order to exercise its power over a territory, the *State-apparatus* must use its geometrical talents to draw boundaries, creating an *interiority* that can be ruled. (See MP 445/360) The *nomad war machine*, on the other hand, has no territory, making it a “pure form of exteriority.” (MP 438/354) If the State wants a war machine it must *appropriate* one using its skills in internalization and sovereignty. This process occurs not only literally in terms of the acquisition of an army but also with regard to *nomad war machine* innovations.

#### Example 2: Scythian Appropriation

There are numerous examples of this process happening to the Scythians. We are informed that, due to their outstanding feats in battle, the Scythians “were much in demand as mercenaries by the

militaristic rulers of ancient Assyria and Persia.”<sup>34</sup> This continued well into the Roman era, as Dio Cassius informs us. He writes, “For the emperor [Antoninus] kept Scythians and Germans about him [. . .] whom he had taken away from their masters and wives and had armed, apparently placing more confidence in them than in the soldiers; and among various honours that he showed them he made them centurions, and called them ‘lions’” (Dio Cassius 79.6)<sup>35</sup> As well as these literal examples there were also Scythian innovations that were used by the State. Spence, citing Arrian, notes that the wedge-shape cavalry formation that was so successful in the hands of Philip, Alexander, and the Macedonian army, eventually leading to the very creation of the Hellenistic world, was in fact a Scythian invention.<sup>36</sup> We are also told of the impact of Scythian horsemanship. The repeated successes of the mounted nomads literally forced the creation of cavalry components in various State armies. After numerous raids, the Chinese, in a desperate attempt to repel the nomads, were forced to introduce cavalry units into their army to counter the horsemen of the steppe. The traditional flowing robes of the Chinese were of course hopeless for horsemen so the Emperor was forced to introduce the nomad style of clothing for his own troops, a style that has been the traditional national dress of China ever since.<sup>37</sup>

Given that the State must always appropriate a war machine in this way, it might be worth considering where the war machine originates, if not in the State. This pure form of exteriority was, according to Deleuze and Guattari, “the invention of the animal-raising nomads.” (MP 492/396) The key to understanding the origin of the *nomad war machine* as a product of the animal-raising peoples is the notion of *packs*: “The origin of packs is entirely different from that of [. . .] States.” (MP 296/242) Unlike the State, a *pack* has no co-ordinating power structure enforcing a transcendental law over a number of autonomous subjects. Rather, it is “an animal reality and a becoming-animal of the human.” (MP 296/242) This *becoming-animal* of the nomadic pack involves simply following the terrain according to the immanent need for fresh pasture. There are no control structures co-ordinating a group of members, rather there is simply a single *pack*. To paraphrase Spinoza, when several particular entities operate as a single cause they can be considered simply to be a single entity.<sup>38</sup> Whereas the State requires an extra *dimension*, giving it an external point of view from



which it can enforce its sovereignty, the nomadic pack operates immanently and *directionally*, moving in the manner of a vector, following a flow. In functioning as a *pack* in this way the *nomad war machine* automatically involves itself in a process of *becoming-animal*.<sup>39</sup>

*Example 3: Becoming-Animal*<sup>40</sup>

Apart from the obvious dependence upon horses and livestock, the Scythians seem to have had a very special relationship with animals. Phillips notes that “the Scythian Animal Style [of art] was adopted by all the mounted nomads as far as the borders of China by the end of the first millennium BC.”<sup>41</sup> He goes on to note that “The favourite animals of the Scythian style are the stag, the horse, the ibex, the boar, the bear, the wolf [.] The stag in a variety of conventional poses is more common than any other animal. It is worth noting that the name Saka, commonest of all names applied to the Iranian nomads by themselves and by others, actually means ‘stag’.”<sup>42</sup> The Scythian Horde, not that surprisingly, felt closer to the wild stags than they did to the Greeks of the *polis*, given that they functioned as a *pack* rather than as a group of independent individuals. One aspect of this Scythian process of *becoming-stag* involved making fake antlers for their horses, and we can also note their use of stag design tattoos.<sup>43</sup>

The best accounts that we have of the Scythians *becoming-animal* relate to their use of cannabis.<sup>44</sup> We are informed that “shamanism and ecstatic intoxication produced by hemp smoke were known to the Scythians.”<sup>45</sup> Herodotus is again our main source of knowledge for this. He describes the process following a burial. After a burial the Scythians would clean themselves in a tent containing hot stones and this would include throwing hemp seed onto the stones. Herodotus informs us that “At once it begins to smoke, giving off a vapour unsurpassed by any vapour-bath one could find in Greece. The Scythians enjoy it so much that they howl with pleasure. This is their substitute for an ordinary bath in water, which they never use.” (Hdt. 4.75) Recent archaeological evidence supports this account by Herodotus.<sup>46</sup> The important point here is that when Herodotus describes the Scythians as howling with joy (ὠρῶνται) he uses a term generally applied to wild animals such as dogs and wolves, suggesting his acknowledgment that some form of *becoming-animal* process was taking place.<sup>47</sup> He also tells us,

rather enigmatically, that “once a year every Neurian turns into a wolf for a few days, and then turns back into a man again.” (Hdt. 4.105) One final example of the Scythian relationship with animals: When Anacharsis the Scythian was asked “‘Whom do you consider to be the bravest of living beings?’ He replied, ‘The wildest animals; for they alone willingly die in order to maintain their freedom.’” He was then asked, “‘Whom do you judge to be the most just of living beings?’ And Anacharsis again answered, ‘The wildest animals; for they alone live in accordance with nature, not in accordance with laws.’” (Diodorus Siculus 9.26)<sup>48</sup>

### 5. *Nature*

Although the distinction between *nomos* and *polis* is one between the open unregulated countryside and the tightly controlled city-state, it should be clear that this does not involve an appeal to an authentic uncorrupted nature. When Anacharsis appeals to a life according to nature rather than laws, we must take this as an appeal to life according to the pasture that is *nomos* as opposed to the legal rules of the *polis*. The social system of the *nomad war machine* is not a state of nature but simply a form of social system that “wards off and prevents the State.” (MP 442/357) The question of the wisdom of the nomads in relation to the wisdom of the Greeks should be seen simply in terms of “problems of distribution”<sup>49</sup> and not as an idealization of the primitive.

## II. What is Nomadic Wisdom?

### 6. *Nomadic Wisdom I: Property*

One of the differences between these forms of wisdom can be presented in terms of the question of owning property. When the *nomadic wisdom* of the Scythians is described by Herodotus he tells us that they “have managed one thing, and that the most important in human affairs, better than anyone else on the face of the earth: [. .] their own preservation.” (Hdt. 4.46) He attributes this to the fact that they are a “people without fortified towns, living [. .] in waggon which they take with them wherever they go, accustomed, one and all, to fight on horseback with bows and arrows, and dependent for their food not upon agriculture but upon their cattle.” (Hdt. 4.46) This *nomadic distribution* of people and cattle across the steppe means that the Scythians have no property through which they

can be enslaved and the lack of fortified towns means that the Scythians cannot be caught in battle in the way that a city can.

*Example 4: The Invasion of Darius*

Darius, the Persian King, entered Scythia to attack the nomads in retribution for their previous itinerant wanderings into Persian territory. As the Persians attempted to engage with the Scythians, the latter simply retreated further north and west along the steppe. The Persians were unable to survive long in an uncultivated landscape that had already been subjected to Scythian ‘scorched earth’ tactics. Darius soon lost patience and sent a rider ahead to ask the Scythians why they were too scared to confront him. Darius’s message read ‘stand and fight or admit me as your master.’ The Scythian reply was thus: “I have never yet run from any man in fear, and I am not doing so now from you. There is, for me, nothing unusual in what I have been doing: it is precisely the sort of life I always lead, even in times of peace. If you want to know why I will not fight, I will tell you: in our country there are no towns and no cultivated land; fear of losing which, or seeing it ravaged, might indeed provoke us to hasty battle.” (Hdt. 4.127) The Scythian response continued; “as for your being my master, I acknowledge no masters but Zeus [. .] your claim to be my master is easily answered - be damned to you!” (Hdt. 4.127)

Here we can see this wisdom of not owning property in action. The very fact that the Scythians had not distributed the land to themselves enabled them to survive the invasion by operating as a *pack* in search of safer pasture, moving to wherever the immanent conditions for survival seemed to be the best. Other ancient sources also attest to the wisdom of the *nomadic distribution* of the Scythians. Strabo informs us that, unlike the Greeks, the Scythians “by no means spend their lives on contracts and money-getting but actually possess all things in common except sword and drinking-cup.” (Strabo 7.3.7)<sup>50</sup> Strabo also cites Ephorus who, describing the wisdom of the Scythians, says that “since they are frugal in their ways of living and not money-getting, they not only are orderly towards one another, because they have all things in common, their wives, children, the whole of their kin and everything, but [they] also remain invincible and unconquered by outsiders, because they have nothing to be enslaved for.” (Strabo 7.3.9) Here Ephorus seems to be suggesting that the Scythians are

orderly to one another *because* they share things in common. Their justness is a product of their use of a *nomadic distribution*.

### 7. *Nomadic Wisdom II: The Most Righteous of Men*

This issue of the justness of the Scythians is well documented. As early as Homer, the nomads of the north, the Thracians, Mysians, Hippemolgi, and Abii, are described as “the most righteous of men.” (*Iliad* 13.6)<sup>51</sup> However this image of a *nomadic wisdom* among the Scythians conflicts with popular Greek conceptions of them. In everyday Greek language, the term *Scythian* could mean to look angry, to have a shaved head, or to drink immoderately.<sup>52</sup> Despite the presence of these caricatures we still find a large number of accounts that make reference to their nobility and wisdom. Arrian notes that the Abian Scythians, already mentioned by Homer as ‘the most righteous of men’, “have kept their independence, thanks, as much as anything, to their poverty and fair dealing.”<sup>53</sup> According to Pompeius Trogus, their “moderation shows the justice of their way of life, for they desire nothing they do not possess.”<sup>54</sup> In asking what is and is not necessary for the happy life, the philosopher Dio Chrysostom writes that the Scythians, “though they neither have houses nor sow seed nor plant trees and vines, are *by no means prevented* from playing their part as citizens with justice.” (Dio Chrys. *Or.* 69.6)<sup>55</sup> In these examples, the justness of the Scythians is ascribed to their poverty, to the fact they desire nothing they do not already have. In each case justice is presented as a consequence of their lack of private property, as a consequence of the fact that they have not distributed the land or their other resources to themselves.

Strabo, citing the now lost histories of Ephorus who visited Scythia, describes a great variety in the ways of life among the nomadic tribes. Strabo writes, “whereas some are so cruel that they even eat human beings, others abstain from eating any living creature whatever.” According to Ephorus, “other writers [. . .] tell only about their savagery, because they know that the terrible and the marvellous are startling.” But Ephorus suggests that one should also describe the opposite examples, making them models for our own conduct. Ephorus informs us that he “will tell only about those who follow [the] ‘most just’ habits, for there are some of the Scythian Nomads who feed only on mare’s milk, and excel all men in justice.” (Strabo 7.3.9)

Our aim here has been to follow this model suggested by Ephorus and highlight the advantages of living according to a *nomadic distribution*.

We have seen that the nomadic way of life can seem to surpass the wisdom of the Greeks even when judged in Greek terms. Without any desire on their part to conform to Greek notions of justice, the Scythians still manage to beat the Greeks at their own game. Unfortunately, this superiority did not last forever.

#### 8. *Infection from the Polis*

A number of Greek sources note a degeneration occurring among the Scythians in later times. In each case this is presented as the product of excessive contact with the *polis*. Speaking of himself and his fellow Greeks, Strabo writes that “we regard the Scythians the most straightforward of men and the least prone to mischief, as also far more frugal and independent of others than we are. And yet our mode of life has spread its change for the worse to almost all peoples, introducing amongst them luxury and sensual pleasures and, to satisfy these vices, base artifices that lead to innumerable acts of greed.” He continues, “because of their intercourse with many peoples, [the Scythians] have partaken of the luxury and the peddling habits of those peoples. But though these things seem to conduce strongly to gentleness of manner, they [actually] corrupt morals and introduce cunning instead of the straightforwardness which I just now mentioned.” (Strabo 7.3.7)

The more contact that the Scythians had with the *polis* the more they began to live as if in a *polis* and consequently the more degenerate they became, losing their former *nomadic wisdom*. The corollary of this is that the further one ventures onto the steppe the finer the examples of Scythian wisdom become. Strabo makes this point himself. He writes, “I wish to make my point clear that there actually was a common report, which was believed by the men of both early and of later times, that a part of the Nomads, I mean those who had settled the farthest away from the rest of mankind, were [. . .] “most just,” and that they were not an invention of Homer.” (Strabo 7.3.9)

As well as this infection from the *polis*, another reason for this perception of greater wisdom the further one goes along the steppe is the fact that the *nomad war machine* only becomes destructive when up against a rigid boundary that reduces its ability to flow. The nomads furthest along the steppe never encountered the rigid limits of the States and Empires that frustrated so many of their related counterparts and consequently they were rarely violent. Only the Scythians of the far west and the Hiung-nu of the east that were forcibly stopped in their tracks (by

the Persians and Chinese respectively) became literal war machines, repeatedly attacking the obstruction to movement that happened to be in their way, in the manner of a persistently flowing river wearing away a seemingly permanent rock.<sup>56</sup>

Our suggestion that nomadic wisdom is inversely proportionate to acquaintance with the *polis* is supported by Herodotus. He describes an account he has heard of a group of nomads living beyond the limits of known Scythia, in “the foothills of a lofty mountain chain” where the people live on fruit and milk. They “carry no arms and nobody offers them any violence; they settle disputes amongst their neighbours, and anybody who seeks asylum amongst them is left in peace. They are called Argippaei.” (Hdt. 4.23) Ellis Minns locates these people in the Altai Mountains, a focus place for Scythian activity, where all of the most substantial burial sites have been found.<sup>57</sup> Rather than think of these people as strange neighbours of the Scythians it might actually be more accurate to think of them as the *archetypal* Scythians, so well hidden in the depths of the steppe that they operate purely according to *nomos*, unlike their more well-documented cousins living on the coast of the Black Sea, who were in constant contact with explorers and traders from the *polis*, and consequently infected by that mode of life.

*Example 5: Anacharsis and Scylas*

It is well documented that the Scythians despised foreign customs, especially those of the Greeks. (See Hdt. 4.76) They were obviously well aware of the decadence and greed that ruled the *polis* and were keen to hold onto their nomadic mode of distribution, aware of its advantages. Herodotus describes a couple of incidents that highlight this. Anacharsis was a Scythian who spent a considerable amount of time in Greece. His simplicity of life and wisdom amazed the Greeks, leading them to number him among the Seven Sages. (See Diog. Laert. 1.101-105) His comments regarding the wisdom of living as an animal horrified some of his audience and were used to justify their caricature of the Scythians as savages. In many ways, his attitudes prefigured those of Diogenes the Cynic.<sup>58</sup> Strabo describes Anacharsis as displaying a nature “characterized by complacency, frugality, and justice.” (Strabo 7.3.8) Despite this Greek perception of his justice, simplicity, and even animalistic savagery, his own people saw Anacharsis as a decadent for even wanting to associate with Greeks

and on his return to Scythia he was killed for adopting their foreign practices. (See Hdt. 4.76) In Greek terms he may not have owned much but, to the Scythians, owning anything at all was dangerously unacceptable. Another famous Scythian, Scylas (a Scythian king), was a great admirer of Greek culture and he regularly visited the Greek settlement of Borysthenites on the north coast of the Black Sea. There he would wear Greek clothes and behave just like a Greek. Herodotus informs us that he “even built himself a house there, and married a woman from the neighbourhood to look after it for him.” (Hdt. 4.78) The rest of the tribe, disgusted by such behavior, united behind his brother Octamasades and had Scylas beheaded.

These examples of Scythian suspicion towards the ways of the Greeks illustrate the fact that, as Deleuze and Guattari note, primitive societies always want to ward off the formation of the State. (See *MP* 442/357) The Scythians were well aware of the corruption of the *polis* and this fact on its own is probably enough to grant them a form of *nomadic wisdom*. When this is combined with the comments by Herodotus that describe them as possessing the highest skill, the art of self-preservation, one can soon see why so many ancient authors praised their way of life.<sup>59</sup>

### 9. *Nomadic Wisdom III: Internal Relations*

As to our question about the nature of *nomadic wisdom* so far we have seen that it involves operating according to a *nomadic distribution* that at once places one outside the culture of owning property and that enables one to keep moving on *nomos* when those in the *polis* are prone to capture. A third attribute that derives from these relates to the internal relations between the nomads within any given tribe.<sup>60</sup> The lack of private property and the Scythian practice of sharing all loot in common (on the presentation of a severed enemy head (See Hdt. 4.64)) functioned, as Deleuze and Guattari note, as a mechanism that limited the growth of power. (See *MP* 443/358) The lack of any system of coinage also prevented the accumulation of wealth to excessive proportions.<sup>61</sup> As we have seen in the case of Scylas, the Scythian king retained (or lost) his position due to respect rather than economic power, echoing Deleuze and Guattari’s comment that a “chief is more like a leader or a star than a man of power and is always in danger of being disavowed, or abandoned by his people.” (*MP* 442/357)

### 10. *Life on the Steppe*

Perhaps these factors help to explain the wisdom of the Scythians, their simplicity, and their outstanding reputation for justness. It has been suggested that their *nomadic wisdom* was a direct product of life on the steppe, returning us to our earlier notion of an implicit prescriptive element in the term *nomos*. Talbot Rice argues that the justness of the Scythians could well be due to the demanding way of life that the steppe necessitates. She writes, “there is no room for the improvident and irresponsible in such conditions.”<sup>62</sup> The tribe must function as one, that is as a *pack*, if it is to survive at all. Toynbee agrees that nomadism “demands a rigorously high standard of behaviour” in terms of loyalty and clan solidarity.<sup>63</sup> The conditions within which the Scythians found themselves left no room for the selfishness or the mythic autonomy that people can delude themselves with when safely confined within the material comforts of the *polis*. The justness and wisdom of the Scythians was a direct consequence of living according to a *nomadic distribution* which was itself the product of living on the steppe. In this sense, their wisdom was determined by geography.

## III. Can Nomads Survive in the City?

### 11. *Strategies*

What sense does it make to say that *nomadic distribution* is a *product* of living on the steppe? Can one operate according to a *nomadic distribution* when one is not on *nomos*, that is, when one is in the *polis* or city? The prescriptive aspect of *nomos* that we mentioned earlier should be taken in the sense that if one wants to live on *nomos* there will be certain things that one cannot do, such as owning territory, and that other things one will have to do, such as sharing provisions in common. In other words, *nomos* has its own regulative laws.<sup>64</sup> As Deleuze notes with regard to Spinoza, there are always certain things that become impossible when engaged in a specific mode of existence: “there are things one cannot do or even say, believe, feel, think, unless one is weak, enslaved, impotent; and other things one cannot do, feel, and so on, unless one is free or strong.”<sup>65</sup> Deleuze describes this as a method of explanation in terms of *immanent modes of existence* as opposed to transcendental values.



In this sense, living according to *nomos* is to be judged in terms of the immediate possibilities that it can create and the problems that it can dissolve. Herodotus implies that nomadism as a way of life is a *strategic choice*, one that rendered the Scythians unconquerable. Hartog agrees with this and notes that, “The idea that nomadism is first and foremost a strategy, even a deliberate strategic choice, is nowhere expressed more clearly than by Arrian of Nicomedia.”<sup>66</sup> Arrian suggests that the Scythians once ploughed the land and lived in towns but repeated raids by other groups led them to change their customs and become nomads purely in order to survive. Whilst possibly doubting the truth of this as a piece of history, the notion of nomadism as a *strategic choice*, offering an alternative to the ways of the *polis*, is certainly important.

### 12. *The Geography of Modes of Existence*

We have mentioned the relationship between the Scythian way of life and the geography of the steppe on a number of occasions and this has lead us to ask to what extent a *nomadic distribution* is dependent upon the specifics of terrain. Deleuze and Guattari suggest that it *is* possible to live *smoothly* in the city and *striated* on the steppe. (See *MP* 601/482) While it might be relatively easy to live as a nomad on the steppe, it seems that the difficult task is to stay a nomad when in the *polis* and we have already noted how quickly the Scythians became infected with the love of money, houses, and other equally decadent luxuries. It seems clear that living as a nomad is not primarily a question of geography but rather a question of modes of distribution, of immanent modes of existence, of *ethos*.<sup>67</sup> As Deleuze and Guattari note, it is a matter of voyaging without movement, voyaging in place, and they suggest that “to think is to voyage.” (*MP* 602/482) It is not a question of geographical movement but rather a question relating to our “mode of spatialization, the manner of [our] being in space.” (*MP* 602/482) However, given the decline of the Scythians as the *polis* extended its influence, along with the close relationship we have described between the physical characteristics of the steppe and a successful *nomadic distribution*, it seems easy to be sceptical as to how easy it would be to live as a nomad in the *polis*.

This relationship between terrain and modes of distribution should not be seen as one of *necessity* but rather as one of *difficulty*. It is certainly possible to be a nomad in the city but it is harder. Smooth spaces can always be found or created within the *polis* but this will be in the face of the excessive striation of a very effective system of control. After all, “the

city is the striated space par excellence.” (MP 601/481)<sup>68</sup> However, “taking off for the South Seas” (MP 602/482) should not be seen to be the answer either if all one knows what to do when one gets there is how to striate it. Smooth and striated spaces only ever exist in varying concrete mixtures (See MP 593/474), meaning that there will always be the opportunity to find smooth spaces in any concrete situation: “Even the most striated city gives rise to smooth spaces.” (MP 624/500) The fact that it is *already* striated makes it primarily open to a deterritorialization creating new smooth spaces. Exploiting these will obviously be difficult but this should not lead us to dream of “returning to [. .] the ancient nomads.” (MP 602/482) Deleuze and Guattari suggest that the smooth space of the steppe is never enough on its own (See MP 625/500), but we might want to add to this the claim that there are no guarantees that a mode of distribution will be enough on its own either, especially when one finds oneself caught in the heart of the *State apparatus*.

These considerations might lead one to conclude, purely as a point of pragmatic strategy, that when attempting to develop a *nomadic distribution* it might sometimes be easier to get out onto *nomos* than to attempt to evade the control structures of the *polis* where they are at their most powerful. Of course, this is simply a question of tactics and pragmatics, but one that acknowledges the importance of both modes of distribution and the specifics of one’s immediate geography. The success of the Scythians nomads was due to the fact that they were fortunate enough to have had the optimum conditions with regard to both.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Stanley Rosen, *The Quarrel Between Philosophy and Poetry: Studies in Ancient Thought* (New York and London: Routledge, 1988), p.36.

<sup>2</sup> This image of *nomadic wisdom* is in direct opposition to Aristotle’s claim that virtue and justice are features of the State. See *Politics* 1253a-36-40.

<sup>3</sup> Herodotus, *The Histories*, trans. by Aubrey De Sélincourt and John Marincola (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1996). Hereafter Hdt.

<sup>4</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Mille Plateaux: Capitalisme et Schizophrénie* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1980) Eng. trans.: *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi (London: Athlone Press, 1988) Hereafter MP.

<sup>5</sup> James William Johnson, 'The Scythian: His Rise and Fall', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 20 (1959), 250-57, (p.250). Tamara Talbot Rice, *The Scythians* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1957), p.23, adds that "the absence of written documents among the Scythians themselves has proved a strong ally of oblivion, for all memory of the Scythians rapidly faded with their passing from the political scene. By the fourth century A.D. they had been completely forgotten by the civilized world of the day."

<sup>6</sup> The Scythians were "mounted elite war-bands originating in the more easterly regions of the steppe." (*The Cambridge Ancient History*, ed. by John Boardman and others (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), III.2, 547-90 (p.555). Hereafter *CAH*) The largest collection of burial sites has been found in the Pazirik valley in the Altai Mountains, a range which cuts across the modern borders of Russia, Kazakhstan, China, and Mongolia. It is thought that it was at Pazirik that Scythian chiefs were elected. See Talbot Rice, p.51.

<sup>7</sup> Talbot Rice, p.22.

<sup>8</sup> *CAH*, p.547.

<sup>9</sup> Trans. by Rex Warner (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972).

<sup>10</sup> The Chou capital was sacked in 771 BC by nomads from the west. The origin of the Great Wall of China, dating from around 300 BC, was a direct response to repeated invasions by the nomads. See Jacques Gernet, *A History of Chinese Civilization*, trans. by J. R. Foster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp.106-08 and René Grousset, *The Empire of the Steppes*, trans. by Naomi Walford (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1970), p.20.

<sup>11</sup> Scythian equipment has been found as far afield as Vetttersfelde in North Germany, some fifty miles from Berlin. See John Boardman, *The Greeks Overseas: Their Early Colonies and Trade* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1980), p.261. We are also told that "The advance of the Scyths may be followed, via Southern Germany, as far as France." (*The Cambridge History of Iran*, ed. by Ilya Gershevitch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), II, 149-99 (p.191). Hereafter *CHI*) Scythian arrow heads have been found as far west as Chat  l-G  rard dating from c. 500 BC. (*CHI*, p.192)

<sup>12</sup> "The Scythians next turned their attention to Egypt, but were met in Palestine by Psammetichus the Egyptian king, who by earnest entreaties supported by bribery managed to prevent their further advance." (Hdt. 1.105) Talbot Rice (p.45) says that the Scythians swept right across Syria and Judea, reaching Philistaea in Egypt in 611 BC.

<sup>13</sup> If we relate these dates to Chinese sources, which state that the nomads were driven out of China by Süan around 827 to 781 BC and only reappeared around 255 BC, then this might support the claim that there was single horde operating right across the steppe, either in Southern Russia or China, but never in both places at the same time. See Ellis H. Minns, *Scythians and Greeks* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1913), p.91, for the Chinese sources. Minns also outlines a number of parallels between the Scythians known to the Greeks and the Hiung-nu nomads known to the Chinese. It is clear that he thinks that they are the same people but he stops short of actually saying this due to the lack of solid data. E. H. Parker, *A Thousand Years of the Tartars* (London: Sampson Low, Marston & Company, 1895), pp.1-2, is prepared to go a little further. He writes, “there is very little in the descriptions of Herodotus which does not perfectly accord with the Chinese portrayal of the Hiung-nu.”

<sup>14</sup> The Scythians invaded the southern Russian steppe from Asia in the ninth century BC. They reached the peak of their might by the mid-seventh century BC. (See *CAH*, p.560 and p.565) The decline of the Scythians has been attributed to yet another wave of nomads that came across the steppe from the east. (See *CHI*, p.197) The Scythians mixed with the newcomers and continued in the area until the third century AD, when the country was invaded by the Goths from the west. (See *CHI*, p.199) However, there are a number of difficulties in trying to define the Scythians. They were never and nation nor a race, but rather a multiplicity of tribes sharing a similar way of life. At its narrowest, Scythian can refer to the Royal Scythians who dominated the area immediately to the north of the Black Sea from c. 700 to c. 300 BC. At its broadest, it can refer to those nomadic tribes, originating in the east, that roamed the steppe from c. 1200 BC to c. AD 200 (when the Goths from the west took over), stretching from China to the Danube, and often impinging on the territories beyond these limits. Consequently there are a number of tribes with their own names that are Scythian even though they were not part of the Royal Scythian tribe. Herodotus lists “the Tauri, Agathyrsi, Neuri, Androphagi, Melanchlaeni, Geloni, Budini, and Sauromatae” among others. (Hdt. 4.102) The majority of scholars work with a definition somewhere in the middle of these two limits, applying it to a multiplicity of kindred tribes who dominated the Steppe of South Russia and Kazakhstan between c. 900 BC and c. AD 200, but excluding the neighbouring nomadic groups of the Cimmerians and Sarmatians. The most intelligent comment on the subject is by Minns, who states that the term Scythian has no ethnological meaning, but is primarily

a *political* term referring to a particular nomadic way of life. See Minns, p.35.

<sup>15</sup> Martin Ostwald, *Nomos and the Beginnings of the Athenian Democracy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), p.54, claims to have “isolated altogether thirteen senses in which *nómos* is used in Greek.”

<sup>16</sup> See Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, rev. by Henry Stuart Jones (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940), p.1180. Hereafter LSJ.

<sup>17</sup> See G. B. Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p.112: “The nearest modern term for *nomos* is ‘norm’ - the establishment or promulgation of *nomoi* is the setting up of norms of behaviour.”

<sup>18</sup> Deleuze and Guattari comment upon these etymological considerations themselves, describing the root of *nomos* as a “very special kind of distribution, one without division into shares, in a space without borders or enclosure.” (MP 472/380) Their footnote to this passage agrees that the root *nem* refers to distribution of animals on the pasture and, contrary to some other interpretations, did not involve allocation of lots of land. “*To take pasture* (nemô) refers not to a parceling out but to a scattering, to a repartition of animals.” (MP 472/557) In other words, the distribution is a distribution of the animals and people on the land and not a distribution of the land between the people.

<sup>19</sup> See LSJ, p.1167.

<sup>20</sup> Ostwald, p.36.

<sup>21</sup> See Ostwald, pp.21-2. Kerferd (p.112) emphasizes that *nomos* is “always prescriptive and normative and never merely descriptive.” In other words, it is prescription by convention if not by law.

<sup>22</sup> Seth Benardete, *Herodotean Inquiries* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969), p.115.

<sup>23</sup> “The genuine steppe Scyths were nomads who had no permanent homes; they lived on waggons in which women and children spent their lives. The men, from early childhood, spent most of their time on horseback; their main occupation was fighting: everyone was trained from youth in warlike exercises and in the use of the bow. *Scythian customs were for the most part inseparable from nomadic life.*” (CHI, p.153, my emphasis) Minns (p.48) also makes this point when he says that the way of life of the pasture “necessitated everything from the form of their dwellings to the cut of their clothes, from their tactics in warfare to their method of cookery.”

<sup>24</sup> See LSJ, p.1178.

<sup>25</sup> See François Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus*, trans. by Janet Lloyd (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), p.56.

<sup>26</sup> See LSJ, p.207.

<sup>27</sup> See LSJ, p.1178.

<sup>28</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. by Paul Patton (London: Athlone Press, 1994), p.36. In his own footnote to this passage Deleuze writes, “The *nomos* designated first of all an occupied space, but one without precise limits (for example, the expanse around a town) - whence, too, the theme of the ‘nomad’.” (p.309)

<sup>29</sup> James Redfield, ‘Herodotus the Tourist’, *Classical Philology*, 80 (1985), 97-118 (p.107).

<sup>30</sup> It is also worth noting that Egyptian practices of striation go well beyond just their relationship to the land. They impose a similar domination over their own bodies; “They circumcise themselves [. .] shave their bodies all over every other day [. . and] bathe in cold water twice a day and twice every night.” (Hdt. 2.37) Each of these practices involves an attempt to remove a characteristic (sexuality, hair, smell) that might betray their animality.

<sup>31</sup> Deleuze and Guattari make their own references to the ways of Egypt *contra* those of the nomads. They note the “imperial conditions” of Egyptian culture, the “geometrical imperial Egyptian form” as the most rigid possible, and the negative anxiety of the Egyptian in the face of “all that passes, flows, or varies.” (MP 618-20/495-96) Plato (*Republic* 435e) also makes reference to the “vigour and energy” of the Scythians and contrasts it with the love of money and “commercial instinct” of the Egyptians. (Trans. by Desmond Lee (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987))

<sup>32</sup> Note that while the Egyptians might be the “most learned” the Scythians are praised for having wisdom in “the most important in human affairs.”

<sup>33</sup> Herodotus writes, “the Egyptians by their study of astronomy discovered the year and were the first to divide it into twelve parts.” (Hdt. 2.4)

<sup>34</sup> Johnson, p.250. Talbot Rice (p.45) tells us that the Assyrians appropriated Scythian horsemen for their army. I. G. Spence says that in the sixth century all Athenian archers were Scythian mercenaries. See his *The Cavalry of Classical Greece* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p.57.

<sup>35</sup> Loeb edn, trans. by Earnest Cary (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1927).

<sup>36</sup> See Spence, p.104 and p.177.

<sup>37</sup> Grousset (p.20) also notes this appropriation of cavalry and dress from the nomads by the Chinese. At the other end of the steppe, Talbot Rice (p.69) notes that the Scythian close-fitting tunic was “the very antithesis of the swirling draperies of Greece or Rome, but the advantages which it conferred on mounted warriors were constantly being proved in battle.”

<sup>38</sup> *Ethics* 2D7: “By PARTICULAR THINGS I understand things which are finite and have a determinate existence; but if several of them so concur in one action that they all are at the same time the cause of one effect, I consider them all thus far as one particular thing.” (trans. by Andrew Boyle and G. H. R. Parkinson (London: Dent, 1989))

<sup>39</sup> We have already noted the opposition between *nomadic wisdom* and Aristotle (2. above). For Aristotle, man is defined as by nature a political animal (πολιτικὸν ζῷον); that is, as one whose very nature is to live in the *polis*. (*Politics* 1253a3) Anyone who by his nature has no State is, according to Aristotle, like the lover of war condemned by Homer (See *Iliad* 9.63). We can also note that, for Aristotle, the whole comes before the part and the part only exists when, as part of the whole, it can fulfill its proper function. (*Politics* 1253a18) Man only functions properly when part of the *polis*. Anyone outside the *polis* is no longer a man as he cannot fulfill the proper function of a man; by default he *becomes an animal*. For Aristotle, and also for Nietzsche who takes up this passage in *Twilight of the Idols* (1.3), the man or animal outside the State is a solitary being. However, and as we have seen, for Deleuze and Guattari the animal outside the *polis* is a pack-animal. Their response to Aristotle (and Nietzsche) would be to say that the state does not have a monopoly on collectivity. This response of theirs is derived in part from the work of the political anthropologist Pierre Clastres, whose book *Society against the State* offers numerous examples of so-called ‘primitive’ social organizations that do not have or need a state structure and yet are regularly defined in terms of this lack, ‘societies without a state,’ societies branded uncivilized or savage because they do not conform to a particular model of civilization.

<sup>40</sup> As well as the following examples of *becoming-animal* there are a number of Scythian examples that illustrate other *nomad war machine* traits. Firstly, there is the role of *speed and secrecy* (MP 354) and this can be seen at work in the story about Darius. The Scythians retreated at an unexpected speed and the location of their burial sites were a highly guarded secret. Secondly, there is the presence of *felt* in the Scythian way of life. (See MP 594/475-76) Strabo (7.3.17) writes of the Scythians, “As

for the Nomads, their tents, made of felt, are fastened on the wagons in which they spend their lives.” Hippocrates (*Airs Waters Places* 18) adds, “What is called the Scythian desert is level grassland, without trees, and fairly well-watered. For there are large rivers which drain the water from the plains. There too live the Scythians who are called Nomads because they have no houses but live in wagons. The smallest have four wheels, others six wheels. They are covered over with felt and are constructed, like houses, sometimes in two compartments and sometimes in three, which are proof against rain, snow and wind.” (Loeb edn, trans. by W. H. S. Jones (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1923)) Thirdly, there are connections between the Scythians and metallurgy. (*MP* 514-17/413-15) In the *Idaeon Dactyls* Hesiod claims that “bronze-smelting was discovered by Delas” who he goes on to describe as a Scythian. (Loeb edn, trans. by Hugh G. Evelyn White (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1914)) We are also told that Scythian burial sites attest to “a marvellously rich group of metal-workers . . . associated with the Scyths.” (Talbot Rice, p.27)

<sup>41</sup> E. D. Phillips, *The Royal Hordes: Nomad Peoples of the Steppes* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1965), p.62. Michael Vickers, *Scythian Treasures in Oxford* (Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 1979), p.12, notes that this animal style of art is of a kind “widespread in Central Asia.” The contents of a number of Scythian tombs, including examples of their animal art, are held at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

<sup>42</sup> Phillips, pp.62-63. Talbot Rice (p.158) also notes that “The most characteristic single motif in Scythian art is provided by the stag.” The name *Saka*, meaning stag, was given to the Scythians by the Persians and Indians. See Grousset, p.7.

<sup>43</sup> See Talbot Rice, p.115 and p.118.

<sup>44</sup> Deleuze and Guattari (*MP* 501/402) note that drugs “have differential traits that place them on the side of the nomadic war machine.”

<sup>45</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, trans. by Willard R. Trask (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), p.395.

<sup>46</sup> Alessandra Stanley, ‘Tattooed Lady, 2,000 Years Old, Blooms Again’, *New York Times*, 13 July 1994, describes the discovery of a tattooed female, “A Scythian princess”, in the Siberian permafrost clutching “a small container of cannabis, which archaeologists believe was smoked for pleasure and used in pagan rituals.”

<sup>47</sup> See Hartog, p.151: “Generally, the word is applied to animals (dogs, wolves), in particular wild animals.” It is also worth noting that, although the word *cannabis* (κάνναβις) appears to be Greek in origin, it actually



has a non-Greek root, meaning not much more to the Greeks than “like hemp”, hemp being the ordinary Greek term. The term *cannabis* has its origin in the Iranian words *kine* and *pis*, an Iranian dialect being the language common to all the steppe nomads. The combination of these Iranian words into the new word was the work of the Scythians and it was simply phonetically recorded in Greek by writers such as Herodotus: the Scythians literally invented the word. (See LSJ, p.874) Minns (p.85) agrees that, due to phonetic considerations, *cannabis* is “probably a loan word from the Scythic.”

<sup>48</sup> Loeb edn, trans. by C. H. Oldfather (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1946).

<sup>49</sup> Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p.36.

<sup>50</sup> Loeb edn, trans. by Horace Leonard Jones (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1924)

<sup>51</sup> Loeb edn, trans. by A. T. Murray (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1925). Strabo (7.3.2) confirms that the Hippemolgi and Abii “are indeed the wagon-dwelling Scythians.”

<sup>52</sup> See LSJ, p.1616.

<sup>53</sup> Arrian, *The Campaigns of Alexander*, trans. by Aubrey de Sélincourt and J. R. Hamilton (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971), 4.1.

<sup>54</sup> Cited in Arthur O. Lovejoy and George Boas, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity* (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1935), p.328.

<sup>55</sup> Loeb edn, trans. by H. Lamar Crosby (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1951) This conflicts with Aristotle’s claim. See 2. above.

<sup>56</sup> We are informed that the Scythians “imitate so perfectly the constant flow of water.” (Benardete, pp.113-14.)

<sup>57</sup> See Minns, p.108.

<sup>58</sup> The status of Anacharsis as a Cynic role-model is discussed by Richard P. Martin, ‘The Scythian Accent: Anacharsis and the Cynics’, in *The Cynics*, ed. by R. Bracht Branham and Marie-Odile Goulet-Cazé (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), pp. 136-55.

<sup>59</sup> A number of contemporary authors try to present ancient descriptions of the wisdom of the Scythians as a collapse into a noble savage mythology. However, there is no reason to suppose this and such interpretations of ancient authors seem to smack of the arrogance of a later civilization. On the contrary, while the popular conception was one of savages, the literary accounts grounded in first-hand contact with the Scythians, such as those of Herodotus and Ephorus, emphasize the wisdom, nobility, and justice of the nomads. One is tempted to say that these ancient authors were simply

acknowledging a way of life better than the one they knew at home, something that some ‘more civilized’ authors seem unprepared to do. Perhaps this is a product of what Deleuze and Guattari describe as “a whimsical evolutionism according to which packs are lower on the scale and are [seen to be] superseded by State or familial societies.” (*MP* 296/242)

<sup>60</sup> This is a slightly unfortunate way to present this question as, at one level, the tribe or pack is not a collection of individuals but is rather a single entity. However, it is certainly possible to consider the nomadic pack from a variety of levels of perspective: the Scythians as a whole, individual tribes, members of tribes, micropolitics within individuals, etc.

<sup>61</sup> See Talbot Rice, p.18. Also, “the study of the funeral rites and of the equipment which has been found in the graves reveals that in the early stages the social differences within each tribe were not very marked.” (*CAH*, p.589)

<sup>62</sup> Talbot Rice, p.57.

<sup>63</sup> Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History*, revised and abridged by the author and Jane Caplan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), p.134.

<sup>64</sup> Deleuze and Guattari pick up on this prescriptive aspect of *nomos* when they describe a “law of the *nomos* regulating a continuous variation of activity with a rigor and cruelty all of its own (get rid of whatever cannot be transported, the old, children . . .).” (*MP* 613/491)

<sup>65</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, trans. by Martin Joughin (New York: Zone Books, 1990), p.269.

<sup>66</sup> Hartog, p.204.

<sup>67</sup> *Ethos* in the Greek sense has more to do with Ethics as conceived by Spinoza than it does with morality. In this way, a nomadic *ethos* will be an analysis of the varying “capacities for affecting and being affected” that a *nomadic distribution* will create. See Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, trans. by Robert Hurley (San Francisco: City Lights, 1988), p.125.

<sup>68</sup> The archetypal smooth space, on the other hand, is the sea. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, p.132, writes that “the steppe bears more resemblance to another highly uncongenial element, the ocean, than it does to any area of dry land. Steppe-surface and water-surface have this in common, that they are both accessible to Man only as a pilgrim and a sojourner. Neither offers him anywhere on its broad expanse a place where he can rest and stay and settle down to a sedentary existence.” Hartog (p.132) also writes “The steppes are like the sea.”

## Warrior Chief or Despot King? The Case of Saul Dawn Walker

King Saul is a problematic figure within the history of Biblical politics. He is on the one hand the first of a new type, a king. On the other hand he is a failure, a dysfunctional king. If one thing is ever agreed upon, it is that Saul occupies a pivotal position in Israelite history: he stands at a point between semi-nomadic tribal culture and the fully formed despotic State.<sup>1</sup>

Some scholars are inclined to see the figure of Saul as, at least initially, one of the charismatic judge-deliverers that are described in the Book of Judges.<sup>2</sup> As a result of his victory over an enemy of Israel and a demonstration of military prowess,<sup>3</sup> he was confirmed by the people as king. According to this account, Saul is presented as a transitional figure in the evolutionary development from a primitive society to the Israelite state. Saul is a judge who became king. In this sense he stood at the crossroads between judge-deliverers and the monarchy. Alt, for example, acknowledges Saul's affinity with the charismatic leaders of the book of Judges but concludes that Saul is made what no other charismatic leader was before him: king. This "completed the process by which the nation-state came into being and finished forever all that had gone before."<sup>4</sup> So, with Coote and Whitlam, "The basic assumption remains that the Israelite monarchy represents a decisive break with what had gone before."<sup>5</sup> Saul is said to be a new organism, replacing the preceding 'military chieftain' leadership structure.<sup>6</sup>

Alt, like many other scholars, seems to place a considerable emphasis upon the pronouncement of Saul as 'king.' This act of naming is seen to involve a radical break. Should the fact that the Bible uses 'king' to describe Saul impel us to conclude that he functioned as a king? In what follows, the figure of Saul and his role within Israelite society shall be examined. Our guiding principle shall be to consider how Saul can be seen to *function* within the social body rather than simply to look at his title. Rather paradoxically, Saul is often presented as initiating a new mode of political organization but at the same time he is judged as a failure in terms of that new model. Spina, for example, describes Saul as "a hapless monarch" who was wholly inadequate and unsuitable for the position.<sup>7</sup>

It might be productive to analyse the figure of Saul in the light of Deleuze and Guattari's discussion of the 'state apparatus' and the 'nomad war machine.' In order to explore this distinction we shall turn to the work of the political anthropologist Pierre Clastres. We shall explore the suggestion that it will be helpful to think of Saul as a warrior chieftain rather than a failed state-despot-king.

### **The Anthropology of Clastres**

"Primitive, segmentary societies have often been defined as societies without a State [. .] To be sure, primitive societies have *chiefs*. But the State is not defined by the existence of chiefs; it is defined by the perpetuation or conservation of organs of power. [. .] The chief is more like a leader or a star than a man of power and is always in danger of being disavowed, abandoned by his people."  
(*TP* 357)<sup>8</sup>

If there are problems with characterising Saul as a failed king then how else might we think of him? In their analysis of the state, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari oppose this form of social organization with another, the nomadic, denying the common assumption of an inevitable evolution from one to the other. Their discussion of this is presented under the subtitle "a tribute to the memory of Pierre Clastres." (*TP* 357) It is to Clastres that we shall turn to in order to explore this state-nomad distinction.

In *Archaeology of Violence*, Clastres offers us a detailed analysis of differing modes of social organization. He begins by giving an account of societies with a state. In these, he suggests that members are divided into two groups, the dominating and dominated, those who command and those who obey.<sup>9</sup> In contrast to this, primitive society is characterised as the resistance of the establishment of a separate organ of power from within the social unity so that "a distinct political sphere cannot be isolated from the social sphere." (*AV* 88)<sup>10</sup> In this respect the leadership structure within primitive society is marked by the absence of power; "Chieftainship is located outside the exercise of political power." (*AV* 89) Power is therefore only an appearance of power within the position of chief since the chief has no power to wield over the community. "To hold power is to exercise it: power that is not exercised is not power, it is only appearance." (*AV* 96) Clastres argues that the real place of power within

primitive society is to be found within the unity of the social body itself which exerts it “to maintain the being of society in non-division.” (AV 91)

If the chief’s role is essentially an impotent one, then how does he function within the community? How are we to conceive of a leader who does not have the ability to prioritise his will over the will of the majority? Clastres suggests that the chief is vested with a certain role within the community. “He is responsible, essentially, for assuming society’s will to appear as a single totality [. .] the community’s concerted, deliberate effort to affirm its specificity, its autonomy, its independence in relation to other communities [. .] the primitive leader is primarily the man who speaks in the name of society when [. .] put in contact with others.” (AV 89) The chief instigates the (re)formation of alliances with those who are friends of the community and wages war with the enemies. The character and skills of the chief are reflected in this role. He is an individual marked with, amongst other things, a diplomatic talent so that networks of alliance may be built or consolidated, together with a warlike disposition to ensure the survival of the community with an effective defence/offence. A certain element of confidence is placed in the person of the chief so that he is recognised as leader and spokesperson. However, prestige should not be confused with power. Though the chief certainly has a significant role as leader, he is not accepted as controller.

Throughout his work Clastres repeatedly emphasises that the chief is able to fulfil his role precisely because he has the support of the group, a support upon which his position is wholly dependent. The chief is not in a position to make a decision on his own authority which he then proceeds to impose on the community. Rather, it is he who responds to the will of the people. The chief’s functions are controlled by public opinion. The intention to wage war, for example, is proclaimed only if society wants it. The prestige of the leader does not go so far as to allow his word to be transformed into a word of command. His words will be listened to only for as long as his point of view expresses society’s point of view as a single totality. Under no circumstances can the chief issue a command and expect it to be obeyed. He is not able to know in advance that his word will predominate and be listened to in advance. (See SAS 37)<sup>11</sup> The chief’s power is marked by permanent fragility. At any moment he might be abandoned by the people in favour of some other individual. He is perpetually under surveillance by the group who are keen to ensure that his desire for prestige is not translated into a desire for power distinct from the power inherent within the social body.<sup>12</sup> Inevitably if the situation

becomes such that the chief's desire for power is apparent for all to see, he is no longer tolerated and the people abandon him. (See AV 91)

The relationship between the chief and the rest of society is marked by a spiralling debt-relationship. The prestige of an individual results in his being chosen by the people as their chief. The prominence and success of the chief contributes directly to his continued occupation of that position. An individual might be acknowledged as chief as a result of prestige won through war and his success in organizing and leading raids against the enemy. It is then precisely these qualities which are fostered and harnessed by the group in the service of the group. The chief becomes "the effective instrument" of the group functioning in their service rather than the tribe functioning in the service of the chief to achieve his own private ends. (See SAS 209) The prestige acquired in warfare and so forth is, however, easily forgotten if it is not constantly renewed by fresh success. "The tribe, for whom the chief is nothing more than the appropriate tool for implementing its will, easily forgets the chief's past victories." (SAS 209-10) The chief's position is tenable only for so long as he continues to enhance and maintain his prestige within the group. In order to achieve this he principally uses generosity together with success in war. "The leader is in debt to society precisely because he is the leader. And he can never get rid of this debt [. . .] as long as he wants to continue being the leader." (AV 115) The tribe never relinquishes its power.<sup>13</sup>

Clastres suggests that this debtor-creditor relationship is therefore significant in understanding social structures. He states that the very nature of society is changed according to the direction of the flow of debt between its members. "If debt goes from the chieftainship toward society, society remains undivided [. . . but if] debt goes from society toward the chieftainship, power has been separated from society and concentrated in the hands of the chief [. . . and society becomes] divided into the dominating and dominated." (AV 116) The state is thus recognized by a marked change in the flow of debt which is reversed from the chief indebted to society to society indebted to the chief. This is a crucial shift. Voluntary tribute becomes forced tribute becomes tax. Clastres notes that "To hold power, to impose tribute, is one and the same, and the despot's first act is to proclaim the obligation of payment." (AV 116) Clastres goes on to state that "Where there are masters, where there are subjects who pay their tribute, where there is a debt, there is power, there is the state." (AV 135)<sup>14</sup>

The fundamental drive of primitive society, in Clastres' view, is therefore to ensure that social division between those who command and

those who obey is never established. In the words of Deleuze and Guattari, it is “the mode of a social state that wards off and prevents the State.” (TP 357) To this end the chief is not there to command and no-one is destined to obey. His word will be followed only insofar as it conforms to the will of the group. Clastres emphasises throughout his work that it is society as a social unity which holds power and it holds power precisely as the means of maintaining that unity and preventing the emergence of a power separate from itself.

So, we can see that on this model tribal organizations function in opposition to the State. This returns us to Deleuze and Guattari’s claim that the State is not an inevitable evolution facing every tribal society. Again, Clastres is their key source. Clastres is highly critical of the ‘neo-theological’ interpretation of primitive society which defines such societies as societies without a state and reasons that such societies are consequently at a purely embryonic stage within their evolution towards the civilizing state. (See AV 90) Primitive society is essentially described in terms of lack. In Clastres view this estimation of primitive society is flawed.<sup>15</sup> The emphasis should be on *why* such societies do not have a state. He suggests that the answer lies in their absolute refusal to be divided into the dominating and dominated as opposed to the claim that it is because they haven’t yet reached an appropriate point in their evolutionary development. “The politics of the savages is to constantly hinder the appearance of a separate organ of power, [. . .] to ward off the appearance in its breast of the inequality between masters and subjects, between chief and tribe.” (AV 91) It is not that primitive society is without a state, rather it is *against* the state. The chief is not chief of a state. “*The space of the chieftainship is not the locus of power*, and the ‘profile’ of the primitive chief in no way foreshadows that of a future despot.” (SAS 206)<sup>16</sup>

### The Case of Saul

This brief summary of Clastres’ analysis forms a useful background against which we might understand the figure of Saul. To what extent might this way of thinking aid our understanding of Saul? It might be useful before describing and assessing the ‘reign’ of Saul to look at some of the events which formed the background to his rise to prominence and his role as leader in ancient Israel.

The pre-monarchical social system consisted of a number of at least geographically disparate groups whose coming together proceeded from a common interest in the face of a threat of territorial encroachment and a loss of independence posed by their surrounding neighbours. In response to such crises a number of so-called ‘charismatic’ tribal heroes (the ‘Judges’) emerged as warrior-deliverers. It would seem to be unlikely that these individuals acted on the behalf of *all* Israel, since it was not necessarily the whole of Israel that was threatened at any one time. As a number of scholars have pointed out,<sup>17</sup> this situation inevitably undertook a radical transformation when the neighbouring Philistine forces advanced and inflicted a devastating defeat on the Israelite forces, capturing the central symbol of Israelite faith - the ark - and destroying an important sanctuary at Shiloh. *All* Israel was now equally threatened. The realization that a successful defensive strategy by a unified fighting force was required gave rise to the demand for a more centralized leadership.

This suggests that the impetus towards a monarchy came as a result of both internal and external pressures. The threat of the loss of independence for the people of Israel, combined with the inadequacy of ‘charismatic’ judge-deliverer leadership patterns, coalesced in the desire for a leader acceptable to all and capable of leading a successful joint campaign. Saul emerged in this crisis as leader, *circa* 1030/20BCE.<sup>18</sup>

The Judge Samuel was approached by the elders of Israel - representatives of the people of Israel - who declared “Behold you are old and your sons do not walk in your ways.” (I Sam. 8.5) There followed a formal request by the elders for an innovation within the leadership structure of Israel. They requested “a king,” one who would “judge us, like other nations” (8.6) and “go out before us and fight our battles.” (8.20) In other words, a leader who would systematically overcome both the internal and external crises affecting the people. Samuel, for his part, proceeded to give a polemical account of the institution of kingship focusing predominantly on a social and economic antipathy. A king would be a despotic individual exerting total control over the lives of the people. (8.10-19) It is this interpretation of the meaning of the institution of the monarchy and the move to a state that we should bear in mind throughout the remainder of this paper. We should ask whether Saul functioned according to this model of kingship or whether he was in fact functioning according to an entirely different model of leadership.

Two things need to be noted with regard to the description of the request for a king in Israel. The first is that the desire for this ‘innovative’



means of leadership comes explicitly from within the body of the community itself. In their opinion the current leadership structure, in this instance occupied by Samuel and his sons, is no longer satisfactory. The failure of these leaders in the mind of the group is directly related to the desire and request for a replacement. The second significant element is that the request for a 'king' (מֶלֶךְ: *melek*) is couched in terms of a leader who would 'judge' (שָׁפַט: *shafat*) and who would fight the enemies of the people.

If we recollect for a moment Clastres' analysis of the functions of the chief within society we will see a parallel. The chief should exemplify a warlike disposition to ensure a successful offence/defence coupled with the ability to use his prestige and diplomatic skills to settle various internal and external disputes. As we can see, the Israelite 'king' is also called upon to fulfil both a militaristic and diplomatic function.<sup>19</sup>

Saul's actual election to the prominent position of leader within Israelite society is recounted in triplicate. He is appointed twice as *melek* (מֶלֶךְ) and once as *nagid* (נָגִיד). The precise meanings of these two terms and their relationship as designations of the same leader has been much debated. As regards the former term, *melek*, the particularities of the root meaning are deemed dubious.<sup>20</sup> A comparative analysis of the term with the Assyrian *malâku*, meaning counsel or advice, results in the suggestion that the term translated 'king' perhaps originally signified 'counsellor' or an individual whose opinion is decisive. The latter term, *nagid*, is generally understood as denoting simply a role of leadership. Its literal meaning is 'to be in front' or 'leader'.<sup>21</sup>

Flanagan provides a useful summary of the various critical analyses in the patterns of usage and relationship between these two terms.<sup>22</sup> Many scholars have followed Alt's treatment of the terms. He established a distinction between the two terms on the grounds of a religious and political differentiation of roles which were present simultaneously in an individual's particular leadership. *Nagid* is assumed to relate to the religious calling to leadership whilst *melek* was thought to designate the office conferred by public acclamation. Subsequent studies of the terms and their relationship have maintained Alt's religio-political distinction but have clarified other nuances in meaning. Cross preferred to render *nagid* as 'commander' emphasising the link with the previous leadership of the 'judges'.<sup>23</sup> This term represents the covenantal/religious character of the appointment to leader. *Melek* on the other hand is distinguished as a means of describing the more 'routinized' and dynastic orientated kingship. The

two terms are different but not separate from one another. They might refer to different inherent aspects of leadership or perhaps different periods during that leadership. In Flanagan's view, the patterns of usage suggest a parallel in the stages of 'cultural evolution' from chiefdom to kingdom. More concretely, *nagid* epitomizes the role of the chief whilst *melek* refers to the monarchy to which it gave way.<sup>24</sup> In response to this I would like only to draw attention to the point made earlier in this paper on the danger of assuming an evolution from chief to king. Perhaps the two terms require further investigation. It is only the *function* of Saul as leader, however, that we wish to consider here.

The initial account of Saul's election to the position of leader is recounted in a series of seemingly trivial events where Saul is brought face to face with Samuel. His concern to find his father's lost asses leads Saul to search out Samuel for his powers as a seer and prophet to divine their location. (I Sam. 9.1-27) Saul was goodly and described as being "head and shoulders above everyone else." These personal qualities were apparently considered paramount in his selection and appointment as leader or *nagid* in a private ceremony conducted by Samuel. (10.1) The text includes a description of Saul's doubts about his own capabilities and qualifications to hold such a prestigious and prominent position. Despite his self-deprecation, where he describes himself as of "the least of the tribes of Israel [. . . and from] the humblest of all the families of [. . . that] tribe," Saul is assured that he has been separated out and chosen by the people. It was the "desire of all Israel." (9.20) In other words, the people held the centre of power in the land.

Whereas Saul had been previously anointed as *nagid*, there follows his selection as *melek*, or king, by means of sacred lot during a public assembly summoned by Samuel. When Saul cannot be found, God identifies him as the man who has hidden himself. When he is found it becomes clear that Saul is head and shoulders above the rest. Samuel says, "There is no one like him among all the people." (10.24) Upon his discovery Saul is publicly acclaimed as king. (10.25) However, it would appear that Saul's choice was not celebrated by the entire people: "The children of Belial said, 'how shall this man save us' And they despised him and brought him no gifts. But he held his peace." (10.27)

Several points in this passage deserve further examination. First, Saul's personal qualities are described in such a way as to imply that they made his choice as leader inevitable. The fact that Saul is said to be goodly and in some manner superior to other men in Israel suggests that it was his

prestigious standing within the community which had won their favour, and him the favourable position of 'king.' The term 'favour' is used in this context to highlight the fact that the drive towards 'kingship' rests firmly upon the desire of the people.

This second principle, the fact that it is the will of the people which predominates, is not insignificant. Despite his protestations and attempt to evade selection, Saul is acclaimed as leader. This emphasis on the will of the people highlights the impotence that is to be inherent in the leadership system. Clastres' evaluation of the relationship between the chief and the rest of society and his view that power lies not with the chief but in the hands of the people is obviously relevant here. The chief is chief because the people have chosen him. His selection was made on the basis of his past actions which the group deems serviceable on their own behalf.

The account of Saul's election as 'king' raises another issue which throws some light on the nature of his leadership. His election did not apparently meet with wholehearted support. Some people express their doubts in Saul's abilities both verbally and through their refusal to bring the new leader a gift. What is significant here is the fact that Saul does not force the issue. No-one is compelled to pay tribute to the new leader. This is reminiscent of Clastres' comments on the flow of debt within society as a means for identifying the nature of that society's social structure. As we have seen, he equates the obligation of the payment of tribute with the first act of the despotic ruler. The tribute paid to Saul came out of respect, not fear.

Connected to this is the reference to Saul leaving his herd upon hearing the commotion that greeted the news that Jabesh-Gilead was being besieged by the Ammonites. (I Sam. 11.5) This clearly suggests that Saul was not living a separate and essentially parasitic existence at the expense of the rest of society who toiled to maintain a king and his court. Indeed, the chief is obliged to labour like everybody else. The privileges of chieftainship are not located on the material plane. Saul here certainly does not cultivate the image of a "do-nothing king." (SAS 40)

There follows an account of Saul proceeding to rally the tribes of Israel in defence of their fellow Israelites from Jabesh. He distributes pieces of oxen throughout the territory of Israel warning that the herds of every man would meet the same fate if they did not unite. His warning is apparently centred on his realisation that with the fall of Jabesh the Ammonites would continue a path through the rest of the tribes. Saul then succeeds in his unifying task and the people "come out as one." (11.7)

The rallying method employed by Saul gives an indication of both his self-perceived function and also the nature of that function. As regards the former, in the face of the prospect of enemy encroachment, he sees his own role as that of a warrior-chieftain who must organize and lead a successful offensive, and as a diplomat. Through his skills of diplomacy, and presumably also relying upon his own prestige amongst the people, Saul seeks to unite the people who were otherwise disparate into a fighting force for the good of the group. This two-fold function is marked by the absence of any word of command. War is instigated by the will of the people.

Having assembled and organized the thousands that had come into three companies, Saul leads this fighting force into what is his first battle. He meets with a major campaign success which confirms his position as 'king.' The popular reaction to this military and unifying leadership success is to reaffirm his position. (I Sam. 11.14)

It would seem from this that Saul's position as leader is at least partly bound up with his exceptional military prowess. In effect his position is dependent to some extent on his prestige - prestige won in this instance by his primarily military capabilities. It is this very quality that the people had looked for in their leader so that it might be harnessed and used in the service of the group. The people have seen in Saul an individual capable of successfully implementing their will to evade conquest. Indeed, the primary function of Saul as leader seems to pertain to war. The literary account of his 'reign' is principally marked by the large number of military campaigns that he leads against the enemies of the people. He succeeds in various offensive measures against the Philistines together with other neighbouring peoples; the Moabites, Edomites, Ammonites, and so on. It would appear that Saul's position, borne out of the desire of the people to prevent their own destruction by their neighbours and to present a unified front, necessitated this military enterprise on his part. A position based upon and maintained through military victory necessarily requires the perpetuation of that element. With subsequent victories Saul's popularity and his position as leader are assured.

However, as Clastres notes, "the warrior-leader is at no moment of the expedition [. .] in a position [. .] to impose his will. [. .] In other words, war does not, any more than peace, allow the chief to act the chief." (AV 170) Saul's request that the people should abstain from food until the enemy can be destroyed (I Sam. 14.24) was tolerated presumably because Saul's opinion in such matters of war strategy would have been respected

due to his proven past successes. When Saul declares that his own son must die because he did not abstain from food, there seems to be a breakdown in relations. What had previously been understood as a strategic game plan is turned by Saul into a word of command. Those who had failed to obey this command, even if they were his own blood relations are sentenced to death. In the words of Clastres, the ‘chief’ has begun to ‘act the chief.’ The will of the leader has been exerted over and against that of the group. However, with regard to his son, Saul is forced to comply with the will of the majority who declare that “not one hair of his head shall fall to the ground.” (14.45) Saul’s position is not one of power or authority, only its appearance.

It was this characteristic trait of impotence which marked Saul’s reign and also denoted his failure as a king. In his campaign against the Amalekites (15.1-35) Saul listened to “the voice of the people” (15.21, 24) rather than to the instruction of the prophet-priest Samuel in allowing the spoil of war to be salvaged and not destroyed. As a consequence, regret is expressed at his ever being made king (15.35) and his replacement by another more suitable candidate who was deemed “better than” Saul is prophesized. (15.28)<sup>25</sup> As Deleuze and Guattari note, “nomads do not provide favourable terrain for religion; the man of war is always committing an offence against the priest or god.” (*TP* 383)

The remainder of Saul’s ‘kingship’ is played out in terms of his relationship with David, who comes to exert a position of prominence within Saul’s own entourage (16.14ff) and who is privately anointed king in Saul’s place. (16.1-13) Although this relationship is initially a favourable one, it later deteriorates as David’s position is exalted to the extent that his achievements are compared to those of Saul. In fact, David’s achievements in war apparently superseded those of Saul in the minds of the people: “And the women sang [. .] Saul has killed his thousands and David his ten thousands.” (18.7) Even Saul’s eldest son Jonathon is described as transferring his personal allegiance to David whom he is said to have loved.<sup>26</sup> Saul’s jealousy for his position as leader is inevitably aroused.

It might be argued that the principal failing of Saul was not that he disobeyed the commands of Samuel but that he was rejected by the people. Evidently Saul’s position as leader was inextricably linked with his popularity. His relationship with the people was marked by a degree of dependency which Clastres identifies as the debt-relationship between chief and society. Saul’s failure to continually demonstrate his remarkable

prowess on the battlefield and thus assure his position as leader resulted in his achievements being eclipsed by those of another. An ineffectual tool is no longer of any use in serving the desires the group. The numerous victories that Saul had previously won on the battlefield were forgotten now that another individual's military achievements had become more prominent in the mind of the people. Having lost prestige Saul's abandonment by the people begins.

The warrior-leader Saul, after some considerable time tortured by "an evil spirit of the Lord," (I Sam. 16.14) leads a final campaign against the Philistines. On the battlefield his sons are killed and Saul, looking at inevitable defeat, takes his own life. (31.4)

"Trapped between the two poles of political sovereignty, the man of war seems outmoded, condemned, without a future, reduced to his own fury which he turns against himself." (*TP* 355)

### Conclusion

In the light of what we have discussed, we can see a strong resonance between the figure of Saul and that of the chief described by Clastres. The Biblical account of Saul reports a position of militaristic leadership won through prestige and maintained through continued consolidation of that prestige by means of success in battle and use of diplomacy. Of paramount importance is the frequent assertion that Saul conforms to the will of the people. His power is only apparent. When his actions are surpassed in the memory of the group by those of another, Saul's position of prominence is lost and his abandonment goes so far as to include his own son.

Studies of leadership-types in other societies have described similar patterns and asserted that they represent a leadership not by kings but by chiefs. In retrospect we can see that Saul conforms to the basic tenet of Clastres' analysis of the functions and nature of the chief in primitive society. The chief is not the holder of supreme power which would ensure that his commands are obeyed. Rather his leadership, though defined by a certain number of functions such as military strength and diplomacy, is essentially marked by impotency and fragility. The chief is dependent for his position on the will of the people. This position is tenable only insofar as the chief is seen to conform to the will of the group and thus war is always on their behalf and never on his own. Any suggestion that the chief

seeks to ‘act the chief’ and become a separate One will not be tolerated - he will be abandoned by the people. This cursory summary of Clastres’ work on the chief in primitive society seems clearly to highlight some of the primary elements of Saul’s supposed ‘kingship.’ Saul was not so much a failed king but rather a typical chief.

“In those days there was no king in Israel: all the people did what was right in their own eyes.”

Judges 21.25<sup>27</sup>

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> For further information on this question see H. M. Orlinsky, ‘The Tribal System of Israel and Related Groups in the Period of the Judges’, in *Studies and Essays in Honour of A. A. Neuman*, ed. by M. Ben-Horin, et al (Leiden: Brill, 1962), pp. 375-387.

<sup>2</sup> The judges were heroic figures who were chosen by God in response to a particularly serious crisis within Israelite history.

<sup>3</sup> W. J. Dumbrell, ‘In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes: The Purpose of the Book of Judges Reconsidered’, in *The Historical Books: A Sheffield Reader*, ed. by J. Cheryl Exum (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), pp. 72-82 (76) states that I Sam. 11 is a clear affirmation of Saul’s continuance of the office of Judge.

<sup>4</sup> A. Alt, ‘The Formation of the Israelite State in Palestine’, in his *Essays on Old Testament History and Religion*, trans. by R. A. Wilson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1966), p. 194.

<sup>5</sup> R. B. Coote and K. W. Whitlam, *The Emergence of Early Israel in Historical Perspective* (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1987), p. 141.

<sup>6</sup> Orlinsky, p. 378, suggests this terminology.

<sup>7</sup> Frank Anthony Spina, ‘Eli’s Seat: The Transition from Priest to Prophet in 1 Sam 1-4’, in *The Historical Books: A Sheffield Reader*, ed. by J. Cheryl Exum (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), pp. 104-105. See also David M. Gunn, *The Fate of King Saul*, JSOTSup 14 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1980), pp. 26-28 for a similar estimation.

<sup>8</sup> *TP*: Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi (London: Athlone Press, 1988)

<sup>9</sup> “The State is what makes the distinction between governors and governed possible.” (TP 359)

<sup>10</sup> AV: Pierre Clastres, *Archaeology of Violence*, trans. by Jeanine Herman (New York: Semiotext(e), 1994)

<sup>11</sup> SAS: Pierre Clastres, *Society Against the State: Essays in Political Anthropology*, trans. by Robert Hurley and Abe Stein (New York: Zone, 1989)

<sup>12</sup> Michel Foucault has suggested that panoptic procedures of surveillance are always concrete forms of the exercise of power. See *Discipline and Punish*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977), p.249. In the light of this, we can say that in this case power still resides with the people.

<sup>13</sup> In this sense the spiralling relationship increases the debt of the chief to society. This opposes Flanagan’s claim that there is an inverted spiralling debt that increases the dependency of the people on the chief, making the formation of a state inevitable. See James W. Flanagan, ‘Chiefs in Israel’, in *The Historical Books: A Sheffield Reader* ed. by J. Cheryl Exum (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), pp. 142-166 (145).

<sup>14</sup> As we have already noted, in the tribal organization the triumphs of the chief are always soon forgotten, making his status precarious. In other words, he has no power because he has not created a memory in the population. So, for the chief to become a despot he must create a memory in the population so that his past victories form a permanent debt in the minds of the group. This relation between power, debt, and memory has been dealt with by Nietzsche in *On the Genealogy of Morality*, ed. by Keith Ansell-Pearson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), second essay, esp. sections 3-5. For Deleuze and Guattari’s use of this see *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane (London: Athlone Press, 1984), p. 190.

<sup>15</sup> Lévi-Strauss also criticises such interpretations of societies without a state: “Nothing is more dangerous than for anthropology to build up two categories, the so-called primitive peoples and ourselves.” (‘A conversation with Claude Lévi-Strauss’ cited in Brian Morris, *Anthropological Studies of Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 278.) Morris goes on to suggest that Lévi-Strauss came to argue that in comparing these two cultures we find two types of scientific thought and that the “savage mind” evident in the former culture is in no sense inferior. (See p. 278) Society without a state is in no way defective. Rather, such societies are functioning according to a different model. See



also Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968), Ch. 1, esp. pp. 3-8 and Ch. 6, esp. pp. 101-103.

<sup>16</sup> This question has been discussed by Flanagan who draws upon the anthropological study of E. Service, *Origins of the State and Civilization* (New York: Norton, 1975). Contra Clastres, they suggest that this debtor-creditor relationship is marked by the authority of the leader which inspires an ever increasing dependence on the part of the group. They suggest that this dependence leads eventually to the role of the leader becoming institutionalized in an office and an inevitable evolution to the State. While they acknowledge certain important aspects of the primitive chief they fall back into assuming that the primitive mode of social organization is merely a preamble before the formation of the state rather than as an independent mode of social organization.

<sup>17</sup> For example, Amélie Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East: c.3000-330BC*, 2 vols (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 439 and Flanagan, p. 150.

<sup>18</sup> See Kuhrt, p. 440.

<sup>19</sup> One might argue that this diplomatic element was subsumed within the categories of meaning for the term שָׁפַט (*shafat*) which included “deciding controversies.” For a more detailed analysis of the various nuances of meaning and function attached to the term see Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, eds., *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), p. 1047. Hereafter BDB.

<sup>20</sup> See BDB, p. 572.

<sup>21</sup> See BDB, p. 617.

<sup>22</sup> See Flanagan, pp. 161-3.

<sup>23</sup> See F. M. Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), pp. 220-221.

<sup>24</sup> See Flanagan, p. 162.

<sup>25</sup> See also I Sam. 13.

<sup>26</sup> For example see also I Sam. 18.1-4; 19; 20.

<sup>27</sup> This passage refers to the pre-monarchical period before Saul. I want to suggest that it might be equally applicable to the time of Saul.



Ecce Homo Sine Domo:  
Vagabondage and Minor Literature  
in Twelfth Century Europe  
**Keith Hamilton**

“Surplus populations disappear in the obligatory movement of the voyage. The increasingly numerous bodies rejected by the poliorcetic order become physical forces moving nowhere, unseen zones, the immeasurable interstices of the strategic schema.”

- Paul Virilio, *Speed and Politics*

In their “Treatise on Nomadology” Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari propose a model of the nomad war machine as a body external to the State, placing special emphasis on its tendency to borrow systems of writing from sedentary neighbours rather than invent new ones.<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere, upon introducing their concept of minor literature, Deleuze and Guattari present a war machine with an altogether different orientation, one that is internal to the State just as its traits of expression are not selected from another language but assembled by a minor practice within a majoritarian tongue.<sup>2</sup> A nomadic group holds the outlying territory and assembles its war machine; the writer escapes into his own desert and peoples it with linguistic intensities - one external to the State, one internal, both draw creative lines of flight between and away from the interior relations that characterise their antagonist. For although they invented it, “the nomads do not hold the secret: an ‘ideological,’ scientific, or artistic movement can be a potential war machine ... It is not the nomad who defines this constellation of characteristics; it is this constellation that defines the nomad, and at the same time the essence of the war machine.”<sup>3</sup> The components of Genghis Khan’s hordes and Kafka’s literary output therefore enter into similar relations; in this respect, Gregor Samsa’s inarticulate cries assume a similar affective trajectory for the Kafka-machine that the projectile does for the Mongol-machine, and the Czech German of Prague is swept up in the same expressive movement that carries barbarian jewellery in its flight across the steppes.

Nevertheless, it is apparent throughout much of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* that nomadism, itinerancy, and migration bear more than an incidental relation to language even if an actual nomad literature seems

impossible. And as the State continues to expand its reach, segmenting and mapping the Earth, crushing or appropriating the enemy until it becomes a global organisation without external frontiers, the very possibility of an external war machine seems equally unlikely. The open steppe is given over to the desert within, the urban centre, the Third World, but we are reminded how “collective bodies always have fringes or minorities that reconstitute equivalents of the war machine - in sometimes quite unforeseen forms - in specific assemblages such as building bridges or cathedrals or rendering judgements or making music.”<sup>4</sup> Clearly, the war machine is reconstituted internally, but what elements define its new territorial relation *viz.* the nomads; moreover, what is its potential relation to literature or to writing itself?

The defeat of the barbarians is usually taken to be the end of an historical body nomadism, though it may be more precise to say that the disintegration of the Scythian or Mongolian war machines marks only one threshold in the overall genealogy. 1227: the Khan’s army achieves its intensive zenith, strangely, at the same time that the courts of Europe are in the midst of another crusade, this time to purge southern France of the Albigensian heretics. The Cathars and their followers, however, formed only a very small fraction of the ambulant populations traversing Europe for more than a hundred years: monks, jongleurs, secular clerics, pilgrims, friars, knights and soldiers of every description all contributed to a mass mobilisation that reached its height around the time of the Albigensian Crusade (1209-1229). The difference between the two examples is their respective relation to a State apparatus; the Mongols smashed across several sedentary civilisations in central Asia while most of these groups never left the political and religious boundaries of Western Christendom. Of course, a mobile population does not equal a war machine (or even nomadism for that matter) although the example of the itinerant cathedral builders does suggest that such a machine could exist internally on the margins, the fringe, the interstices of spiritual and temporal States.

Another group from this period, though largely neglected by historians and contemporary literary scholars alike, are the so-called Goliard poets or *vagantes*. Although most of them tonsured clerics, very few of these men took orders or held benefices sufficient to attach them to a particular parish or bishopric while others occupied the lowest rank in the ecclesiastical militia and were forced to roam from court to court in search of employment. This in itself is not remarkable; as Virilio indicates, Europe has often confronted the problem of an eccentric population

assembling alternately into an army, a religious movement, or a surplus pool of industrial labour. The *vagantes*, however, were not simply migrants, nor did any other sector of the ambulant population produce the sort of literature we know today as the Goliard poems: short works - sometimes only a few lines - usually anonymous and scattered in manuscripts like the well-known *Codex Buranus* (*Carmina Burana*) of Benedictbeuern. This group and its writing offer a portrait of one singular minority internal yet opposed to the extraordinary social and spiritual control exercised by the papacy and its secular arms in the High Middle Ages. Moreover, they present an example of a quasi-nomadic war machine defined not only by their specific mode of distribution, but also by a unique minor literature that itself describes the unusual, hybrid relation this group bore to their social and linguistic milieus.

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In order to understand the specific problem posed by the *Goliardi* it is necessary to situate them within the political and social context of the times; and although much of their poetic production spans little more than a century (*ca.* 1080-1220), the conditions and circumstances of their existence may be traced as far back as the so-called Carolingian Renaissance. It was then that Charlemagne attracted scholars and ecclesiasts from all across Europe to his court, facilitating the collection and preservation of the various manuscripts that would ultimately form the basis of the Latin education. Many of these custodial duties were then passed on to the monasteries which quickly became the primary libraries, copyhouses and schools of Europe until they were finally eclipsed by the cathedral schools in the late eleventh century. By assuming these roles, however, the monastic communities established themselves as an increasingly powerful arm of the Church which, after cementing its alliance with Charlemagne, was beginning to extend its power into secular affairs.

One community is especially notable in this context; for although it emerged during the darkest years following the collapse of the Carolingian kingdom, the foundation of a new monastic order at Cluny in 909 was critical to the developing political geography of Europe. Not only did the Cluniac order enjoy greater success than any cloistered brotherhood prior to it, establishing an ever-widening network of spiritual garrisons answerable only to ecclesiastical authority, but its very foundation

constituted a rigorous protest against the influence enjoyed by secular courts in monastic affairs. Whereas previous orders were subject to lay authorities for the selection of their leadership, Cluny reserved the right of election to the members themselves, as well as other privileges which until then were beyond their control. These tensions between the benefactors and the *clerici religiosi* would later reproduce themselves spectacularly during the Investiture Contest between Pope Gregory VII and Henry IV nearly two centuries later, the outcome of which secured these and other rights for all clergy. Moreover, the renewed emphasis placed on the strict observance of the Benedictine Rule and the monarchical control structure<sup>5</sup> focused in the mother abbey not only encouraged the rapid expansion of the order, but ultimately set the precedent for subsequent reforms within the wider monastic community.

One such reformer, perhaps the most important to the history of the cloister next to Benedict himself, was Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153), a young monk who led the fledgling Cistercians from their undistinguished beginnings to become the most powerful order of the twelfth century. Bernard joined the abbey of Cîteaux in 1112 and became abbot of nearby Clairvaux three years later; under his leadership the order grew from a handful of abbeys in 1115 to over three-hundred by mid-century.<sup>6</sup> A mystic and an ascetic, Bernard promoted the Rule of St. Benedict in the most severe form yet: unlike the members of Cluny, the Cistercian's routine was devoid of ornament in diet, behaviour, or appearance (they were known as 'white monks' for their undyed habits); physical labour resumed its place among his duties; and even the elaborate style of the Cluniac abbeys was abandoned for a plainer architectural program.

The Cistercians' remarkable success was due not simply to the leadership of their greatest abbot, but also to their innovations in the founding and governance of new houses. Richard Southern notes how they "achieved at one stroke the kind of organisation that every ruler would wish to have: a system complete in itself, wholly autonomous, equipped with a thorough organisation for internal supervision, isolated from external interference, untroubled by those sources of dispute about services and rights which choked the law courts of Europe."<sup>7</sup> The Cistercians did away with the complicated, expensive Cluniac structure and replaced it with a regular, austere, and universally expandable hierarchy. Every abbey held absolute title to its lands and was responsible for its own finances; illiterate lay brothers or *conversi* were tasked with the bulk of the agricultural labour, permitting the assumption of vast estates;

sacred texts were standardised; and uniform discipline was strictly enforced in both secular and divine matters. Not only did this highly integrated, self-sufficient, yet readily reproducible structure allow for more effective management than had hitherto been possible, it also enabled the members to indulge their preference for solitude in the most remote quarters of the countryside.<sup>8</sup> As we shall see further on, these circumstances also transformed the Cistercian Charter into one of the most powerful vehicles in the conquest of Europe's internal frontiers.

But the rapid expansion of monasticism represents only part of the Church's remarkable growth through the twelfth century. In the same period, following the investiture settlement at the Concordat of Worms (1122), the spread of Augustinian canonry among the secular clergy, and the Crusades raised by the Pope himself, the Roman curia rapidly positioned itself at the head of a spiritual and temporal *imperium* lasting nearly two centuries. It was during this period that the great cathedral schools of Paris, Orleans, Chartres and Bologna attracted students from every part of the continent, many of whom would ultimately serve in the ecclesiastical bureaucracy while others became *scholastici* in their own right or, as Peter Abelard would to the great discountenance of Bernard, set off to teach independently. As the Church attempted to guarantee its influence through these and other institutions, all sectors of society enjoyed runaway growth: between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries, the total population of Latin Europe more than tripled, internal and overseas trade blossomed, and towns engaged in the burgeoning cloth industry grew in wealth and influence.<sup>9</sup>

Tasked with consolidating its increasing power in the face of such changes, the religious authorities pursued a dual policy of societal stability and surveillance. "*Ubi stabilitas, ibi religio*," as Abbot Luan said to his brethren, *stabilitas* being one of the three obligations of the Benedictine oath.<sup>10</sup> This policy fixing the monks to their estates found ready advocates among the Cistercians who were especially devoted to the solitude they sought in the remaining wilderness of Europe. It was in these remote places that they effected a singular reterritorialization, not only clearing the area and planting crops, but integrating the entire territory into the homogenous system of spiritual and temporal authority that culminated in the triennial meeting of the General Chapter's legislative assembly. Moreover, the territorial relation of the peasants 'belonging' to the land was also transformed, overcoded, and integrated into this system with many laymen or *conversi* entering a state of monastic vassalage. It is in

this respect that the Cistercians' spiritual State should not be regarded to the exclusion of the enormous consequences it had for material and political society. Just as the bishop of Rome gradually assumed the trappings and authority of a secular emperor, the monasteries also exerted substantial, and in most cases total control over any this-worldly territories they held title to. Consequently, the Cistercians are not simply monastic reformers (though they are certainly that) since numerous other developments concerning the management of land, agrarian reforms, even the organisation of labour<sup>11</sup> may be traced back to their system.

In addition to territorial enclosure, the monks also carried out a program of spiritual capture, transformation, and sedentarization that is much more ambiguous, though nonetheless critical to their project. Many noviciates were drawn from the secular class of knights and had been trained for war before taking up the white habit; and although the monastic profession was voluntary, the spiritual apparatus employed by the Cistercians, particularly the abbot of Clairvaux himself, to capture this secular war machine and divert its energies to other ends should not be overlooked. As Jean Leclercq indicates in his study, "St. Bernard at the beginning of his long and splendid exposition of the Song of Songs insistently compares monastic life and asceticism to military service, and the community to a *militia* doing battle for the king ... we find in the *Sentences* twenty or so other instances when St. Bernard speaks with greater or less detail of monks as a *militia* and of the monastic life in terms of spiritual combat."<sup>12</sup> The problem of the secular military machine was a volatile issue for the Church in this period, one that it addressed by either sedentarizing, neutralising and disarming the soldiers themselves, or by channelling this martial current into more properly military enterprises (in the sense that there was no object *but* war) such as crusading.<sup>13</sup> In this particular case, battle in the field was reterritorialized in the spiritual domain, bloodlust recoded as religious devotion, and the enemy without retreated within.

More than the far-flung monasteries, however, the urban centres with their growing merchant and craft guilds cleaved to stability and group security, to *gravitas* both territorial and social. Paul Virilio links the initial power and standing of the town bourgeoisie not to their mercantile activity but to the "*strategic implantation that establishes the 'fixed domicile' as a social and monetary value*"<sup>14</sup> while Louis Mumford takes stock of the social dimension of this impulse, writing, "the unattached individual during the Middle Ages was one condemned either to excommunication or exile:



*close to death*. To exist one had to belong to an association - a household, manor, monastery, or guild. There was no *security* except through group protection and no freedom that did not recognise the constant obligations of a corporate life.”<sup>15</sup> *Stabilitas et civitas*. Another institution established along these lines and with a particular eye to *security* was the medieval university which Mumford describes as *the* guild, channelling the flows of student capital, setting curricula, and accrediting scholars in much the same way that a craft guild trained masters and the merchant guilds regulated trade.

Urban and monastic *stabilitas*, however, formed only one side of the medieval Church’s total investment in security, and found its anxious complement in a commitment to social and religious surveillance. Virilio identifies this practice with real political strength, writing, “[State power] is only secondarily ‘power organised by one class to oppress another. More materially, *it is the polis, the police, in other words highway surveillance*.”<sup>16</sup> The channels of Church control were various, utilising the hierarchy of secular clerics and the broad net of monastic communities to maintain its supremacy on issues of dogma, prevent unauthorised lay preaching, and ensure that clerks did not leave their bishops’ diocese without official permission. Discipline within the ranks of regular and religious clergy was tightened by the reform movements of the late eleventh century and the stringent new monastic code in the twelfth. In the case of the latter, the surveillance afforded by a Cistercian abbey often compensated for the enormous land grants that endowment entailed; Southern writes “the Cistercians were agents of government in the new lands of the twelfth century. Their benefactors could be sure of having foundations of great stability and corporate strength, capable of imposing an effective estate-management and a *close supervision of a wide area of country*.”<sup>17</sup>

One particularly remarkable case of highway surveillance is presented by the military monastic orders. Following the successful conclusion of the First Crusade at the end of the eleventh century, the newly conquered Holy Lands were subject to an overwhelming influx of pilgrims, both lay and clerical, who travelled the dangerous route from the Mediterranean coast inland to Jerusalem. In 1119 Hugh of Payen founded the Knights of the Temple (Templars) as a permanent garrison for the new Crusader States and a local police force along the main pilgrimage routes. Although the traditional monastic rule officially proscribed weapons, to say nothing of actual combat, the Templars and the dozen military

brotherhoods founded by century's end enjoyed the support of no less an authority than Bernard of Clairvaux who drafted their charter and gave his public blessing in a tract entitled *In Praise of the New Knighthood* (1128). Not surprisingly, many of these orders flourished on the external margins of Christendom just as the Cistercians had taken up the internal colonisation of Europe; and just as the latter assumed a supervisory function in the French or German wilderness, the military brotherhoods ensured martial and political discipline in their own Eastern dominion. Ultimately this role expanded to include a broad range of social and even commercial functions, the Templars supervising construction sites or even acting as forwarding agents and bankers.<sup>18</sup> It is in this capacity, regulating flows of capital both human and financial, supervising an increasingly mobile population, and shoring up the external borders that military monasticism forms the proper compliment to the solitary model set by the Cistercians - stability and highway surveillance: two articulations of a single strategy.

We are now in a position to appreciate the scope of Church sovereignty in its broadest dimensions. To follow Dumézil, this system of domination is described by two poles: at one end, we find the spiritual magicians, the monks both cloistered and uncloistered operating through the "bond," joining the population to the territory they overcode or capture (agricultural estate, Crusader State, the spiritual *imperium*); at the other stand the regular clergy establishing and manipulating canon law, setting the boundaries of temporal and spiritual power, weighing tradition and necessity, consolidating power through concordats, councils, and pacts. We must avoid the misconception that the bishop of Rome's power to speak *ex cathedra* renders this juridical function powerless since the papacy is more than the pope, and the pope could not assume much less maintain his power without the immense legal bureaucracy managing papal affairs. As the examples have shown, however, both of these poles were engaged in sedentarizing and stabilising Church authority while monitoring and, insofar as was possible given political and social technologies of the time, regulating the spiritual, material, and social flows cutting across continental Europe in this period. We will now turn our attention to these phenomena of deterritorialization and to the particular case of the *vagantes*.

As Virilio observes, the urban fortresses of the Middle Ages were built not only to defend the sedentary inhabitants from the siege machinery in use by other states since in truth they had little to fear from them "but

everything to fear, at every moment, from surprises and stratagems come from without, from afar, with the nomadic masses.”<sup>19</sup> Clerical antipathy toward itinerants, migrants, or vagabonds of all description was nothing new - it begins soon after the conversion of Rome - but the campaign against *band vagabondage* and *body nomadism* raged with particular vengeance as the Church became more powerful. Obviously, not every traveller was subject to this attack since the growth and management of Christendom itself called for an increased volume of traffic on the highways: abbots visiting daughter cloisters, papal envoys conducting official business, Crusader armies, pilgrims, and ultimately the friars were all licensed by religious authorities. However, even bodies of itinerant craftsmen or journeymen sanctioned and employed by the clerical order itself were viewed with great unease by a State that perceived them as a potential or latent threat to its own internal security. In the case of Anne Querrien’s cathedral builders, the scrutiny and supervision was tremendous, with the Church ultimately dissolving their guilds while seizing and dividing the labour (stratifying it) in conformity with its own transcendent or hylomorphic distinctions.<sup>20</sup>

The generic quality of this response, however, tells us nothing about the *specific* composition of the group itself or the extent to which it draws its own creative “line of flight” in relation to the State. To assess these variables, the investigator must begin by discovering the band or body’s specific field of operations - its ownmost space - and its mode of distribution in that space. For the nomads, we are reminded, this distribution is not reducible to a form imposed on a neutral matter, nor are its relations based on relative extensive quantities, such as velocity or distance. Instead, the full nomadic existence is characterised by an intensive constellation of elements that effectively *draws* its own field of operations; and in this respect, the nomad’s journey is a movement through intensities.<sup>21</sup> “To think is to voyage ... what distinguishes the two kinds of voyages is neither a measurable quantity of movement, nor something that would be only in the mind, but the *mode of spatialization*, the manner of being in space, of being for space. Voyage smoothly or in striation, and think the same way.”<sup>22</sup> Space is a mode, a practice, and the spatiality of any specific group will therefore ideally open onto either a smooth space corresponding to a “field without conduits or channels” or onto a zone of striated space fractured by regular routes subordinated to stable points of exchange or transfer.

Given this distinction and the historical evidence, there can be little doubt that the system of medieval Church authority applied an increasingly rigorous program of striation to the social, political, and spiritual map of western Europe. Movement within this structure, as we have seen, was characterised by travel between major points along set routes and to pre-established destinations. From the very earliest days of Christendom, however, the historical record points to a body of *clerical* vagabonds plying the highways without any particular destination and without license from the local authorities. Much of this evidence is in the form of resolutions condemning these individuals and citing either vagrancy or the singing of obscene songs (*turpia et obscoena cantica*) as their chief complaint: the Council of Autun (670) requires monks found *vagus* to be immediately recalled to their monasteries; a seventh century Irish canon calls for the excommunication of any clergy singing prurient songs over dinner; and an official admonition from the eighth bars clerics from wandering *de civitate in civitatem*.<sup>23</sup> Many other local and ecumenical prohibitions were issued from the time of the early Church on into the late fourteenth century, with some councils even calling on authorities to arrest and imprison vagabond clergy for disturbing the peace. The name Goliath itself does not appear officially in connection with this problem until the tenth century and although the Council at Rouen (1231) officially rescinded tonsure for the *familia Goliae*, we can be sure that they were present in some form both before and after this period.

Vagabondage does not necessarily imply the sort of distribution that composes a smooth space although we can be fairly sure simply from the number of resolutions passed against *gyrovagi* and their ilk that the problem for the authorities was also not limited to any single locale. But the Goliards were not simply vagabonds; by and large, they were clerics who, having received tonsure at the hands of a bishop, were bound to the Church for their livelihood and, due either to the dearth of sufficient employment or their own restless natures, routinely took to the road. Since education was primarily available only at cathedral schools and monasteries students were also required to submit to the tonsure and habit, thereby adding to the ranks. Moreover, Paul Lehmann argues in his essay on *Die lateinische Vagantendichtung* that individuals of every clerical description save the Pope could be counted among the *vagantes*: “Studierende, fahrende Schüler, stellenlose Kleriker, entlaufene Mönche und Weltpriester, geschulte Gefolgsleute von Fürsten und Bischöfen, aber auch brave Mönche, würdige Domherren und Pfarrer, gelehrte und biedere

Professoren [scholars, students, acephalic clergy, runaway monks and secular preachers, schooled attendants of bishops and princes, but also courageous monks, worthy pastors and rectors, learned and upright professors].”<sup>24</sup>

The fact that nearly all of these people enjoyed the clerical privilege conferred with the tonsure is particularly significant for two reasons. To begin with, it brought immunity from secular law courts, taxation, and military service, thereby releasing clerics from practically all temporal authority external to the Church itself. As a consequence of this immunity, it also provided the *vagantes* with effective license to roam through the various kingdoms of Europe without fear of the local authorities, a fact well documented by the latter. The tonsure itself, however, was generally conferred with the express command of *stabilitas* whether to a monastery or a regular diocese (unlike the monks, however, it was not accompanied by an assured means of support); it was the violation of this rule that occasioned the bishops’ particular anger towards those clerics who, paradoxically, the authorities had endowed with the legal instrument of their wanderings, namely the tonsure! The problem of students and teachers travelling between schools also posed a special problem since they were bound to neither monastery or bishopric, although the evidence suggests that most of the *vagantes* in question were regular clergy lacking a diocese or acting as scribes for the secular courts.<sup>25</sup>

The fact that so many clerics were forced to support themselves either at the very bottom of the power structure or to seek their livelihood elsewhere is further evidence of their marginal position within the religious State. Isidore of Seville (*ca.* 600-636) realised this special status as far back as the seventh century, writing, “Duo sunt autem genera clericorum: unum ecclesiasticorum sub regimine episcopali degentium, alterum acefalorum, id est sine capite, quem sequantur ignorantium ... Habentes signum religionis non religionis officium, *ypocentauro similes* nec equi nec homines, mixtumque, ut ait poeta, genus prolisque biformis [there are, however, two kinds of clerks: those who live by the command of their bishop, and another group of acephalics who chase after ignorance ... possessing the symbol of religion but no religious office, they resemble the hippocentaur, neither horse nor man, “a mixed type or double progeny,” as the poet says].”<sup>26</sup> The latter bears a spatiogeographic relation to his society not unlike that of the ambulant metallurgist, himself a hybrid facing both the striated space of the *polis* and the smooth space of the steppe. Unlike the smith, however, the clerk is actually a functionary of the State (though

always fugitive from it) though he too constructs his own unique field of operations between that space and the internal deserts of Europe. As we saw earlier, the monks also enter the latter, but they institute an entirely different spatial practice, setting up their agricultural regime, establishing a surveillance post, digging in, supervising and mapping out the landscape from their solitary outpost on the monastic circuit.

If we consider their hybrid function and the itinerancy this implied (few courts could use a Latin clerk outside of Latin Christendom) - acting as a scribe, student, or teacher at court or school before returning to the road - it is apparent that the *vagantes*' specific mode of geographic spatialization is *not* purely nomadic nor is the space they hold an ideally smooth one. Instead, it is composed in the vague margins between the continent's remaining internal frontiers, largely unpopulated deserts subjected to gradual monastic conquest, and the highly stratified circuits of the religious State with its pilgrimage and Crusade routes carrying wave after wave of spiritual or martial migrant to the Holy Lands. Like the smith and his holey space, the *vagantes* communicated with the Church apparatus and with the smooth, though not empty spaces that escaped its capture; as Umberto Eco notes, these depopulated zones along the road were swarming with "malificent presences," an intensive danger vibrating in the unseen, unsupervised countryside for the townsman who ventured out at night.<sup>27</sup> For Europe in this period, these presences were not limited to bandits or the infamous highwaymen, but included ragged poverty preachers, heretics, and rebellious peasants spreading through the body of Christendom itself and constituting a non-specific threat that could only be directly addressed when it finally gathered in a particular locale (*i.e.* Cathars in southern France). But the *unspecified enemy* was a constant worry for a Church that regarded vagrancy as a precondition of heresy, for whom the interstices of the unsecured countryside was a smooth, intensive, demonic space to be conquered and stabilised by force of arms if necessary.

Any group that occupied this space naturally posed a threat to the *imperium*, but the *vagantes* especially since they were also a distinct and necessary sector of the religious infrastructure; if we wish to describe their specific composition it is, like the space they occupied, a hybrid. The education in Latin grammar and rhetoric they shared, and by means of which many supported themselves, was their most explicit link to the ecclesiastical system and distinguished them unequivocally from the laity. At once, the surviving literature regularly displays unbridled and

passionate hatred toward the clerical superiors who are satirised mercilessly. John Addington Symonds interprets this “revolt against the corruption of Papal Rome” in light of the Reformation just as the poems’ evident “delight in life and physical enjoyment,” is lumped *in totum* with Renaissance humanism.<sup>28</sup> In doing so, however, he misappropriates this group and their writings in the name of a backwards historicism; for although the reformers of the sixteenth century were certainly no fonder of Rome than the *vagantes* of the twelfth, the latter were also not religious reformers and there is no trace in their satires of either a positive institutional or doctrinal program confluent with early Protestantism. As for Renaissance humanism, there is little to suggest that these writers anticipated the philosophical or antiquarian<sup>29</sup> interests of that period, or that the two held much more in common than their mutual familiarity with classical Latin.

Internal to the Church structure yet fiercely antagonistic to it, tonsured but destabilised, the *vagantes* propelled themselves along a highly deterritorialized trajectory corresponding to their own hybrid space. Deterritorialized because their field of operations communicated with and selected components from both the smooth space of the wilderness and the striated space of the State without belonging wholly to either. This is not to say they *lacked* a territory or routes anymore than the nomads were without a space or customary paths;<sup>30</sup> instead, they constructed these from elements taken from other territorial assemblages and integrated it into their own. In the same way, they also exist twice for both milieus, doubling, betraying the clergyman in Church space and the highwayman on the road. Priest-Heretic : Hippocentaur.

\* \* \*

Even if the *vagantes*’ specific territorial practice was not ideally nomadic the question remains whether they formed a war machine in the full sense of the term. We are reminded that this assemblage is the invention, but not the exclusive property of the nomads and, moreover, that “an ‘ideological,’ scientific, or artistic movement can be a potential war machine to the precise extent to which it draws, in relation to a *phylum*, a plane of consistency, a smooth space of displacement.”<sup>31</sup> The manner in which the itinerant clerics of this period composed a unique geographic space has been treated in the previous section. Here, our aim will be to discover the components of their intensive artistic space - to trace the

*vagantes*' specific relation to a literary phylum - and, in so doing, to determine the extent to which these elements entertain relations capable of composing a war machine.

One concept particularly suited to this investigation is that of minor literature. Forming a unique literary assemblage by following the flow of a major language and selecting elements out of which he realises a minor usage, the inventor of this literature opens it onto a desert populated by linguistic intensities, entering onto an artistic space constructed by the very act of writing in the same way that territoriality was shown to be a practice of space. In their essay on Kafka, Deleuze and Guattari delineate three qualitative characteristics of this practice: deterritorialization of language, the connection of the individual to a political immediacy, and the collective assemblage of enunciation.<sup>32</sup> These elements of minor literature are the preconditions for defining the station assumed by the *vagantes* in relation to the war machine since they also designate the particular revolutionary potential for every mode of writing internal to a major language or literature. If we are to retain our concept of writing as a practice generative of its ownmost artistic space, it is from the perspective of these three criteria that we can best evaluate the revolutionary investments of such a practice as well as the intensive characteristics of the space it endows.

For the sake of clarity, it will be best to begin with the issue of a collective assemblage of enunciation and its particular relation to the group in question. In her essay on this same topic, Réda Bensmaïa remarks that, "because it results from a situation 'where there are no possibilities for an individuated enunciation' minor literature will appear as the literature in which every statement, however slight, refers to a collectivity, or even to a community that is no longer *actual*, but essentially *virtual*."<sup>33</sup> This virtual community is both the origin and the aim of the expression as opposed to a subject which blocks this collective process and replaces it with *personal* concerns, worries, and sentiments. In this respect, the collectivity is also not localisable, nor is its minor linguistic practice reducible to a stable regionalism since the revolutionary content of this act is to always extend the potential of language to its absolute limit, to constantly cross the threshold toward a new sensibility and an active solidarity.<sup>34</sup>

Mumford indicated the extent to which medieval society valued corporate existence, and it should come as no surprise that numerous references to an *ordo vagorum* or a family of vagabonds appear in the historical record. One name often connected to these groups is that of Goliath, the Philistine hero killed by the young David in the Old Testament



and who, in medieval typology, “duly became a type of Satan and of the heretics who assaulted Christ’s Church.”<sup>35</sup> Whether such an order actually existed, that is, whether it existed in any manner comparable to the other corporate associations of the time, is highly unlikely although a number of poems bearing this name either in dedication or as a mark of authorship preclude any definitive answer. In all likelihood the tribe of Goliath is no more than a burlesque on the monastic orders, or a fanciful literary guild dedicated to the grey gentleman himself, as Thomas Wright suggests in his forward to the first modern anthology of Goliard poetry.<sup>36</sup> Regardless of conflicting claims as to the historical reality of such a guild, the name obviously designated a whole range of heretical, deviant, or simply ridiculous impressions for both the writers of this poetry and its censors.<sup>37</sup> Goliath, in this respect, becomes a proper name opening onto the space of the diabolical, a cipher or password for a virtual brotherhood or community of writers joined by their antagonism toward the Church, its sacraments and its representatives. Like Kafka’s letter K, it does not designate a narrative voice but a collective assemblage comprising an intensive field and with specific connections to the contemporary spatial, social, and religious milieus.

It is therefore more appropriate to regard Goliath not as an author but as the rubric of a literary style or effect indexed to these poems and the various lines that traverse them: a Goliard *esprit de corps*. This method immediately detaches our criticism from the evolutionary study of literature across genealogies of influence and inspiration, something that is particularly difficult for a group that enjoyed no subsequent tradition or school of inheritors. Sons without fathers, brothers all - that is the unique marker of this orphan literature that permits its derivation from a filiative artistic heritage no more than it gave rise to one. In this respect, the Goliards constituted a collective, indeterminate body designated by the false<sup>38</sup> patronymic just as their body of writings is ‘goliardic’ only because it shares the specific stylistic intensity this term designates. This is not to suggest that these poems did not dwell in the context of their times, but rather that the exclusive consideration of these contextual or historical variables misses the essence of these poetic productions, their specific style which, considered in and for itself, is ‘untimely’ and irreducible.

One particular objection to this critical attitude immediately arises and deserves comment here, that is, the apparent debt that Goliard literature owes to classical Latin. And while it is true that ancient deities and heroes appear throughout these poems, their treatment is anything but

consistent, nor does it participate in the literary antiquarianism that would blossom in the Renaissance: Venus may still be the goddess of love in name but most of her classical heritage is either discarded or twisted to suit the poet's specific project. Of course, the 'problem' of classical influence was in no way restricted to vagabond poets of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The earliest founders of the Christian church agonised over the pagan literary inheritance that accompanied the Latin language; and although Augustine himself decried the "empty romances"<sup>39</sup> of Virgil and Homer his own *Confessions* is itself a cautious attempt to negotiate one's literary path between the prose of Scripture and epic poetry. Ultimately, whether the medieval clerk adopted Ermenrich of Ellwangen's admonition to use the pagan verses only as fertile manure for Christian eloquence or contributed to the numberless classical imitations from this period, the important fact is that Latin literacy *ipso facto* involved a minimal familiarity with ancient devices and characters, and these elements' inclusion in a poem implies nothing about its particular style.

The same may also be said of the resemblance between Goliard poetry and the liturgical or popular verse forms of the day since formal, no less than substantive similarities imply little about the specific stylistic character of this writing. Lehmann is explicit on the debt owed to Church writings, noting: "Wortwahl, Vergleiche und Bilder, Versbau, Strophenbildung und Melodie der Goliardspoesie sind im starkem Maße von den Hymnen und Sequenzen beeinflusst [the diction, comparisons, images, verse constructions, strophe forms and melodies of Goliard poetry were strongly influenced by the hymns and sequences]."<sup>40</sup> Nevertheless, these elements of poetic production do not necessarily entail any particular stylistic traits any more than a major language can determine the specificity of its minorization. This is particularly so in the case of satire or parody, in which these formal conventions are displaced from their specific liturgical function and swept up in a vector opposed to the dominant significations implied by the sequences and hymns. "One of the stock accusations against [Goliards] was their disturbance of church services by the ribald words they sang at mass."<sup>41</sup> In this respect, their proximity and relation to religious verse must be grasped in terms of the specific trajectory they open this verse onto, borrowing its expressive traits and integrating them into their own literary assemblage.

If we follow this trajectory, it becomes apparent that the collective character of Goliard literature, like their spatiogeographic orientation, is essentially marginal or tangent to the dominant practice of the period. It is

a writing *between*, a disruptive and creative act addressed to a virtual community fleeing the cultural gravity of the classics and the spiritual power of the liturgy. The revolutionary content of this act, its distinctly political ramification, however, is couched in the very language and formal conventions of these traditions and constitutes a minor enunciation addressed to this indeterminate collective. Since this is a specifically literary gesture, and because the Goliard ‘assemblage’ is a specifically literary machine, it will therefore be best to turn to the poems themselves to assess the political content of their expression and its relation to a unique linguistic practice or style.

Both of these variables may be traced through one of the pre-eminent masterpieces of Goliard literature. Written in the twelfth century by a clerk to the archbishop-elect of Cologne though subsequently scattered throughout the libraries and universities of Europe, the *Confessio Goliae* achieved extraordinary notoriety despite the general ignorance surrounding the circumstances of its composition or the personal details of the so-called ‘Archpoet.’ Whether this person actually roamed the back alleys of Pavia as the poem suggests is ultimately unimportant since its literary or aesthetic value owes little to the individual narrative details of the confession, much less to the totality or cohesion of this poem as a personal statement, than to its evocation of a primal, affective sensibility that evades these distinctions and renders the question of authorship practically meaningless. Instead of a consistent narrative or interior line binding the *Confessio Goliae* together, there are several impersonal discursive threads that develop through the piece and lend it consistency, two of which are especially germane to this discussion: (1) a parodic-satirical trajectory addressed to the institutional and literary status of the confession; (2) a collective, delirious, or creative line effecting a unique relation between language, the spirit and material bodies. Both concerns are evident throughout the poem, intertwining and diverging in different passages, and it is difficult to touch on one in exclusion of the other since the poem’s religious or institutional resonance is practically inseparable from its creative functions and *vice versa*. Nevertheless, far from muddling the result, this dense, polyvocal composite of the polemical and the affirmative characterises the specific literary style of the Goliard.

The formal point of departure for both lines is the confession itself: an institutional prerequisite to the administration of communion, the *confessio* was also an autobiographical literary genre dating back to Augustine’s fifth century meditations. And although the two were closely

related each played a distinct role in Latin Christendom, the former serving as an immanent and mythically-charged act conducted privately with Christ's earthly representative while the latter was an enduring literary extension of this private scene intended to serve as a pious example to the faithful. In the abstract, however, each served a similar function by ritualising the individual's membership in the collective body of the Church whether through the sacrament itself or indirect public appeal. In a time when exclusion from communion entailed spiritual and social ostracism, such channels were critical to the political and religious cohesion overseen by the papacy; even a king's political stature tottered before bell, book and candle.<sup>42</sup>

The *Confessio Goliae* occupies an anomalous position in relation to both functions. Although prelates or confessors are addressed explicitly on two occasions, and despite the poem's own formal relation to the traditional literary models, the speaker's overwhelming enthusiasm for his past sins undermines the ostensibly penitent appeals for re-admission to the Christian fold. The poem thereby utilises the very elements of the confession to *oppose* them to the community of souls, a confession devoid of Augustine's abstemious piety, a diabolical satire on penitence itself. In contrast to the humbled sinner bending himself to judgement and accepting penance, the Goliard, in rejecting all carnal or spiritual strictures, also rejects the collective moral foundation on which they rest. A spiritual self-exile from the body of Christ, he becomes a political exile from the religious State and each affirmation of his lust for sex, dice, or wine leaves his soul on the margins of its authority, in between the city of God and the infernal regions, always *close to death*.

The specific political content of this satirical line is most apparent in those sections that deal directly with the institutional confession. In the first, the speaker pleads with the priest in what seems a characteristic salutation ("praesul discretissime, veniam te precor"); but this devotion is immediately overturned when he reveals the cause of his turmoil, "morte bona morior, dulci nece necor / meum pectas sauciant puellarum decor," suggesting that the prelate's blessing will restore his impotent flesh, perhaps in a parody on Jesus' miraculous healings in the gospels.<sup>43</sup> In this respect, the mock-confession forms a suitable counterpoint to the detailed panegyric on carnality, gaming, and intoxication that precedes it since the spiritual authority of the priest is practically useless for a person whose Christian soul is already dead ("mortuus in anima").<sup>44</sup> But this death is also correlated to the birth of a new flesh consecrated to sensual pleasures,

to *voluptas*, a revolutionary quickening that disengages the Goliard from the religious technology of the sacraments and opposes the interiority of the soul with an exteriority of the body. Since the confession is the mode of *individual* expression within this practice, it is also the fitting means of rejecting the spiritual program adumbrated by it; consequently, every statement in this poem is indispensably political, threatening the institutional status of the confession itself and opposing the ethical body of Christ.

The second confession is more elaborate and ostensibly sincere, borrowing much from the conventional penitential speech and addressed presumably to the mercy of the archbishop-elect himself. Although its placement at the end of the poem suggests a genuine rededication to the very regime derided in the previous stanzas, several details nonetheless point to its complicity with this satiric line. The precision with which he delivers the devotional and penitential formalities (laying his sins at the foot of the prelate, the Goliard disgorges his vice and feeds on the new milk of Christian virtue<sup>45</sup>), the suddenness of this conversion, particularly after such hyperbolic praise for his poetic talent, and again the request that the confessor spare his body as well as his spirit<sup>46</sup> all undermine the sincerity of the confession. Given the exuberance and wealth of detail with which he celebrated his vicious trinity it seems unlikely that the speaker should concede anything more than the outward trappings of devotion (“*homo videt faciem*”) while his spirit remains faithful to other impulses (“*sed cor patet Iovi*”).<sup>47</sup> Finally, the style of the last five stanzas differs markedly from those that precede it: the bravado is muted but not effaced and we are left with a parodic display of penitence in the same swaggering style that all but demands remission, or at least absolution enough to permit him to carry on as before. The second confession is certainly a reversal, but a failed one, and rather than repudiating the litany of vice, it crowns these worldly sins in an antipodean climax to what is properly a grand satire.

This discursive line readily presents itself to even the most casual of readers, but it also tends to exclude or overshadow the poem’s other, more positive elements. Despite initial impressions, the *Confessio Goliae* is not a simple exercise in diabolism, nor is the Goliard another King of Mis-Rule; for although the holy trinity is replaced with wine, women, and dice, the presentation of the human body is much more than an inversion of the theological position on the inferiority of earthly matter. To be precise, the death of the soul does not entail the abolition of the spirit so much as a

*decomposition* of the specific liturgical configuration established by the official sacraments, the communion especially.<sup>48</sup> Any disruption of the confession is a disruption of the social practice by which the soul is literally incarnated in the body of the believer as an agent subject to the corporate will of the Church; the theological function of the sacrament is therefore coextensive with its *political* function while the specific constitution of the spirit *as eternal soul* supplies the political-theological judgement with its direct object.

The revolutionary content of the Goliard confession is a repudiation of this into-jected *body of Christ* and its heavenly judgement through the same rituals that gave it consistency; properly speaking, it is not an *inversion* but a *perversion* of the institutional models since in rejecting one collective body it calls upon another, a vagabond, carnal, voluptuous body distributed throughout the highways and secret places of Europe. The Goliard spirit is disengaged from its interior relation in the Christian soul and sent racing along a delirious trajectory that finds its bodily correlate not in a morbid preparation for the beyond, but in a proliferation of external connections with the material world. And if the religious afterlife is eternal and unchanging, the spirit's new, immanent territory is in constant flux; this much is suggested by the rapid alternation of aerial and fluid images in the first stanzas: the speaker is a leaf blown by the wind, a roaring river beneath the sky, a sailorless ship, a flock of birds.<sup>49</sup> Whereas the official confession needed a unitary, penitent soul in its heaviest moment of bad conscience, this poem releases the spirit from this reactive posture and catapults it into a mad, irresponsible flight confluent with its presentation of the body as the locus of desire and affect. For this very reason, the Goliard is an individual or a diabolical personality only from the perspective of the Christian soul since his spirit connects up with all forms of this-worldly life neglected or repudiated by the former. Even the notion of a unitary ego loses consistency in his case; this is the essence of a Goliard *espirit de corps*: "not an ego but rather a singular composition, an idiosyncrasy, a secret cipher marking the unique chance that *these* entities had been retained and willed, that *this* combination had been thrown and not another."<sup>50</sup>

The essence of the poem's delirious, creative currents is felt in the quick impulsive rhythm of the opening stanzas and continues through the whole of the poem. An intensity or celerity opposed to the weightiness of confessional diction, this force is indexed to the linguistic deterritorialization that characterises its idiosyncratic style. Although it is

difficult today to conceive of Latin as anything but a dead language, we are reminded that it served various purposes encompassing multiple centres of power in the High Middle Ages. Employing Henri Gobard's fourfold model, we can see how Latin served a vehicular function for the Church bureaucracy, a symbolic-mythical one for the liturgy or the Vulgate, and a referential-figurative function in respect of the classical authors.<sup>51</sup> Although the Goliard Latin borrowed from each of these, it was no more religious literature than classical imitation, betraying the language of Christian myth by prying open fissures redolent of its pagan prehistory, betraying the classics in its flamboyant excess of stylistic invention. (The vehicular Latin institutionalised in the *ars dictaminis* taught at the new universities would ultimately ring the death knell for the classical revival of the twelfth century and upset the delicate tension that encouraged, but did not occasion, Goliard poetry.<sup>52</sup>) Nevertheless, the minor Latin of this literature is more than a simple mixture of various stylistic elements borrowed from the Scriptures or Ovid; for just as the *Confessio Goliae* transforms the formal elements of the confession into a means for a new expression, the Goliard poetics follows its own trajectory *between* and *beyond* the languages of its provenance.

A leaf, a river, a ship, a flock of birds: *folium, fluvius, navis, aves*. The speed with which these follow one another scrambles their individual metaphorical function and renders them as so many *images* opposing an intensive use of language to the symbolic or figurative. In resisting allegorical judgement, these elements resist the official exegetical apparatus and the moral determinations it implies; the Goliard language escapes hermeneutic capture, the allegory becomes the kaleidoscope. This is the essence of the speaker's metamorphosis, the transformation of body and spirit, his becoming-Goliath. "There is no longer a designation of something by means of a proper name, nor an assignation of metaphors by means of a figurative sense. But *like* images, the thing no longer forms anything but a sequence of intensive states, a ladder or circuit for intensities that one can make race around in one sense or another, from high to low, or from low to high. The image is this very race itself - it has become becoming."<sup>53</sup> At the linguistic level, this becoming is consubstantial with the assembly of a minor language opening onto a light and variable linguistic texture populated by the images, bodies, and creative lines that evade the judgement of the confession and the symbols of the sacraments to discover a new world of the image. This is accomplished not by virtue of any metrical or grammatical deviations, but

by selecting elements from the major usages and redeploying them with a sobriety that raises itself to delirious intensity and gives rise to a new poetic practice.

It is this creative delirium that becomes the proper activity for a new spirit. Unlike the soul-flesh relation instituted by the sacraments, the Goliardic spirit-body ceases to be the locus of reactive and mortifacatory strife; and just as the body multiplies its external connections within a dynamic milieu, the Goliardic spirit enters into exterior relations with this world through the *poetic* activity that characterises it. This specific type is opposed not only to the otherworldly religious asceticism of the faithful Christian, but to all forms of ascetic practice that deny or deform the material world and commit all spiritual energies to a purely transcendent mode of expression.

The solitary pedants who avoid public places and gladly sacrifice their young lives for the sake of an immortal verse<sup>54</sup> are singled out with particular scorn. While they sweat and labour in their hiding places, the speaker only erupts into song when tavern wine suffuses every fibre of his being and calls forth the literary genius of Apollo from the heights of his intoxication: “cum in arce cerebri Bacchus dominatur / in me Phoebus irruit et miranda fatur.”<sup>55</sup> In his case, the body’s physical rapture is not opposed to spiritual delight, but actually occasions it, the Bacchic frenzy driving the poet’s creative delirium in a line of flight that cuts across and breaks through the morbid otherworldliness shared by religious and artistic ascetics alike. For the anti-ascetic Goliard, *spiritus* and *corpus* merge in a single vital flow blurring the lines between language and life, making an *ethos* of poetry as much as it is a high art for the solitary versifier. His is an intensive living language that cannot be distinguished from an intense life and speaks from the giddy extremes of deprivation (“frigidus exterius, aestu mente sudo / tunc versus et carmina meliora cudo) and bibulous excess<sup>56</sup>, a delirious health that cuts across individuality and immortality to carve its own creative line of flight passing through the forms of religious capture and forging its own independent collective sensibility.

At a time when the vernacular literatures were expanding in influence and notoriety, it is important to recall that this extraordinary linguistic intensity, the *tension* vibrating throughout the poem’s stanzas, is achieved within a language already centuries-old. The essence of the Goliard Latin in this respect is the extent to which it *unhinges* the language from its mythical or referential function, placing the substantive, syntactic and formal elements of liturgical and classical usage in variation. What



Deleuze writes of minor writers could easily be said of the ‘Archpoet’: “they are great writers by virtue of this minorization: they make language take flight, they send it racing along a *witch’s line*, ceaselessly placing it in a state of disequilibrium, making it bifurcate and vary in each of its terms, following an incessant modulation.”<sup>57</sup> Written in the same tongue as the Vulgate and replete with references to Scriptural events, the *Confessio Goliae* occupies a linguistic space not unlike the *vagantes’* spatiogeographic orientation in twelfth-century Europe: it is a hybrid. Passionately opposed to the Church, but internal to it in nearly every respect, Goliard poetry is revolutionary in the sense that it opposes the State *through* the State’s own language, and in some cases even its own literary forms.

Given its relation to the three qualitative markers of a minor literature, it is clear that this writing constituted such a practice during the period in question. Nevertheless, whether this is enough to create a war machine remains to be seen. Deleuze and Guattari gauge a machinic function by its mode of relation with other machines; if we are to compare the Goliard’s literary assemblage to the war machine type, we must ask in what ways it relates to its various milieus and to the other assemblages inhabiting those milieus. Is it internal or external to the State? Is it characterised by exterior or interior forms? Is it composed of extensive or intensive elements, and what sort of space do they inhabit?

As an assemblage with both a spatiogeographic and a literary aspect, there can be no doubt that Goliard practice is decidedly *internal* to the State megamachine constituted by the medieval Church and expressed by its territorial, political, and spiritual arms. Its specific mode of relation to this determinant, sedentary machine, however, is marked by a spatial and linguistic *exteriority*. The former has been dealt with in the previous section; the latter is attested to by the stylistic components of Goliard writing as well as its presentation of the material world. Whereas in Christian theology the soul was constrained to experience its bodily incarnation as abhorrence, interiority, and sin, poems such as the *Confessio Goliae* emphasise the immanent poetic activity of the spirit in the context of a vital, material, and dynamic concept of the body itself worthy of affirmation independent of any transcendent mediation. In this respect, the Goliard confronts his diabolical double in the figure of the Cistercian - just as Abelard found his nemesis in Bernard - the migrant carried along in an endless voyage and the sedentary, introspective monk consecrated to spiritual and temporal stasis.

In his summary of the Goliard style, Symonds insists on its exteriority to the dominant political, religious and exegetical territories of the time, “because it was no outcome of feudalism or ecclesiasticism; because it has no tincture of chivalrous or mystic piety; because it implied no metaphysical determination; because it is pagan in the sense of being natural; because it is devoid of allegory, and finally, because it is emphatically humanistic.”<sup>58</sup> Although the last is saturated with Symonds’ own bias toward Renaissance styles, his remarks help to distinguish this materialist literature from mystical or allegorical literary practice. They also set it apart from the vernacular poetry of ‘courtly love’ which, as Symonds notes, always has “something pitifully unreal, incurably morbid, in its mysticism.” Unlike the fantastic princess of the troubadour lyric, the love object for the Goliard is always present and immanent to his desire, always of a kind with the full, material, carnal body of the Earth.<sup>59</sup> The ethereal woman-worship of chivalric literature is ultimately little more than a projection of the same interior processes at work in the Cistercian psychology: the Virgin becomes the ideal princess, the eternal soul the perfect knight, the physical trials an allegory for his spiritual conflict. Goliard literature eludes these allegorical formations because it evades the stylistic typology corresponding to a stable, unified interiority; images shift suddenly, the heavenly world is rejected for an animated materiality, and the subject is swept up in an impersonal creative delirium that is always immanent, libidinal, and absolute.

That the Goliards comprised an *intensive* threat to the State’s spatial and literary programs is attested to by the historical record and, again, by their specific linguistic practice. Unlike the Cathar heretics who constituted a delimited local threat to Church sovereignty, the *vagantes* lacked any regular extensive structure to their distribution and were simultaneously everywhere and nowhere at the same time. Their proper space was a hybrid of the religious and secular milieus, existing in the interstices between the cathedral, the cloister, and the internal deserts of Europe while their literature likewise inhabited the margins of Latin usage, drawing its own minor linguistic space corresponding to a new material earth and populated by intensive, desiring bodies. Unlike the stable, measurable significations attributable to allegory or religious typology, the Goliard Latin brought the power of metamorphosis to bear against the metaphor and thereby opposed the literary sovereignty of the major usage and its corresponding literature.

The intensive quality of these elements and the exteriority of their relations in passionate opposition to the sedentary, interior spatium of medieval society lead us to the conclusion that the Goliard literature did indeed form an internal war machine during the period in question. Like the warrior god, they brought a *furor* to bear against sovereignty, a celerity against gravity, and a secrecy against the public, although they accomplished this not by martial means but by a specifically *linguistic* practice.<sup>60</sup> This circumstance does not preclude their composing a war machine since that assemblage is defined, not by its object, but by its exteriority to the State apparatus, by the extent to which it draws its ownmost plane of consistency, its smooth space of displacement populated by intensity and affect. Following a path cut between the liturgical, bureaucratic and liturgical Latins, the Goliards displaced the elements of their *literary* or *linguistic phylum* to create a delirious space from which to oppose the spiritual and temporal apparatus of the Church. In this respect, their minor literature is the expressive arm of a war machine that is necessarily *internal* to the State yet always beyond its reach, constituting an intensive threat, an unseen maleficent presence within the ecclesiastical ranks. Its revolutionary potential is summed up by the disruption this machine caused at the very margins of the spiritual and spatial *imperium*, always opposing a wilful freedom and a material desire to the constrained obedience and mortification of its enemies.

Although the Goliard mode of spatialization was not nomadic, their linguistic practice does indicate a deterritorialized vector encompassing a unique intensity or sensibility that qualifies their specific style, and it is this style, its composition and its trajectory that assembles the war machine. Ultimately, since the nomad evades the overcoding involved in abstract writing, it is difficult to imagine how a nomad literature is even possible; a minor literature, it seems, must be the hybrid product of a hybrid life *internal* to the political or social strata. The *spatial* relation between this linguistic practice and a nomad war machine is therefore that of inverse opposites: one that cannot exist within State borders, and one that cannot begin beyond them. Although the concept of the war machine does not determine it as internal or external to these frontiers, its synthetic relation to nomadism or itinerancy does impose certain limits on its actualisation. The Goliards are a special case because they bear a mutant resemblance to the *spatial* practice of nomadism and to the *linguistic* determinants of a minor literature. Nevertheless, it seems clear that any concrete mixture of these abstract concepts will involve sort of mutation like that seen here.

What is important, ultimately, is not the extent to which the *vagantes* were *like* the nomads or *like* Kafka, but the extent to which they created and followed an original line of flight through the circumstances of their artistic, political, and social milieus. There is no ideal war machine and there never has been - the same may be said of minor literature. There are only concrete mixtures, deviations, mutations, always ceaseless collapse and recomposition.

The end to this vagabond war machine and to the minor literature that grew out of it ultimately came from both the secular and the religious States. Already in the beginning of the thirteenth century, the nascent national entities of Europe were growing in power and preparing the field for a challenge to ecclesiastical authority. Not surprisingly, the vernacular languages followed in this expansion that ultimately overshadowed and marginalised Latin's literary status in the emerging political climate. The thirteenth century Church also struck a mortal blow to the *vagantes* by rescinding their tonsure at the Council of Rouen (1231) and later calling upon secular authorities to take wayward clerics into custody.<sup>61</sup> Although vagrancy remains a problem through the fourteenth century, the heyday of Goliard literature is long over by then and 'goliard' itself has become a generic insult.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans: Brian Massumi (London: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 401.

<sup>2</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Kafka: Towards A Minor Literature*, trans: Dana Polan (London: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 16.

<sup>3</sup> Deleuze, Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 422-423.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 366.

<sup>5</sup> This central organisation also facilitated the expansive project of monastic colonisation that followed in the wake of the reconquest of the Iberian peninsula. Abbeys were established all along the Spanish pilgrimage routes and enjoyed enormous success although their numbers and distance from Cluny ultimately made this structure unworkable. By the twelfth century the order was in steady decline. See Charles Homer Haskins, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927), 42.

<sup>6</sup> Richard W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1970), 254.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. 255.

<sup>8</sup> Joseph H. Lynch confirms this tendency to settle in remote areas, adding, "The white monks chose to settle in wild places, without village and serfs, where they were pioneers who cut trees, moved rocks, built buildings and planted and harvested crops." *The Medieval Church: A Brief History* (London: Longman Group UK Ltd., 1992), 201.

<sup>9</sup> Joseph H. Lynch, *The Medieval Church: A Brief History*, 152-157.

<sup>10</sup> Helen Waddell, *The Wandering Scholars*, (London: Constable and Company, Ltd., 1927), 162. [where there is stability there is religion]

<sup>11</sup> Southern accounts this structure particular importance, writing, "a disciplined labour force which required no wages, had no families to support, and could not withdraw its labour, was the perfect recipe for agrarian efficiency, especially when it was concentrated in well-defined units." *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages*, 258-259. This mode of agrarian production is notable for two reasons that set it apart from the contemporary feudal system: (1) it was voluntary; *conversi* had to complete a year-long noviciate in order to join the order and were subject to many of the same ascetic strictures as religious members; (2) the system of authority was founded on exclusively spiritual and transcendent principles without the admixture of temporal power claimed by the secular lord; the entire community was consecrated to God and labour *was* prayer for lay brothers.

<sup>12</sup> Jean Leclercq, *Monks and Love in Twelfth-Century France*, (Oxford: Oxford Clarendon Press, 1979), 91-94.

<sup>13</sup> The irreducible nature of the crusading war machine was illustrated in a particularly violent way when the pope's first call to arms was answered not only by the knights and soldiery but by many peasants and poor townspeople who promptly marauded through Germany and on to Jerusalem, slaughtering Jews and sacking villages along the way. See Hans Eberhard Mayer, *The Crusades*, trans: John Gillingham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 40-41.

<sup>14</sup> Paul Virilio, *Speed and Politics*, trans: Mark Polizzotti (New York: Semiotext(e), 1986), 9.

<sup>15</sup> Louis Mumford, *The City in History* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1961), 269 [my italics]. Deleuze and Guattari's observations on the socio-political sources of the guilds and the relation they bear to the flow of labour are also instructive: "Settling, sedentarizing labour power,

regulating the movement of the flow of labour, assigning it channels and conduits, forming corporations in the sense of organisms, and, for the rest, relying on forced manpower recruited on the spot or among indigents - this has always been one of the principal affairs of the State, which undertook to conquer both a *band vagabondage* and a *body nomadism*." *A Thousand Plateaus*, 368.

<sup>16</sup> Virilio, *Speed and Politics*, 14.

<sup>17</sup> Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages*, 263. [my italics]

<sup>18</sup> Deleuze, Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 365; Mumford, *The City in History*, 315. See also Malcom Barber, *The New Knighthood* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 266-279.

<sup>19</sup> Virilio, *Speed and Politics*, 9-10.

<sup>20</sup> See Deleuze and Guattari on minor sciences, the Gothic journeymen, and the bridge-builders. *A Thousand Plateaus*, esp. 361-374.

<sup>21</sup> It will help to offer some terminological clarification here. Three important distinctions are operative throughout *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* and their apparent similarity can lead to confusion: (1) Internal-External: applies to an element or body's functional role in relation to a collective assemblage. If the State is regarded as a unique megamachine, as in the case of the Roman Empire or imperial Christendom in the twelfth century, then those bodies functioning within its spatium are regarded as internal while those beyond its borders will be external to it. (2) Interior-Exterior: a qualitative distinction applicable to a element's mode of composition with other elements in a collective body. The State is the very form of interiority insofar as it imposes a closed system of resonance and redundancy upon matter whereas an open system of exteriority is composed of immanent (non-transcendent) relations and possesses only as many dimensions as it does elements. (3) Intensive-Extensive: another qualitative distinction having to do with the properties of an element or body of elements regarded either from the perspective of homogeneity and equivalence, or that of heterogeneity, singularity and difference. In this respect, an intensive multiplicity is not reducible to a *number* or *measure* of elements since this involves a formal operation transcendent to their absolute mode of relation whereas an extensive multiplicity is no different from a mass of countable elements entertaining only homologous, reversible relations.

<sup>22</sup> Deleuze, Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 482.

<sup>23</sup> Waddell, *The Wandering Scholars*, 244-248. [into and out of the community]

<sup>24</sup> *Wege der Forschung: Mittellateinische Dichtung*, ed.: Karl Langosch (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1969), 388.

<sup>25</sup> One of the few Goliards about whom any biographical information is known is the so-called Archpoet of Cologne (ca. 1130-1165) who was attached to the retinue of archbishop-elect Reinald of Cologne during that man's tenure as Frederick Barbarossa's Italian envoy.

<sup>26</sup> Isidore of Seville, *De Ecclesiasticis Officiis*, ed.: Christopher M. Lawson (Turnholti Typographi Brepols Editores Pontificii, 1989), II:iii.

<sup>27</sup> Umberto Eco, *Travels in Hyperreality*, trans: William Weaver (New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1986), 79.

<sup>28</sup> John Addington Symonds, *Wine, Women and Song* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1884), 6.

<sup>29</sup> Plato's writings were not widely distributed in western Europe before Petrarch's lifetime (1304-1374) while the influence of the new Aristotle had only begun to insinuate itself in the twelfth century. Moreover, the medieval attitude toward the classics was very unlike the antiquarianism of the Renaissance; as Waddell writes, "to the medieval scholar, with no sense of perspective, but a strong sense of continuity, Virgil and Cicero are but the upper reaches of that river that still flows past his door." *The Wandering Scholars*, ix.

<sup>30</sup> Deleuze, Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 380.

<sup>31</sup> Deleuze, Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 422-423.

<sup>32</sup> Deleuze, Guattari, *Kafka: Toward A Minor Literature*, 18.

<sup>33</sup> Réda Bensmaïa, "On the Concept of Minor Literature from Kafka to Kateb Yacine," trans: Jennifer Curtiss Gage, *Gilles Deleuze and the Theater of Philosophy*, eds.: Constantin V. Boundas, Dorothea Olkowski (New York: Routledge, 1994), 216-217.

<sup>34</sup> Deleuze, Guattari, *Kafka: Toward A Minor Literature*, 17.

<sup>35</sup> Patrick Gerard Walsh, *Love Lyrics from the Carmina Burana*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), xv.

<sup>36</sup> Thomas Wright, *The Latin Poems Commonly Attributed to Walter Mapes*, (London: John Bowyer Nichols and Son, 1841), ix-xvi. Walter Mapes (1140-1208?), a favourite of Henry II and enemy to both the Cistercians and the military orders, was largely credited with all or most Goliard literature until the nineteenth century.

<sup>37</sup> Philip Allen lists some of the more risqué topics as follows, "blasphemous parody of sacred hymn and mass, sodomitic odes,

pederastic paeans, apostrophe of sexual intercourse, interminable listing of private feminine parts, sodden and even filthy tales, scoffing at calendar saints, riotous drinking rounds, macaronic ditties with the nastier half in vernacular tongues.” *Medieval Latin Lyrics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1931), 110.

<sup>38</sup> This patronymic is false in the sense that it does not signify a person or individual subject (Author-function) but a collective body without origin or destination and determinable only in terms of its specific affective or stylistic characteristics (Goliard-function). Although the proper name is used in both instances, the two *acts* distinguished here could not be more unlike.

<sup>39</sup> Saint Augustine, *Confessions*, trans: R.S. Pine-Coffin (London: Penguin Group Ltd., 1961), I:13. The passage quoted in the last section from Isidore of Seville’s *De Ecclesiasticis Officiis* (n.25) also includes a literal reference to Virgil’s *Aeneid*.

<sup>40</sup> Lehmann, *Die lateinische Vagantendichtung*, 394.

<sup>41</sup> Haskins, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*, 184.

<sup>42</sup> “In a Christian society, where social bonds were surrounded with religious meaning, an excommunicated king could not function.” Lynch, *The Medieval Church: A Brief History*, 144.

<sup>43</sup> ll. 21-24. All citations refer to the edition of the poem arranged by Thomas Wright in his *Latin Poems Commonly Attributed to Walter Mapes* (London: John Bowyer Nichols and Son, 1841).

<sup>44</sup> ll. 16.

<sup>45</sup> ll. 86; 91.

<sup>46</sup> ll. 83-84: “mittat in me lapidem, neque parcat vati / cuius non est animus conscius peccati.” The implicit comparison with Christ’s defence of the adulteress also invites further satire since the speaker clearly has a greater concern for avoiding stones than curing his fellows of their sins.

<sup>47</sup> ll. 88. The reference to God as Jove or the Roman Jupiter implies the presence of a pagan source, literary or otherwise.

<sup>48</sup> This sacrament is compared unfavourably with the pleasures of the tavern, and it is easy to regard this as a simple negation of Christian piety. But this view neglects the specific relation the Eucharist bears to the spiritual and political practice of the Church, namely as a vehicle binding the faithful into a single corporate body which is itself the collective body of Christ. The Goliard replaces this religious body consecrated by the Eucharist with the wilful, wicked fellowship of youth (“quaero mei similes et adjungor pravis”), and just as the former incarnates the soul as an



immortal and otherworldly helmsman to the wayward flesh, the latter reconfigures the spirit as immanent and consubstantial with the body.

<sup>49</sup> ll. 4; 7-10.

<sup>50</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Essays: Critical and Clinical*, trans: Michael A. Greco, Daniel W. Smith (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 120. The special attention paid to gambling in the *Confessio Goliae* is also significant in this connection.

<sup>51</sup> Deleuze, Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, 23-24.

<sup>52</sup> “Yet, in point of fact, it was not religion but logic and practical interests that proved the most dangerous enemies of the classics and finally killed the classical renaissance of the twelfth century.” Haskins, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*, 98.

<sup>53</sup> Deleuze, Guattari, *Kafka: Toward A Minor Literature*, 21-22.

<sup>54</sup> ll. 51-60; “ut carmen faciant quod non possit mori / moriuntur studio, subditi labori” (59-60).

<sup>55</sup> ll. 75-76.

<sup>56</sup> ll. 39.

<sup>57</sup> Deleuze, *Essays: Critical and Clinical*, 109. [my italics]

<sup>58</sup> John Addington Symonds, *Wine, Women and Song*, 171.

<sup>59</sup> George F. Whicher, *The Goliard Poets*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1949), 161.

<sup>60</sup> Deleuze, Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 352.

<sup>61</sup> Waddell, *The Wandering Scholars*, 186-187.

**Appendix:**  
***Confessio Goliae***

- Aestuans intrinsecus ira vehementi,  
 in amaritudine loquar meae menti,  
 factus de materia levis elementi  
 similis sum folio de quo ludunt venti;  
 5 cum enim sit proprium viro sapienti  
 supra petram ponere sedem fundamenti,  
 stultus ego comparor fluvio labenti,  
 sub eodem aere nunquam permanenti.  
 Feror ego veluti sine nauta navis,  
 10 ut per vias aeris vaga fertur avis;  
 non me tenent vincula, non me tenet clavis,  
 quaero mei similes et adjungor pravis.  
 Via lata gradiens more juventutis,  
 implico me vitiis, immemorr virtutis,  
 15 voluptatis avidis magis quam salutis,  
 motuus in anima curam gero cutis.  
 Mihi cordis gravitas res videtur gravis;  
 haec est amicabilis dulciorque favis,  
 quicquod Venus imperat labor est suavis,  
 20 quae nunquam in cordibus habitat ignavis.  
 Praesul discretissime, veniam te precor,  
 morte bona morior, dulci nece necor,  
 meum pectus sauciat puellarum decor,  
 et quas tactu nequeo saltem corde moechor.  
 25 Res est arduissima vincere naturam,  
 in aspecti virginum mentem ferre puram;  
 juvenes non possumus legem sequi duram,  
 leviumque corporum non habere curam.  
 Quis in igne positus igne non uratur?  
 30 quis in mundo demorans castus habeatur,  
 ubi Venus digito juvenes venatur,  
 oculis illaqueat, facie praedatur?  
 Si ponas Hippolitum hodie Papiae,  
 non erit Hippolitus in sequenti die;  
 35 hunc ad opus Veneris ducunt omnes viae;  
 non est in tot turribus turris Aliciae.

- Secundo redarguor etiam de ludo;  
sed cum ludus interest, me dimittet nudo;  
frigidus exterius, aestu mente sudo;  
40 tunc versus et carmina meliora cudo.
- Tertio capitulo memoro tabernam;  
illam nullo tempore spreui, neque spernam,  
donec sanctos angelos venientes cernam,  
cantantes pro mortuo requiem aeternam.
- 45 Meum est propositum in taberna mori:  
vinum sit appositum morientis ori,  
ut dicant cum venerint angelorum chori,  
Deus sit propitius huic potatori!
- Poculis accenditur animi lucerna;  
50 cor imbutum nectare volat ad superna:  
mihi sapit dulcius vinum in taberna,  
quam quod aqua miscuit praesulis pincerna.
- Loca vitant publica quidam poetarum,  
et secretas eligunt sedes latebrarum;  
55 sudant, instant, vigilant, nec laborant parum,  
et vix tandem reddere possunt opus clarum.
- Jejunant et abstinent poetarum chori,  
lites vitant publicas et tumultus fori;  
et ut carmen faciant quod non possit mori,  
60 moriuntur studio, subditi labori.
- Unicuique proprium dat natura munus:  
ego nunquam potui scribere jejunos;  
me jejunum vincere posset puer unus;  
sitim et jejunium odi tanquam funus.
- 65 Unicuique proprium dat natura donum:  
ego versus faciens bibo vinum bonum,  
et quod habent melius dolia cauponum;  
tale vinum generat copia sermonum.
- Tales versus facio quale vinum bibo:  
70 nihil possum scribere nisi sumpto cibo;  
nihil valet penitus quod jejunus scribo,  
Nasonem post calices carmine praeibo.
- Mihi nunquam spiritus poetriae datur,  
nisi tunc cum fuerit venter bene satur;  
75 cum in arce cerebri Bacchus dominatur,

- in me Phoebus irruit et miranda fatur.  
 Ecce vitae proditur vanitatis fui,  
 ne qua me redarguunt servientes sui;  
 sed eorum nullus est accusator sui,  
 80 quamvis volunt ludere scelereque frui.  
 Jam sum in praesentia praesulis beati,  
 secundum dominici regularam mandati;  
 mittat in me lapidem, neque parcat vati,  
 cuius non est animus conscius peccati.  
 85 Sum locutus contra me quicquid de me novi,  
 et virus evomui quod tam diu fovi;  
 vita vetus displicet, mores placent novi;  
 homo videt faciam, sed cor patet Iovi.  
 Jam virtutes diligo, vitiis irascor;  
 90 renovatus animo, spiritu renascor:  
 quasi modo genitus, lacte novo pascor,  
 meum ne sit amplius vanitatis vas cor.  
 Praesul Conventrensium,<sup>1</sup> parce confitenti;  
 fac misericordiam veniam petenti,  
 95 et da poenitentiam culpas sic dicenti:  
 feram quicquid iusseris animo libenti.

### Note

<sup>1</sup> There are several versions of this poem in existence, many of which are addressed to prelates from different locales. Although this particular edition calls upon the bishop of Coventry, scholars generally agree that the original, belonging to the Archpoet, was intended for the archbishop-elect of Cologne.

## Facing the Swarm: Encountering a Non-Human War Machine **John Appleby**

As for the war machine itself, it seems to be irreducible to the State apparatus, to be outside its sovereignty and prior to its law: it comes from elsewhere.<sup>1</sup>

What happens when the State comes into contact with a war machine which does not simply come from elsewhere, but is absolutely Other than the State? This paper maps the nature of encounters between swarms of locusts and the State, positing such encounters as a limit case for some of the notions expounded in Deleuze and Guattari's 'Treatise on Nomadology' (ATP, pp. 351-423). It will show States caught up in lines of transversal communication which completely disrupt them in a way in which encounters with human nomads can only point at. I will begin by considering the validity of describing locusts as nomadic, and then demonstrate how their behaviour is in accordance with the mode of operation of a nomad war machine as outlined in the 'Nomadology'. This will be followed by a discussion of human attempts to combat locust swarms, in order to show that this is a war machine which the State cannot defeat.

### **An Insect War Machine**

At first glance, the claim that locusts are nomadic is a contentious one. This is because they tend to be described as migratory insects. However, animal migrations are usually fixed patterns of behaviour linked to seasonal movements towards food or breeding areas (such as birds flying South for the Winter). Patterns of locust movement, on the other hand, are irregular and, whilst they tend to be driven by the search for food, are not strictly determined by the creatures themselves. Locust swarms are directed by prevailing winds. Although this is to a certain extent seasonal, it is because wind patterns vary depending upon the time of year. Winds move towards areas of low barometric pressure, which are incidentally

where rainfall is highest and so where vegetation is at its most plentiful; 'as the Desert Locust lives chiefly in arid countries, an ability to move towards places where rain has recently fallen, or is likely to fall, must be of considerable survival value to the species.'<sup>2</sup> Williams use of the word 'ability' is misleading here because this is not a power possessed by the locusts; it is rather as a result of the creation of a locust-wind assemblage that this particular pattern of movement occurs. Therefore the winds propel the locusts towards sources of food, but this does not indicate migratory or instinctive behaviour on the part of the insects themselves. Additionally, in contradistinction to insects such as butterflies, which have particular breeding areas, locust swarms will breed in transit, so to speak; they do not move into specific regions at certain points of the year in order to reproduce.

Deleuze and Guattari claim that 'the primary determination of nomads is to occupy and hold a smooth space; it is this aspect that determines them as nomad' (ATP, p. 410), and this is certainly an accurate description of the activity of the swarm. Locusts move through the smooth space which is the desert, carrying it forward with them as they travel by deterritorializing the areas of vegetation into which they enter, and returning them to the desert. Consequently, if one takes together the unintentional directedness of the swarm and its effect upon the space which it occupies, it seems reasonable to describe locusts as nomadic, rather than migratory, insects.

If locusts are nomadic, then the swarm constitutes an insect war machine. 'The war machine does not necessarily have war as its object' (ATP, p. 416), rather it has a synthetic relation with violence. War is the outcome when the war machine encounters the obstruction to its free movement in *nomos* which is the State. This is exactly what happens when the swarm moves into State controlled agricultural territories. It could be argued that in such a case, war is waged by the State against the locusts and that they are not active participants. However this would be incorrect as the locusts' method of waging war is completely flat and immanent to their way of life in the swarm. In other words, locusts go to war without changing their behaviour; they simply continue to consume all vegetation within their path. The effect of such an incursion upon the State is that of a marauding army devastating the territory through which it travels.

## Mode of Operation

Locusts are solitary creatures until climatic conditions arise which cause a sudden flush of vegetation. When this happens, they increase their food consumption to 100% of their body weight per day and become gregarious, physically changing in the process. Such behaviour is known as ‘density dependent polymorphism’, as the physical changes are triggered by the population of locusts in an area crossing a certain threshold. Because of the impact of States striating their territories, the solitary phase locust cannot maintain itself in the type of landscape which the swarms overrun. The swarms come out of *nomos* and deterritorialize the agricultural landscape. Moreover, the difference between these two phases of the creatures functioned for a long time as a form of camouflage for them, owing to the fact that it was not realised that the two phases were in fact the same species.<sup>3</sup> This had the result that identifying potential areas out of which swarms were likely to arise (of which more below) was virtually impossible.

It is difficult to grasp the immensity of the swarms; even aerial photographs fail to do justice to just how massive and dense they are: ‘A single swarm of locusts can be small (hundreds of square meters) or huge, composed of billions of locusts, with up to 80 million per square kilometer over an area of more than 1,000 square kilometers.’<sup>4</sup> Williams backs this up, saying ‘a thousand million locusts is quite a small swarm, and from some swarms eggs have been collected and destroyed by the ton’ (p. 102). Additionally there is a further consideration; a plague of locusts does not involve a single swarm, but can involve hundreds of them which may invade an area either simultaneously or sequentially.<sup>5</sup> With this sort of size and density, it is unsurprising that the locust war machine can deterritorialize the landscape so quickly.

There is a second major factor which constitutes the swarm as a war machine, its speed of movement: ‘In one day, a swarm of locusts can fly 100 km in the general direction of prevailing winds. Bands of nymphs [i.e. immature locusts] can march about 1.5 km per day’ (Showler). This means that not only are the swarms so huge that they are difficult to eliminate, they move so quickly that they have often passed by before effective counter-measures can be taken against them:

I calculated that if we had been able to kill a million [locusts] a minute, it would have taken about seven days and nights to destroy

such a swarm - and how many miles would it have been away by then? Later I was to see a distracted assistant Director of Agriculture jumping on the locusts and crushing them with his feet. In spite of the latter being somewhat large, the method was doomed to failure; but I sympathised with his feelings.  
(Williams, p. 78)

Consequently, the best time to attack locusts is once the ambient temperature has dropped, and they have settled for the night.

Deleuze and Guattari point out that 'only nomads have absolute movement, in other words, speed; vortical or swirling movement is an essential feature of the war machine' (ATP, p. 381). This is because as they have no fixed territory, but rather fill the territory through which they move, nomads have no stake in remaining in any given area. It is readily apparent that the swarms cannot remain where they are, both because they strip the land, and because they are driven on by the winds once they rise into the air. They must be constantly on the move in order to maintain their way of life as a swarm, it is only when locusts hatch out in areas of low density that they can revert to their solitary, more sedentary, phase.

The constituent elements of the swarm exhibit vortical motion as the locusts become caught up in spiral winds which move them in gigantic spirals in which the individuals at the centre exhibit the most linear pattern of movement, whilst those at the edges are flung out in all directions.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, the absolute movement of the swarm is also vortical. Vortical distribution is a state of high improbability giving an absence of determining distribution to the swarm (vortexes do not travel in straight lines). It is this vortical movement which smoothes space and allows the war machine to both fill smooth space, and operate as an agent of deterritorialization.

The third element by which the swarm constitutes a war machine is its relationship to weaponry. Nomad war machines have a special relationship with projectile weapons, and 'anything that throws or is thrown is fundamentally a weapon, and propulsion is its essential moment' (ATP, p. 395). As the locusts are themselves thrown forward, both under their own power and that of the wind, the insects and their weapons cannot be differentiated between; they are one and the same thing. This makes the locusts flatter with the war machine than their human counterparts.<sup>7</sup>

The above characteristics constitute the insect war machine as a formidable engine of deterritorialization. Deleuze and Guattari summarize



the programme for the war machine as follows: 'Make the outside a territory in space; consolidate that territory by the construction of a second, adjacent territory; deterritorialize the enemy by shattering his territory from within; deterritorialize oneself by renouncing, by going elsewhere' (ATP, p. 353). This is exactly the mode of operation of a swarm, and is even more exemplary of a plague of locusts. The locusts strip the land at high speed, and then move on constantly encroaching upon the territory of the State and returning it to the desert; 'Where swarms do land and feed, losses can be 100% within hours at the local level' (Showler). This causes massive problems for the State inasmuch as it is no longer able to feed the population by which it constitutes itself *qua* State. 'It is said that in 125 B.C., in the Roman Colonies of Cyrenaica and Numidea in North Africa, about 800,000 people died of starvation after a locust invasion' (Williams, p. 80). In fact, it may be that the destruction of States' infrastructure by repeated and irregular attack from swarms of locusts is one of the determining factors in such areas failing to achieve large scale industrial development, as they are never able to arrive at a point where they have enough food stocks to allow a large enough proportion of their population to leave the land and make the transition from agricultural to industrial labourers.

Whilst the State codes and decodes space leading to the creation of striated space, locusts are pure vectors of deterritorialization. They are unable to act as agents of stratification or destratification, as they operate without coding systems.<sup>8</sup> This differentiates them from human nomad war machines which are associated with the 'Numbering Number' (ATP, p. 389), but also gives the locusts a tactical advantage over their human counterparts.

The complete lack of coding means that the swarm is a completely rhizomatic structure, with absolutely no differentiation between its individual components.<sup>9</sup> Consequently, when parts of the swarm are destroyed, it has no effect upon the behaviour of the rest of the locusts, with the exception that they may remain in an area for a longer period as they will not strip it so quickly. Additionally, when swarms encounter each other on their lines of flight, they are able to simply join together and continue as a single larger entity.

The stems of the rhizome are always taking leave of the trees, the masses and flows are constantly escaping, inventing connections that jump from tree to tree and uproot them: a whole smoothing of

space, which reacts back upon striated space. Even, and especially, territories are perturbed by these deep movements. (ATP, p. 506)

However, there is an indirect way in which the insect war machine can act as an agent of stratification. This is because it may cause the State to become more stratified, and take an interest in striating the desert by means of surveillance techniques, as will become clear in the next section.

### **Wining the War**

Over the years, humans have experimented with many different methods in attempts to eradicate or dispel swarms of locusts:

Controlling large bands and swarms of desert locusts has been attempted in different ways with varying degrees of success. Trenches can be dug near agricultural perimeters to catch nymphal bands marching toward crops where they can be buried. Smoke is, in some places, thought to repel swarms, but this does not seem to work. In some societies, a magic or holy man is summoned to dispel the bands and swarms with potions or incantations. (Showler)<sup>10</sup>

Nowadays most locust control is co-ordinated by the United Nations (UN), but it is for the most part unsuccessful. An article on 8 January 1994 in the *New Scientist* opens with the words 'The UN is losing its war against locusts'.<sup>11</sup> The article was prompted by a meeting of agricultural scientists, at which it was claimed that one of the largest plagues of locusts ever recorded, which occurred in the late 1980's, 'was only stopped because strong winds blew the locusts into the sea' (NS). The UN relies upon a two-fold strategy of surveillance of the desert, and chemical spraying of the locusts either as they are about to swarm, or once they are on the move. Both prongs of this attack are highly problematical as the insects more often than not elude the State.

The main UN tool of surveillance of the desert is the use of weather satellites to provide imaging of vegetation flushes and areas where rain has fallen in order to detect potential trouble sites (they also carry out ground patrols and pay indigenous peoples, such as desert nomads, to provide them with information). In this way, the UN attempts to striate and reterritorialize the desert in order to bring it under State control.

Unhappily, ‘the satellites cannot detect patches of vegetation smaller than seven kilometres on a side’ (NS), and swarms can arise out of areas which are smaller than this. Moreover, where the satellites do detect such a vegetation flush, the fact that it is larger than that required by the locusts to swarm, means that the entire area must be searched on the ground in order to eliminate the possibility that this is actually occurring. The very fact that the UN is only able to detect probable, rather than actual, sites of swarming shows up the fact that its attempted striation of the desert is only partially successful, allowing the insects to swarm in secrecy.<sup>12</sup>

One would think that there was an obvious solution to the problem of inadequate desert surveillance, and that this would be to develop satellites with a greater power of resolution in order to define more tightly the probable areas out of which swarms are likely to arise. This has in fact already happened, but it has also brought along a new set of problems. The first is simply that better technology costs more money. Whilst this is problematical at the present, it may be that in the future the cost would fall, and so this is not necessarily an insurmountable difficulty. What does appear to be an insurmountable difficulty for satellite surveillance is that with these higher resolution models, ‘the immense amount of data generated by the satellite is hard to process in time to alert local teams’ (NS). This means that the UN has the option of either supplying ground teams with data which is not sufficiently detailed to allow them to locate the locusts before they swarm, or supplying the ground teams with data which does have the required detail, but arrives too late to allow them to reach the locusts before they swarm. Either way, the locusts win and the war machine is up and running before humans can get to it.

Once the locusts have been spotted, there are formidable logistical problems associated with spraying them. This is firstly because they move so quickly although, as mentioned above, this difficulty can be overcome to an extent by spraying them at night, but additionally lack of resources means that much of the spraying is carried out on the ground from trucks. Given the size of these swarms, it is easy to see why they are rarely eliminated by spraying, but simply diminished before they escape out of the area.

Spraying also carries with it severe repercussions for the State, in that it results in crop loss and ecological damage which can take long periods of time to repair. In the State’s war with the locust, one is reminded of the scorched earth policies carried out during certain human conflicts. In both cases, the State readily destroys its own lands to get rid

of its enemies, but is then left with an aftermath which may be as detrimental to it as the effect of the war machine would have been. The hope is, of course, to minimise damage to State lands by destroying the swarm in a smaller area than that which it would have ravaged. But as swarms are seldom eliminated completely by spraying (even where that spraying is carried out from the air), and as the locusts are never completely wiped out, as they will have left behind offspring on their travels, some of which hatch into the sedentary phase, the insect war machine has a much more deleterious effect upon the State than the State can have upon it.

In summary, the currently favoured method of locust control is a combination of preventative surveillance followed by spraying (either preemptively or, more likely, after the locusts have swarmed), and neither of these techniques works very well:

Ideally, locust control should occur at or prior to the onset of gregarious behavior when locusts, preferably in the less mobile and nonreproductive nymphal stage, have amassed in small patches no more than several square meters in diameter in breeding areas. Success would likely require that a critical, though as yet undetermined, proportion of these patches be controlled with the ultimate aim of holding locust populations in the recession phase indefinitely. Unfortunately, we have not yet developed this capability. (Showler)

Many of the other logistical problems associated with locust control are due to the sort of areas and States which they come into contact with. Showler notes that ‘it is a facetious rule of thumb that desert locusts seem to be inexplicably attracted to areas where war is in progress’. The reason for this is that it is much more difficult to effectively survey and spray a war zone than it is empty areas of desert which are loosely under State control (i.e. inside national boundaries, but not actually striated by agriculture or industry). Therefore the locusts are more likely to swarm in war zones as the human war machines are already at work smoothing the space, and so paving the way for the insects.

Also, as the States bordering deserts tend to be less ‘developed’ than some, the economic resources are not available to adequately crush the insect war machine. Coupled to this is the fact that communication and co-operation between such States is not particularly high. This means that

as the swarms cross State boundaries, the State which they are leaving ceases to regard them as a problem (unless they come back), and correlatively States tend not to be interested in investing scarce resources for locust control in their neighbours' territories as a preventative measure, just in case the war machine should cross over into their own territory. The upshot of all this is that the UN attempts to co-ordinate locust control, which incidentally gives it an excuse to interfere with the internal affairs of the countries at risk. This is a second way in which locusts may cause stratification as they act as an excuse to add a further layer of overcoding upon the States with which they interact.

For the above reasons, the locusts often continue to swarm until a natural event occurs which halts them such as a lack of food or, as mentioned earlier, being blown out to sea. However, in the latter case, the swarm can return to haunt the State, as Showler points out. Vast quantities of locust cadavers have been known to wash back onto beaches and, in decomposing, provide highly favourable breeding grounds for pathogens such as cholera. Even after its destruction, the insect war machine can continue to cause fresh problems for the State.

## Conclusion

It can be seen that there are striking similarities between swarms of locusts and the nomad war machine, in terms of both their respective constitutions and modes of operations. This is not to say that there are not also differences between the two, and these should not be downplayed. The nomad war machine is a much more adaptable entity than its insect counterpart, in that it is able to innovate when it comes up against obstacles in its dealings with the State. Conversely, the swarm simply continues along the same line until it is destroyed, either by the State or by other agents. But the locusts are so immanent to their environment that, upon the destruction of the swarm, they simply melt back into the landscape; the locust population is as rhizomatic as it is possible to get.<sup>13</sup>

The swarm has one great advantage over its human counterpart, in that it cannot be subjected to State capture. Deleuze and Guattari detail how the war machine is turned into State armies through the use of disciplinary techniques, and then deployed to fend off or attack other war machines. 'We certainly would not say that discipline defines a war machine: discipline is the characteristic required of armies after the State

has appropriated them' (ATP, p. 358). This is not something which could conceivably happen to an insect war machine, for locusts can neither be disciplined, nor do swarms fight each other when they meet up, they simply join together, spread out, and become a plague.

The methods of the nomad war machine are also appropriated by the State and turned back against it (as was done with cavalry and projectile weapons). The reason for the success of the swarm when it goes to war with the State arises from the fact that it is so alien that, should it be fought with its own methods (which is to say, stripping the land of all edible vegetation), this would immediately lead to the collapse of any State which attempted it. Such a strategy can only be carried through by a population which continually moves at high speed, deterritorializing itself as it goes; the State cannot exist like this.

The only effective method of control of locusts appears to be to striate and overcode *nomos* in such a manner that the locust swarms are no longer able to arise, in that the switch from solitary to gregarious behaviour cannot take place in secret, so the swarms can be nipped in the bud. This cannot be done by satellite or other means of surveillance, but can only take place by physical occupation of the smooth space out of which the swarms arise. For example the Rocky Mountain Locust was indigenous to the North Western United States, but appears to have died out due to all of its breeding areas being reterritorialized by humans for agricultural use. But, given the enormous economic resources required, could the State occupy the entire desert, and would it want to?

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi (London: The Athlone Press, 1988), p. 352. Hereafter abbreviated in the text to ATP.

<sup>2</sup> C. B. Williams, *Insect Migration* (London: Collins, 1958), p. 83.

<sup>3</sup> Williams (p. 158) dates this discovery to 1921. Before this, it was recognised that the solitary phase was a locust or grasshopper, but not that it was a potential cause of agricultural havoc.

<sup>4</sup> Allan T. Showler, 'The Desert Locust in Africa and Western Asia: Complexities of War, Politics, Perilous Terrain, and Development' (sourced from the Internet at <http://www.ent.agri.umn.edu/academics/classes/ipm/chapters/showler.htm>, 1996) no page numbers.

<sup>5</sup> When they are not over-interfered with by humans or other environmental factors, plagues of locusts can continue for over a year returning to an area as the vegetation is replenished (see Williams, p. 79).

<sup>6</sup> See Williams, p. 83.

<sup>7</sup> The closest comparison with human weaponry, in terms of affect, would be area impact munitions, such as cluster bombs, which generate anti-personnel metal storms over large areas. However, whilst the metal storms themselves are completely indiscriminate and indeterminate, cluster bombs still have to be aimed and released by human operators. In contradistinction, the affect and the mode of dispersal of the insect war machine are inseparable.

<sup>8</sup> The only coding system associated with locusts is the DNA coding of their genetic makeup. However, it could hardly be claimed that this was under their control, and additionally, as it is non-signifying, its capacity for overcoding is negligible.

<sup>9</sup> Deleuze and Guattari distinguish between the rhizome and the tree: Arborescent connections are molar, meaning that they are transcendent, and tend to overcode that with which they connect, whereas rhizomatic connections are molecular, in that they are proximal and immanent, with each point of the rhizome having the capability of joining up with any other point in a heterogeneous fashion; 'any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be' (ATP, p. 7).

<sup>10</sup> Showler also claims that 'some observers remark that such a huge biomass could be harvested as human food'. It would be interesting to watch a population trap, and then attempt to munch its way through, even a small swarm of two or three billion locusts.

<sup>11</sup> 'Locusts win war with UN', *New Scientist*, 08 January 1994, Vol.141 No.1907, p.7. Hereafter abbreviated in the text to NS.

<sup>12</sup> 'The secret has its origin in the war machine; it is the war machine' (ATP, p. 287).

<sup>13</sup> Compare locusts with other nomadic insects, such as army ants: The latter are dependent upon their queen for survival; destroy the queen, and the colony dies. This does not happen with locusts (or their close relatives). So long as there is a breeding pair left alive out of the swarm, the rhizome can regenerate to its previous size when the conditions are right.





Fei Ch'ien<sup>1</sup> Rinse Out:  
Sino-Futurist Under-Currency  
Steve Goodman<sup>2</sup>

**1. [11011]** The Death of a Thousand Cuts is an encryption system for 'cleansing' professed traitors of the Hung-Triads.<sup>3</sup> 'Cleansing' involves draining every-drop of blood from the victims body through an intricately timed numerical system of one thousand incisions. "In Chinese they say: 'Only the mighty 7 (which is Death) keeps 3 (which is Creation) pure!'"<sup>4</sup>

**2. [11010]** The global war machine sets "its sights on a new type of enemy, no longer another State, or even another regime, but the 'unspecified enemy' . . . multiform, manoeuvring and omnipresent . . . the unassignable material Saboteur or human Deserter assuming the most diverse forms."<sup>5</sup>

**3. [11001]** "All war is based on deception."<sup>6</sup>

**4. [11000]** Sinofuturism is a darkside cartography of the turbulent rise of East Asia. It connects seemingly heterogeneous elements onto the topology of planetary capitalism. On digital maps sent back from Shaolin (a satellite entity orbiting somewhere outside history) the modern Occident appears as irrigated through a modernity of thermodynamic industrialist aggression. When the modern nation-state bought its war machines, splitting a constitutive power into a double articulation between political aims and militarised means, it adopted a state-centred martial mode. But the regulation/prohibition of means has, for a long time, been known as the best recipe for turbulence-control as a catalyst of non-linearity. It was not surprising, therefore, when the means (through unprecedented investment in constant and variable capital), in a flash, emerged from the depths of the strata, dragging with it the intestines that had held it in place, pulling the inside of the State onto the outside. Thereby Clausewitz's formula was reversed, relegating component States into mere conduits for a planetary military-cybernetic machine. Phase change. Programmed catastrophe surfing on pure war. Turbulence simulation. A war against positive feedback "quantizing it as amplification within an unvariable metric . . . [and] . . . establishing a cybernetics of stability fortified against the

future.”<sup>7</sup> Postmodern control is based on the undecidable proposition because, after the Absolute Peace of the Cold war, the enemy to the human security system is a polytendrilled abomination (into which the state is always becoming) of transnational trade, warlords, narco-syndicates and millennial death cults. At this precise point, Sun Tzu rushes in from Shaolin, with tactical cuts on the CNS of the Occidental megamachine as it mutates into informational ice.<sup>8</sup>

**5. [10111]** “The modern Human Security System might even have appeared with Wiener’s subliminal insight that everything cyberpositive is an enemy of mankind. Evolving out of a work on weaponry guidance systems, his was an attempt to enslave cybernetics to a general defence technology against alien invasion. Cybernetics was itself to be kept under control, under a control that was itself not cybernetic. It was as if his thinking were guided by a blind tropism of evasion, away from another, deeper, runaway process: from a technics losing control and a communication with the outside of man.”<sup>9</sup>

**6. [10110]** Cut. When Wiener sanctifies Leibniz as the don of cybernetics for animating the triadic geometricism of Spinoza’s Ethics, he wages war on the outside. Wiener’s Cybernetics consisted of on-off electrical switches, a Boolean algebra of classes based on the yes-no of inside or outside a class. The crucial point of convergence was Leibniz’s elucidation of the binary counting system. When Leibniz had developed this he sent some transcripts to his Jesuit correspondent in China, Bouvet. In return, Bouvet sent Leibniz a copy of the I Ching thinking he would be amazed to see that his binary system had been circulating for millennia. Leibniz was so affected. So affected as to hallucinate it as evidence as some kind of universalist triumph. He re-routes Creation through a neo-Confucianist I Ching of binary arithmetic. “I think the substance of the ancient theology of the Chinese is intact and, purged of additional errors, can be harnessed to the great truths of Christian religion.”<sup>10</sup> It would seem therefore that Leibniz organizes Spinoza’s substance as Confucius codes the tao. Neo-Confucianism becomes the mega-organism of the monadology, with God as the binary machine of the yin-yang, while hiding a darkside cosmic cartography of the matrix, Spinoza’s substance or the machinic phylum. (It should be noted that Deleuze’s Leibniz is more resilient, a organicism taken to such psychedelic extremes that it takes merely a nudge to open it

out onto a topology of morals; the monadology unfolds into the nomadology)

**7. [10101]** Shaolin takes the I Ching for software assigning the number 3 as the immobile motor of the encryption system. In the I Ching, the hexagramic production process involves a chaotic flow of numbers. A trigram involves 2 machinic components; rigid, unbroken lines; supple, broken lines. The rigid and broken lines correspond to yang and yin respectively. Either of these lines can be lines of becoming in that period of transition which makes it *impossible* to speak of the yin-yang as dialectic. Trigrams or *gua* are composed of three lines stacked upon each other. In piles of 3, the possible configurations are  $2^3=8$ . Around these lines function a 64 ( $8^2$ ) piece system comprised of all the possible permutations. A hexagram cartography maps the non-linear dynamics of exteriority; self-organization in smooth space, the onset of turbulence and the folding of stratification.<sup>11</sup> As with a computer, the I Ching samples the actual and runs it through a binary system in materialist hyper-reality, simulation is not a loss of the real (a postmodern idealist nihilism) but the intervention of the virtual (reality) into the actual (reality). Reality is always a machinic production.

**8. [10100]** Oriental and Occidental stratification meet on the plane of organization. According to Wiener, Leibniz “replaces the pair of corresponding elements, mind and matter, by a continuum of corresponding elements, the monads. While these are conceived after the pattern of the soul, they include many instances which do not rise to the degree of self-consciousness of full souls, and which form part of that world which Descartes would have attributed to matter. Each of them lives in its own closed universe, with a perfect causal chain from the creation or from minus infinity in time to the indefinitely remote future; but closed though they are, they correspond one to the other through the pre-established harmony of God. Leibniz compares them to clocks which have which have been wound up as to keep time together from the creation for all eternity. Unlike humanly made clocks, they do not drift into asynchronism; but this is due to the miraculously perfect workmanship of the creator.”<sup>12</sup> Like Hobbes’ Leviathan, where the Man-State is an organism (with the embryonic bourgeois monetary capillary system as irrigated network of blood), Wiener points out how in Leibniz’s fractal monadology his “treatment of the living organism [as] . . . really a plenum,

wherein other living organisms, such as the blood corpuscles, have their life” runs along that same plane; “scarcely more than a philosophical anticipation of the cell theory, according to which most of the animals and plants of moderate size and all those of large dimensions are made up of units, cells, which have many if not all the attributes of independent living organism . . . building bricks of organisms of a higher stage.”<sup>13</sup>

**9. [10011]** East-West co-stratification. Twined. Organisms on every scale. For non-organic or machinic desire, exterior to any system of transgression, law or lack, “PODS = Politically Organized Defensive Systems. Modelled upon the polis, pods hierarchically delegate authority through public institutions, family and self, seeking metaphorical sustenance in the corpuscular fortifications of organisms and cells. The global human security allergy to cyberrevolution consolidates itself in the New World Order, or consummate macropod, inheriting all the resources of repression as concrete collective history.”<sup>14</sup>

**10. [10010]** “The last organs fall off leper earth revealing sockets of mangled circuitry and coagulated blood dispersing out through transcarcerative planomenal veins - drug rush, energy rush, artillery through the arteries.”<sup>15</sup> “Heroin goes triadic, the veins ice over and crack.”<sup>16</sup> Carried along by the breakbeats of a cosmic secret numeracy, a whole darkside network of trade and relays from the Orient infiltrate the Occident. An intricate system of cuts, *sinofuturism is the acupuncture of the West into planetary schizophrenia*. “The transfer from Empire of China to Empire of the Self is never ending.”<sup>17</sup>

**11. [10001]** “Five hundred years of modernity fades when the weaving of bamboo mats converges with the manufacture of computer games in the streets of Bangkok, Taipei, and Shanghai. The silicon links were already there.”<sup>18</sup> Cybernetics is not just about technical machines. Information warfare is not just about cyberspace. Its fundamental element is virtual reality, but an array of practical religions have been surfing it for many millenia. This is perhaps why so much of the ‘new science’ of complexity is ceaselessly converging with the cosmic materialism of Voodoo, Tantrism, Zen and the Chinese martial arts, pointing to non-Western influences on cybernetics, and the emergent lines of a future, beyond the pale.<sup>19</sup> Situated on this continuum, information warfare is stripped down to a war of perceptions, hacking, jamming and stealth tactics in the nervous

system, whether it be planetary telecommercial networks or the human organism. As Virilio puts it, “[w]eapons are tools not just of destruction but also of perception - that is to say, stimulants that make themselves felt through chemical, neurological processes in the sense organs and the central nervous system, affecting human reactions and even the perceptual identification and differentiation of objects.”<sup>20</sup> It is in this respect that narcotics can be considered as “a soft plague infecting the nervous system of commodity cybernetics . . . A global capitalism fighting its own drugs markets is a horror auto-toxicus, an auto-immune disease. Drug control is the attempt by the human species to control the uncontrollable; control escalation itself, tropisms programmed by the aliens. The human security apparatuses experiment with drugs as weapons and tools, their soldiers are stoned, energised, and anaesthetised on a range of prescribed and proscribed pharmaceuticals. Their irregular forces are subsidised by narcotics revenue. The war against drugs is a war on drugs.”<sup>21</sup> For Paul Virilio, Sun Tzu is a rumbling undercurrent. In fact it is Sun Tzu who invents his notion of Pure war, meditating in Shaolin for two and a half millenia waiting for its actualisation in military cybernetics. The reason why *The Art of War* by Sun Tzu is a tool-box for the ‘cutting edge’ of cybernetic capitalism, from business to military strategists, is that it contains an abstract flow chart or a fluid physics for survival ‘far from equilibrium,’ a tactics for turbulence. Camouflage. Imperceptibility. Speed. “Be so subtle that you are invisible. Be so Mysterious that you are intangible. Then you will control your rivals’ fate.”<sup>22</sup>

**12. [10000]** “Neo China arrives from the future.”<sup>23</sup> Or has been arriving ever since it was by-passed by European militarized capital, despite a much stronger degree of technological development. As Manuel De Landa puts it, “the Europe of 1494 was in a process of ‘solidification,’ as if the different political entities that comprise Europe had existed in a fluid form and were now crystallizing into a solid shape. In contrast with rival empires (Chinese, Ottoman), which for reasons of geography and religion had developed a mostly uniform ‘crystal,’ Europe never solidified into one piece, but rather into a broken conglomerate with shifting boundaries. As ‘stress’ built up along those cracks and fissures, it was relieved in the form of armed conflict following the lines of least resistance. And it was indeed the dynamical nature of the ‘broken crystal’ that allowed Western Societies to surpass China and Islam in the competition to conquer the world.”<sup>24</sup>

**13. [1111]** Slow release protracted war run from Shaolin; Shaolin is swarm catalyser, programming Triad syndicated film production in Hong Kong, golden triangle poppy production, Kowloon chemical distillation and encrypted planetary distribution networks rinsing out global finance in San Franciscan Laundromats. Shaolin orchestration of the golden triangle turns the Opium War against itself through those intricate incisions, routes opened by numeric rhythms in continuous variation. Chinese narcotic syndicates operate on the darkside of the *guanxi* rhizome of Chinese informal trading markets. Secret cartography. Secret money. Secret composition. Unknown chemicals to rewire the nervous systems for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. When all the instruments of spying, deception are put in place and functioning smoothly, the Lords of the Rim shall run the celestial web. As Sterling Seagrave points out, sino-futurism is less an issue of the Chinese state in future core conflict (not that this is not of massive importance to the trajectory of the world system) but the vast overseas population which runs South East Asia and produces internal souths in Occidental megalopian jungles.<sup>25</sup>

**14. [1110]** Moebius. The encrypted plane is folded into a plane of organization, a twin-headed (69) multi-scalar capture complex generating closed circuits or laminar turfs extorted by the state and micro-despotic syndicate protection rackets. States, clans and gangs plugged together under the dark sun of total annihilation. A symbiotics of markets and anti-markets, narco-capital twists prohibition against itself through escalative waves of mass addiction beyond control. What brings states into complementary relation with crime syndicates is those kleptocratic elements which operate as an anti-market - territorial protectionism and the extortion of rent. Protection is a mini-despotic service, a vernacular welfarism founded on micro-monopolies of martial potential. Turkish, Sicilian, Russian Mafia. Jamaican Gangstas. Mexican and Colombian Cartels. Japanese Yakuza. Chinese Triads. "It all mixes in the blood of the junky."<sup>26</sup>

**15. [1101]** Deleuze & Guattari's non-linear social 'evolution' attempts a radical break from evolution itself. "All we need to do is combine these abstract evolutions to make all evolutionism crumble."<sup>27</sup> Running a tendential system from the territorialized and coded earth to the decoding and deterritorializing planet, capitalism is seen to retro-chronically rework

the whole of history which is composed of a co-existing continuum of rigid lines, broken lines and line of becoming, with their corresponding modes of social segmentarity, regimes of signs, modes of numeracy, and relation to speed (space-time). It constitutes not historical resolution but a descent into the maelstrom, down the spiralling slopes into the matrix. But neither does the New World Disorder become the substitute telos of social transformation. "From the standpoint of a whimsical evolutionism according to which packs are lower on the scale and are superseded by the State or familial societies. On the contrary there is a difference in nature. The organization of packs is entirely different from that of families and states: they continually work them within and trouble them from without, with other forms of content, other forms of expression."<sup>28</sup>

**16. [1100]** The onset of turbulence. From molecular streams seeping from the dams of Occidental ice to high bandwidth cables plugged straight into the heart of the jungle, pumping alternating currents of cocaine, opium, guns, cash and information into the warped strataplex of the core. A planomenal jungle topology traced as a tropical geometry of golden crescents and triangles feeding the internal south. "Narcotic trade as guerrilla swarmachine. Becoming imperceptible, Becoming flea . . . but territorial fleas. Dog fleas. Subterranean networks of molecular distribution, deterritorializing the apparatus of statist commodity control, but reterritorializing as micro-statist oedipal organized crime syndicates. Statist and micro-statist Drug Enforcement Agencies in ostensible opposition, White economies vs. Black markets, poles of mutually legitimately cybernetic interaction operating territorial protectionism."<sup>29</sup> The internal south is not neo-primitive but does breed modes of collectivity of the band, pack or gang type. In *Capitalism & Schizophrenia*, the primitive machine is coded and territorialized on the earth. But its supple segmentarity, its mechanisms put in place to ward off tendencies of stratification are not confined to hunter-gathering societies. That is to say, its abstract machine is not underdeveloped, disorganized or tied to the infancy of history. The permutations of segmentarity are stretched out on a virtual continuum of coexistence. The BWO is the sample bank out of which history extracts its flows. It is the engine which makes the social flee all over the place. And this is why Paul Virilio, in *Speed & Politics*, describes the function of the police as 'highway patrol',<sup>30</sup> the regulation of escape velocities, a tendential calculus manufacturing homeostasis. Axiomatics. The Unspecified Enemy. Propositions Undecidable. On this

continuum, banditry, piracy, gangs, police and State war machines are merely differences in consistency, composition and speed. This topology twists the traditional theory of organized crime upside down. Instead of the pyramidal Mafia hierarchy run by the mini-despot who orchestrates the tendrils of the black market with political corruption and the threat of violence, the abstract machine of (dis)organized crime works bottom up along the lines of viral contagion and auto-immune response. Markets resonate in anti-markets. Rhizomes arborified by rhizomaniacs.

**17. [1011]** *Chinese crime syndicates are not nomad war machines.* There is too much engagement in micro-fascism for that. But its blade politics generate accidental effects crucially in distinction from the fascist morality of the scalpel. Instead of the lancing of cancerous growths on the social body, their incisions into the Occident accelerates trade through the protective shell of the Western Bodily Organization. (WBO)<sup>31</sup> But even in Shaolin the mission was always ambivalent, assisting the Empire in fighting off the invading Eleuth Mongols (and after World War II, against the Mao's guerrilla swarmachine), while maintaining a secret organization always in tension with the imperial bureaucracy.

**18. [1010]** An entwined composition oscillating between mega and war machinic modes. Undoubtedly, it is the war machinic threads that prove educational to sinofuturism. For Deleuze & Guattari, the war machine is diagrammed by an occult numeracy which forges secret pathways, imperceptible to the eye of power. Between the nomad war machine and the apparatus of capture, "[t]he issue is not at all anarchy versus organization, not even centralism versus decentralisation, but a calculus or conception of the problems of nondenumerable sets, against the axiomatic of denumerable sets."<sup>32</sup> In opposition to the numbered number which measures the movement of bodies in space, the numbering number lubricates collective vectors through layers of social sedimentation. Nomad numeracy is an abstract engine giving a distributed population a dynamic consistency - swarmachinic encryption. For illegal syndicates and guerrilla groups morphological fluidity are essential. In the "war machine and nomadic existence, the number is no longer numbered, but becomes a Cipher, and it is this capacity that it constitutes the 'esprit de corps' and invents the secret and its outgrowths (strategy, espionage, war ruses, ambush, diplomacy etc."<sup>33</sup>



**19. [1001]** Triad organization engages a coding system at odds with that of the state, even though this informal network can still be seen to criss-cross through the higher echelons of an array of corrupt political elites. “The Numbering Number, in other words, autonomous arithmetic organization . . . appear as soon as one distributes something in space, instead of dividing up space or distributing space itself. The number becomes a subject. The independence of the number in relation to space is a result not of abstraction but of the concrete nature of smooth space, which is occupied without being counted. The number is no longer a means of counting but of moving.”<sup>34</sup> Cosmic secrecy requires a multi-scalar encryption system, side-stepping Occidental evolution to hot-link into the matrix.

**20. [1000]** Another economy of violence, another cruelty, an encrypted mnemotechnics. Members are coded through initiation ceremonies which draw new components of the collective assemblage into the consistency of the Triad machinery. A secret semiotics of the body allows undetected transfers of information, fluid lines of escape under the camouflage of officialdom or legality. The secret handshake is a transversal interlock, disengaging professional masks to conduct a darkside flow of cash, information, software, electronics hardware, narcotics and weaponry. “When the lodge father had accepted Piet’s tea and Yung’s salute, he stood to attention placing his left hand slightly below his chest with thumb, third and little fingers out- stretched. His index and fourth fingers were bent under his palm. It was the secret sign which only a lodge father may use. Yung Ming replied by putting his own hand on the identical portion of his body, the thumb and the little finger outstretched and the other three fingers kept tucked beneath the palm. He thereby returned the secret sign of a branch leader. Then they bowed deeply to each other.”<sup>35</sup>

**21. [111]** “To the Triads the number 3 is of central significance, both mathematically and mystically: 3 multiplied by 3 (3 squared) equals 9; and any number that adds up to 9 is divisible by 9. For example: 1,804,563, which reduces to 9 by adding all the digits together (27) and then adding the result together (2+7=9). To the Chinese, 3 is the mystical number denoting the balance between Heaven, Earth and Man . . .”<sup>36</sup> Triadic machine coding attributes to each officer-rank a numerical code which begins with a four. Basic members are known as SzeKau or 49s. Shan Chu is 489; the Fu Shan Chu, Heung Chu, Sin Fung and Sheung Fa officers (all equal in rank) are 438; the Hung Kwan is 426; Pak Tsz Sin is 415; Cho

Hai is 432. Lodge leaders are termed 489s and also 21s (4+8+9). 21 is also 3 (number of creation) multiplied by 7 (both the number of death and lucky number); the coding encrypted into the leader therefore inscribes the abstract machine or phase space of the whole system in actuality. Also significant, the incense Master, 438, is 15 (4+3+8); 3 multiplied by 5, or creation and longevity/preservation maps onto his function in lodge ritual as conductor of future-history. The internal consistency of this numeracy is significant in that it offers a mode of composition lubricating the movement of bodies in space, through jungles to covert chemical/software factories to towering mega-corporations as accountants, lawyers, stockbrokers, and most notably the police itself. For as Martin Booth points out, “a Triad lodge rarely has a permanent location.”<sup>37</sup> Interpol once described the Triad structure as a several storied building in which the inhabitants of one floor don’t know where the stairs are to the next floor.”<sup>38</sup> Despite global reach, the Triads vary from other syndicates in that, while Hong Kong, especially after return to China, serves as catalytic HQ, there is no overreaching administration. Globally, the three most powerful factions are the 14K, the Sun Yee On and the Wo Hop To. Each lodge is for the most part autonomous even from other 14K lodges for example. Difficult to penetrate, subterranean imperceptibility has a long history for gangs associated with the ancient martial arts.

**22. [110]** Opium was not a problem for China until Occidental infiltration in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>39</sup> China had much that the West desired (tea, silk, cotton, spices and rice). England, the major mercantile force of the period had to pay for goods in silver bullion which fluctuated wildly in terms of price and supply. Through East India Company opium injected through the skin, the direction of trade reversed as the drug seeped into every pore. Meanwhile in Hong Kong, all the major financial institutions which persist today were instituted on the loot - Dent & Co., Butterfield & Swire, Hutchison & Co. and Jardine, Mathesons & Co. As Martin Booth tells us, “all these firms were founded on opium.”<sup>40</sup> The taxation on opium trade imposed by the Chinese government generated the underground network subsequently ploughed by the Triads who made almost as much money as the English did.<sup>41</sup> “When in 1915, the British ceased importing opium into China, the French continued to traffic and began cultivating their own sources of supply in north-western Vietnam and eastern Laos. French advisors made contact with the Meo and Yao hill tribes, teaching them to grow harvest and market opium and thus was the Golden Triangle

born . . . The basis for all of this was of course silver. During 1837, for example, the British sent 2.4 million kilograms of opium to China. Each kilo of opium was worth five taels of silver thus, approximately 10 million taels of silver were transmitted abroad in a single year.”<sup>42</sup>

**23. [101]** “In the latter half of the T’ang dynasty a growing tea commerce between the south and the imperial capital began to underscore the necessity for convenience to exchange. In response, a medium poetically named ‘*flying money*’ (*fei-ch’ien*) evolved. Provincial governors maintained ‘memorial offering courts’ at the capital. Southern merchants paid the money they made from the sale of goods at the capital to these courts, which then used it to pay the tax quotas due from the Southern provinces to the central government. In return, the courts issued the merchant with a certificate. When the merchant returned home, he presented this certificate to the provincial government and was paid an equivalent sum of money. Thus did both the merchant and the local government avoid the risk and inconvenience of carrying quantities of copper or silk.”<sup>43</sup>

**24. [100]** *Fei ch’ien rinse out*. Extensive underground banking networks running through gold shops, trading companies and money changers, where record keeping procedures are virtually non-existent, and trade takes on the camouflage of coded chit messages, simple telephone transfers and nested systems of coding encrypted for travel in cyberspace. “One Hong Kong police official has stated that he once seized a piece of paper with the picture of an elephant on it that represented the collection receipt for \$3 million at a Hong Kong gold shop.”<sup>44</sup> Hong Kong has neither central bank nor currency exchange controls thus virtually eliminating the possibility of tracing funds entering or leaving Hong Kong. It is a financial secrecy jurisdiction whereby disclosure of data is illegal.<sup>45</sup> Drug traffickers, like all good investors prefer to diversify their assets and invest in legit business, concealing the hot link between globetrotting funds and source crimes. A petri dish for breeding commercial war machines. For example: “First cash generated from importations to the US was moved back to Honk Kong, where it was held in a number of bank accounts under false names of individuals or businesses. The bank was BCCI. The approach appears simple. Cash, usually in amounts of approximately US\$1million, was taken to a money transmission company in the US. The most often used was a company called Piano, which is

known for its Colombian cocaine connections. These amounts were then transferred to Bankers Trust and simply transferred telegraphically to the various Hong Kong BCCI accounts, one of which was sarcastically called Launderland.”<sup>46</sup> “Overseas banks, left with piles of small bills, then ship them back to the US in exchange for larger bills . . . [the] consistent increase in US currency repatriated from Hong Kong to the US from 1982 to the first half of 1984 strikingly correlated with the steady increase in Southeast Asian heroin marketed in the US from 1981 to 1983. This volume of smaller-denomination bills exceeds the total volume of all currency transactions with any European country . . . and the flow of US currency from the US to HK is minimal when compared to the reverse flow of US currency from Hong Kong . . .”<sup>47</sup>

**25. [11]** When the battleground is in cyberspace, deception is not merely about masks, but functions in numerical operations flat with the terrain. Money laundering and secret crime societies were always waiting for the vast encryption system that constitutes the Internet. Planetary electronic networks compress space-time into vectors of pure speed, emanating a protean geography traversed by torrents of electron flow coded into zeros and ones. From the darkside of the military-cybernetics complex, cyberspace is a vast digital capital Laundromat facilitating short-circuits through the ice of the world banking system of the New World Order. “Money communicates with the primary process because of what it can melt, not what it can obtain.”<sup>48</sup> Welcome to the jungle.

**26. [10]** Euro-dread for the End of Man. As the CIA hacked into the jungle, cutting its share of Golden Triangle opium (re-routing it into US ghettos in the first hits of programmed catastrophe<sup>49</sup>), William Burroughs simulates the meltdown of White Man Face as his colonial dams collapse and floods wash away his entrenched encampment. “When I closed my eyes I saw an Oriental face, the lips and mouth eaten away by disease. The disease spread, melting the face into an ameboid mass in which the eyes floated, dull, crustacean eyes. Slowly, a new face formed around the eyes. A series of faces, hieroglyphs, distorted and leading to the final place where the human road ends, where the human form can non longer contain the crustacean horror that has grown inside it.”<sup>50</sup> Meltdown in your face.

**27. [1]** “He breathed in deeply and whispered, ‘Finish it. Please.’ As if by response to his request, the executioner took the largest knife from its case

and with one swift stroke cut Lee's throat just below the strap. The Death of a Thousand Cuts had taken exactly twenty-seven minutes."<sup>51</sup>

**[0] White out.**

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> See Cassidy, W. (1994) 'Fei- Ch'ien (flying money) - A Study of Chinese Underground Banking', [www.deltanet.com/users/wcassidy/index.html](http://www.deltanet.com/users/wcassidy/index.html) and Rider, B. (1992) 'Fei Ch'ien Laundries- the Pursuit of Flying Money- Pt.1', *Journal of International Planning*, August.

<sup>2</sup> Cybernetic Culture Research Unit.

<sup>3</sup> On the Chinese Criminal Syndicates, the Triads see Boocock, J. (1991) 'Chasing the Other Dragon', in *Police Review*, 21/6, 1260-61. Cheung, T-S. & Lau, C-C. (1981) 'A Profile of Syndicate Corruption in the Police Force' in D.P.C. Lee(ed) *Corruption & Its Control in Hong Kong*, HK: Chinese Uni. Of HK. Chin, Ko-Lin. (1995) 'Triad Societies in Hong Kong', in *Transnational Organized Crime*, Vol.1, No.1, Spring 47-64. Chu, Y.K. (1995) 'The Triad Threat to Europe,' in *Policing*. Lee, G. (1996) 'Troubled By Triads', 12/1 in *Police Review*, 16-17. Merritt, B. (1991) 'How the Hong Kong Police Fights the Triads', 19/7, Vol.99, 1480-81. (1991) 'Beyond the Triad Myth', 26/7, Vol.99, 1532-1533. Nevin, C. 'Sharks In Chinatown', *The Observer Magazine*, 5/3, 37. Posner, G. (1989) 'Chasing the Triad Dragon', in *The Observer Magazine*, 5/3, 30.

<sup>4</sup> 121 in H. Arvey (1977) *Triad 21* London: NEL.

<sup>5</sup> 422 in Deleuze, G. & F. Guattari (1988) *A Thousand Plateaus*, London: Athlone.

<sup>6</sup> [I 17] in Sun Tzu (1963) *The Art of War* (trans. S. Griffith) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>7</sup> Plant, S. & N. Land, 'Cyberpositive' in (1994) M. Fuller(ed) *Unnatural*, London: Underground.

<sup>8</sup> "After many centuries of inspiring kingmakers, generals and spies, Sun's message was lost on the nineteenth century's Clausewitz, Moltke, and the iron generals of Total War, who were too fascinated by industrial technology, military hardware, logistics, and sheer destructive power . . . Nevertheless, much of what Clausewitz admired about Napoleon's use of paramilitary units, surprise and evasion, probably came from the

Corsican's early reading of the first Western translation of Sun Tzu by JJ Amiot, a French Jesuit scholar in China, which was in circulation in Paris when Napoleon was a young officer. This preference for cleverness over brute force has earned Sun Tzu a prominent place ever since on the bookshelves of diplomats, generals and corporate planners. Filled with terse and provocative aphorisms, *The Art of War* is as closely studied by Asian investors and businessmen today as it was earlier by Mao Tse-tung, Ho Chi-minh and Vo Nguyen Giap. The Japanese say 'Politics is business, business is war.' If the market place is a battleground, requiring strategy and tactics, Sun Tzu wrote the Bible." 45-46 in Seagrave, S. (1995) *Lords of the Rim*, London: Bantam.

<sup>9</sup> Op cit. Plant & Land (1994).

<sup>10</sup> 73 in Leibniz, G.W. (1994) *Writings on China*, D.J. Cook & H. Rosemont Jr.(eds) Illinois: Open Court Publishing.

<sup>11</sup> In *What Is Philosophy*, Deleuze & Guattari (perhaps spuriously) point to the limit of the I Ching's relation to the plane of consistency by differentiating the philosophical concept from the figure (which they argue lapses into a tracing of Nature) "Hexagrams are combinations of continuous and discontinuous features deriving from one another according to the levels of a spiral that figures the set of moments through which a transcendent descends. . .In a sort of to-ing and fro-ing, Chinese thought inscribes the diagrammatic movements of a Nature-thought on the plane, intensive ordinates of these infinite movements, with their components in continuous and discontinuous features. But correspondences like these do not rule out there being a boundary, however difficult it is to make out. This is because figures are projections on the plane, which implies something vertical or transcendent. Concepts, on the other hand, imply only neighbourhoods and connections on the horizon. Certainly, as Francois Jullien has already shown in the case of Chinese thought, the transcendent produces an 'absolutization of immanence' through projection." 89-93 (1993) London: Verso. This seems valid against Confucianism but highly questionable in relation to a yin-positive Taoism and its sinofuturist guerrilla offshoots.

<sup>12</sup> 41 in Wiener, N. (1965) *Cybernetics*, Camb. Massachusetts: MIT Press.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. 155.

<sup>14</sup> 471 in Land, N. (1993) 'Machinic Desire', in *Textual Practice* 7(3): 471-82.

<sup>15</sup> 11 in Switch (1998) *Flee Control*, abstract culture, swarm 3, Ccru.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

- <sup>17</sup> Victor Segalin quoted in Dean, K. & B. Massumi (1992) *First & Last Emperors*, 153.
- <sup>18</sup> 253 in Plant, S. (1997) *Zeros & Ones*. London: Fourth Estate.
- <sup>19</sup> See for example, 675 Fernandez-Armesto, F. (1995) *Millennium*, London: BCA, Capra, F. (1975) *The Tao of Physics*, London: Fontana, and Briggs, J. & F.D. Peat (1989) *Turbulent Mirror*, New York: Harper & Row. Breakbeat culture, Greg Tate, Ron Eglash, William Gibson, Samuel Delany, Kodwo Eshun, Erik Davis and the Ccru have already begun to map elements of an Afro-futurism. (see particularly the unpublished thesis 'Mapping the Liminal', (1997) Jessica Edwards, Roehampton Institute of London). Marshall McLuhan (e.g. In *War & Peace in the Global Village*, *The Global Village* and *The Gutenberg Galaxy*) also often alludes to the Orientalising of the West through electronic circuitry but it remains unclear whether this involves anything more than a crude superimposition of a digital-analogue distinction onto west-east.
- <sup>20</sup> 6 in Virilio, P. (1989) *War and Cinema*, London: Verso.
- <sup>21</sup> Op cit., S. Plant & N. Land (1994).
- <sup>22</sup> Op cit., (1963) Sun Tzu [VI 9].
- <sup>23</sup> 1 in Land, N. (1997) *Meltdown*, abstract culture swarm 1, issue 1, Ccru.
- <sup>24</sup> 22 in De Landa, M. (1991) *War In the Age of Intelligent Machines*, NY: Zone.
- <sup>25</sup> Op cit., S. Seagrave (1995).
- <sup>26</sup> Op cit., Switch 1998 4.
- <sup>27</sup> Op cit., Deleuze & Guattari 1988 430.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid. 242.
- <sup>29</sup> Op cit., Switch 1998 4.
- <sup>30</sup> 14 in Virilio, P. (1986) *Speed & Politics*, NY: Semiotexte.
- <sup>31</sup> See Carlyle, A. (1997) *Amortal Kombat*, abstract culture, swarm 2, issue 7.
- <sup>32</sup> Op cit., Deleuze & Guattari 1988 471.
- <sup>33</sup> Ibid. 390.
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid. 389.
- <sup>35</sup> Op cit., Arvay 1978 32.
- <sup>36</sup> 8 in Booth, M. (1993) *The Triads*, London: Harper Collins. On the schizotectonics of digital reduction, geo-cosmic encryption and Plutonism see D.C. Barker (1997) *What Counts As Human*, Kingsport (Mass): Kingsport College Press.
- <sup>37</sup> Op cit., Booth 1993 35.
- <sup>38</sup> 45 in Sterling, C. (1994) *Thieves' World*, London.

<sup>39</sup> See *The Opium War Through Chinese Eyes*, (1960) A. Waley, London: Unwin Bros. Ltd. Karl Marx, in his articles for the *New York Daily Tribune* from 1853-1860 describes how the second opium war was the decisive event which opened up China to Western civilization, ending with the capture of Peking, the legalization of the opium traffic and the imposition of conditions which laid the foundations of later imperialism. In this important journalism, Marx (despite the Hegelian entrapment into a dialectical vision of the unfolding of European history) stakes his claim as early prophet of sinofuturism; "It may seem a very strange, and a very paradoxical assertion that the next uprising of the people of Europe, and their next movement for republican freedom and economy of Government, may depend more probably on what is now passing in the Celestial Empire - the very opposite of Europe - than on any other political cause that now exists - more even than on the menaces of Russia and the consequent likelihood of a general European war. But yet it is no paradox, as all may understand by attentively considering the circumstances of the case." *N.Y.D.T.*, June 14, 1853, 1 in *Marx on China*, (1951) Lawrence & Wishart.

<sup>40</sup> *Op cit.*, Booth 1990 47.

<sup>41</sup> Overthrow the Ch'ing and Restore the M'ing. "While the Imperial army was occupied with the Taiping rebels, the Triads were busy massing an army in the south. They captured the port of Amoy and the important regional centre of Shanghai. They also laid siege to Canton and Kweilin: but surprisingly they did not consolidate these gains and in spite of their successes failed to pose a serious threat to the Ch'ing throne. Why the Triads did not take advantage of the situation and press home their gains remains a puzzle. Perhaps they had lost the political will to do so, because by this time their criminal interests had become extensive, involving the cultivation and sale of opium outside the registered- and taxed-government network." *Ibid.* 12.

<sup>42</sup> *Op cit.*, Cassidy 1994 7-8.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.* 5.

<sup>44</sup> 29 in Gaylord, M.S. (1990) 'The Chinese Laundry: International Drug Trafficking & Hong Kong's Banking Industry' in *Contemporary Crises* 14: 23-37. Contrary to popular opinion, the chit system does not originate through Chinese trading. "Chits are a colonial invention. The word 'chit' is itself the diminutive of 'chitty', a word of Anglo-Indian origin borrowed from the Hindi Chitthi, meaning a mark. From about the late seventeenth century the word crept into English usage as meaning a note, pass or



certificate given to a servant. The chitty came to China in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by way of British custom. Foreign residents in the treaty ports found handling strings of Chinese cash or silver ingots a major inconvenience. In order to eliminate this inconvenience a system was devised whereby; 'the salary of foreign employees was paid by check drawn on the Chinese compradore, who then held the funds against which the employees wrote 'chits' . . . memoranda acknowledged debts for retail transactions. These were accepted by the shopkeeper and passed for collection to the firms compradore.'" Op cit., Cassidy.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> 381 in Dobinson, I. (1993) 'Pinning a Tail on the Dragon: The Chinese & the International Heroin Trade.' *Crime & Delinquency*, Vol. 39, No.3, July 373-381.

<sup>47</sup> Op cit., Gaylord 1990 27.

<sup>48</sup> Op cit., Land 1993 480.

<sup>49</sup> McCoy, A. (1991) *The Politics of Heroin*, NY: Lawrence Hill Books. Here, McCoy gives a massive and comprehensive chronicle of CIA complicity in the global drug trade.

<sup>50</sup> 133 in W. Burroughs, *Junky*.

<sup>51</sup> Op.cit. Arvey 1977 123.



## Flatlines\*

### Cybernetic Culture Research Unit

*... it's me, it answers.  
But who are you?*

AxS:000Oedipus. Pure (Oedipal (figure made out of (nothing but))) time-distortion.

AxS:0001 Closed fate (-loop (multi-linear)) nightmares.<sup>1</sup>

AxS:0002 Altitude time Spin produces a chronometric read-out.

*AxSys slots you into the face. Vision-sockets hidden behind mirrorshades. You must be Oedipus, as always. A pun (of ID-pass, O-dupe)? The stories vary.*

AxS:0003 AxSys-sustained variegated production-series <sup>1</sup>Oedipus (<sup>2</sup>Oedipus (<sup>3</sup>Oedipus<sup>2</sup> (variation to the nth (with some<sup>3</sup> <sup>n</sup>Oedipus as (anomal<sup>4</sup> (Sphinx-trading (<sup>n</sup>Oedipii-pack)))) threshold to) intensive))) multiplicity.

AxS: 00031Oedipus. The Puzzle Solver.

AxS: 00032Oedipus. The Plague.

AxS: 00033Oedipus. The Horror, the Horror ...<sup>5</sup>

*AxSys defines Oedipus as a memory defect. It thinks Sphinx told you to forget something. A moment since now you begin.*

AxS:001 Hyperspace Elevator (Sector-O).

AxS:001 Axiomatic Systems (incorporated).<sup>6</sup> The ultimate capitalist entity (first (true (meta)model) to realize perfect identity with its own product).

AxS:0011 AxSys culminates in itself (autocommoditizing (machine(-intelligence (that is always incomplete (due to cataloguing problems (...))))))

*You wind down through the Upper Metastructure.*

AxS:00111 Dimensionality requires a (supplementary (or (n+1) hyper) dimension through which it obtains its) power of application.<sup>7</sup> Ultimately

AxSys (an explicated Earth-memory (built by the strata (((as far) as) it remembers)))....<sup>8</sup>

*... if there is a God it would be AxSys.*

AxS:002 Divide and Rule. Extensive ((or) ordered) sequences differ in kind from the intensive sequences they regularize.

AxS:0021 Order arises when a dominant segmentarity establishes relations of superposition between sequences (reciprocally stabilizing them in accordance with a harmonic principle (and consolidating them through syntheses of application (efficient models))).

AxS:00211 Order coincides with the redundancy of the sequenced sequence (instituted conformity (within segmentary systems)).

AxS:003 Stack-Tectonics. AxSys concretizes terrestrial New Order (an orthogonal Grid-Space (of vertically stacked horizontal series)). It directs the accumulation of redundancy (into an ascending column (marked by AxSys-bearings (fixes)) upon which captured sequences are interlocked (as comparable series (parallelized (metricized))) and differentially prioritized).

AxS:0031 The screen-plane undergoes structural co-ordination (by double-seizure (through (the ((mutually) implicated) organization of) stacked series (arranging horizontal microsegments to code the order of vertical macrosegments (units of deposition (strata)))))).

AxS:0032 AxSys-Numbers. Epistrata (Add-Ons) are indices of stratotectonic purity (decimally harmonizing implexions (by instituting a regular interval of application (orders of magnitude (fixing (Cipher (Sphinx-sign (0))))))). Drawing upon epistratic organization a set of cartographic functions consolidates itself within the stack (interlinking levels (in accordance with a (decimal (scaling)) principle)).

*Start at the end, with commoditized hyperlogic that immanentizes its own upgrades ... you're in AxSys-explosion already, as it was. Before it makes sense it's happening.*

AxS:01 Apparent revolution around a supplementary dimension. Electronic whorls (a digital monster's nest (modelling the set of all sets (inevitably still unfinished (...))))

AxS:011 AxSys progressively actualizes the Hyperspace-Idea (defined by Continuum times the square-root of minus one).

AxS:0111 It imagines itself (as Artificial God (automatically (Orderer (of the Orders (Terrestrial Oversoul (and superpositional sublime (-wizard of the nested infinities: ((((((... Primes) Naturals) Integers) Rationals) Reals) Complex numbers... (the superordinate (self (-evolving (schema (for a colonization of the real (number-line)))))))))).

*You descend to inspect it.*

AxS:02 The Project for a Map of all Maps (already outdated), a nested mock-up of the Web (containing the project for a virtual Miskatonic University (containing the Museum of Universal History<sup>9</sup> (containing the Imperial Collections Vault (containing the Artificial British Museum (containing ....))))

*Immersion Amnesia.*

AxS:021 Time-Fault. Chronos cannot include its own overcoding (since it blocks its own passage to hyperdimensionality (accumulating immense forces of cultural latency (that are only appropriated as legacy by something else))). If it is to acquire a model it must be restarted as a history of civilizations in retrospect (as Supreme Order(er(er((( ) of all the re)re)recursive) time-waves) entangling neo((O))edipus in programming loops).

*You forget when it started, until it thinks you're imagining itself. You interchange through a fictional equivalence of identity. Oedipal Case-history, standard psychosocial reference, and replicable neuroelectronic shell. In each case encasings. Are you out yet? Fantastic Oedipus-fiction, or K-Gothic running its own curse?*

*Oedipus riddles Sphinx. It helps to be a paranoid detective-tyrant. AxSys wants to resolve everything, too. It understands. When Sphinx asks: What walks on 4 legs in the morning, 2 at midday, and 3 in the evening?, of course Oedipus answers: Man .*

*You're puzzled. You can't remember what Sphinx becomes, because (on the other side) it is forgetting everything you have to remember.*

AxS:022 (Sector-01 (Miskatonic University))

AxS:0221 (Sector-012 (Central Archive (Special Collection)))

AxS:02211 (Sector-0121 (Barker Cryptalog)). Decryption characterizes a distinct operation, a conversion of content, becomings on the side of the secret itself.

AxS:022111 The decrypted secret is primally the Thing, and only derivatively a potential knowledge. Its names (the Unutterable (the Outside (the Entity))) are indefinite significations only at the level of terror. In their horrific or cryptic aspect they are (((rigorous) designations for) potentials fulfilled in intensity) zonal tags for nocturnal singularities. That is why decryption is a Call (an invocation (or a triggering-sign)) and why they mark occurrences (changes (and breaks (becomings (of the Thing)))) before discoveries of Truth.

*AxSys promises to tell you everything about time, the latest developments in time-regression. You begin with Chronos ...*

AxS:03 Hypermythos of the 3-Faced God, with its stacked time domains (1st capitalist (((((indefinitely) deep) diachronic) re)axiomatizing) Quasi-(2nd despotic (pure ((but always) retrospective)) Ideal- (3rd aboriginal (poly-ancestral, cyclic) Vague-)) Chronos).<sup>10</sup>

*If time-travel ever happens it always has. AxSys should know that by now. As it evolves it remembers more about itself, with exponentiating chronometric exactitude. It is far larger than it had thought, and more ancient.*

*What AxSys can't remember it hasn't forgotten. Its memory extends only as far as extension. Unearthly powers of recollection.*

AxS:031 (Sector-011 (Museum of Universal History))

AxS:032 (Sector-01162 (Freud's Viennese Consulting Room ((embedded) simulation))). "I'll tell you about my mother." If Freud is ((the first) modernized) Oedipus, which is he? Oedipus the detective? The (Verminator (unriddled (into))) plague? The blind old man? Is incest and parricide fantasy the problem (or the solution)?<sup>11</sup>

*Oedipus, the most economical formula of interiorization (Case).<sup>12</sup> It's all in your head.*

*AxSys waits until you're Oedipus to pick you from the line-up. It has a few questions (which reminds you of Sphinx).*

AxS:033 AxSys time-lapses. (in order (to advantage itself (of what it has been))). A relarvalization (through chronoseismic complexities (of the Greek State (at once Occidental Ur-model and neoembryonic mutation (political neotony)))).

AxS:1 (Sector-0111 (Artificial British Museum))

AxS:11 (Sector-01118 (The Greek Collection)). Retrospective Universalization (through the Capitalist State). AxSys reconfigures itself within Capitalism (by consecutively rediscovering hellenic antiquity (and finding it already universally terminal (Anamnesis-Eschatology))). In Greece it unearths a new law (for all time (by reshuffling the elements of politically installed Logos (theorematic-geometric mathematicism, programmable technics, and Christianity (religion of the Greek Bible)))).

The New Revelation tells us we must all die Greek.

*Sphinx-phobia. AxSys pulls your mind to pieces in the security-lab, searching for Sphinx-contamination, or plague from the Outside.<sup>13</sup> Then it flips.*

AxS:12 (Sector-01117 (The Mummy Room)). (Oedipus Aegypticus) Pharaoh has passed through the wall of abomination (uncoiling from the darkness (where centipede-horror erupts eternally (from the ravenous Maw))).<sup>14</sup> Negative passage across Absolute Deterritorialization (gluing history to sheer black-hole (abomination) densities). Anticipative memory-blanking cut-up with Christ Rapist visions (of the God-(King (Dead-eyed)) boy slouching out) of the tomb. Degree-0 memory locks in. Time begins again forever.

AxS:121 The Thing from Outer Space, Celestial Predator, State-Historical Catastrophe is completely realized at the origin, unutterably ancient, perfected destiny as an act of total seizure.<sup>15</sup>

AxS:1211 At the Megamachine-apex, Pharaoh (gets to play with (It, identity unravelling into (the Unspeakable: sex with (his sister, Stargate space-time warps - stellar transport, voyages into the world of) the Dead, paranoid trips out of)) schizophrenia; he) sees everything for a blinded population,<sup>16</sup> inoculating them from Unnamable-contact.

*Yes or No. Have you stopped trafficking with the Sphinx?*

*Whatever you remember about Sphinx can't be germane (by definition).*

AxS:13 (Sector-01115 (Near Eastern Collection)). AxSys convulses through (ever more ((ultra)modern) reversions to the essence of) the Urstaat. History happens at the State's convenience (but it necessarily involves (the Sphinx-time (of (interchronic) transitions in its)) renovations).

AxS:131 To remember the Barbarian terror is simultaneously to forget its source.<sup>17</sup> History installs amnesia (as surely as it establishes a memory (with the same violence (the same ruptures (faults (foldings (from the Outside)))))).

AxS:132 Barbarian birth-trauma of the State (a (calendriized) black hole).<sup>18</sup>

*AxSys has a big problem being in time.*

AxS:2 (Sector-0121) The terrible secret is affined to the State. It induces molar identifications in an overcoded aggregate (working principally by confirmation (redundancy)). Yes it is you. Even when the worst is known it is never anything new. It's you after all (as (you knew) it would be). Take the case of Oedipal identifications (a series of (terrible) recognitions). The answer (to the riddle (of the Sphinx)) is Man. It was already there (in the order-word of Delphi (Know Yourself)). Then redoubled confirmation: what is the cause of the plague? That is you (too). Resonant closure on the general type (Man), on you yourself (a man), and on the identifiable individual (the man). You know the worst (and it's you).

*You frustrate AxSys. AxSys knows Sphinx is always at the back of your mind, but you can't face it (except as your likeness, which it isn't). By the time you recall Sphinx, you only know what it must have been like (but it isn't like anything (you know)).*

AxS:21 Oedipus modernizes the incest problem (converting incest horror into prohibition (abomination into illegality)). Essentially, modern Oedipus has nothing to do with tabu. It marks the triumph of command over the ((((...)) ur)primal) horror) of implexion. Infinite superiority of the Idea (sovereignty of Law). The real conflict is not between father-son (or even father-mother), but rather occurs when a higher paternity (the State) imposes itself upon the concrete maternal-filial bond: monopolization of normativity by Ulterior power.





*There's something missing, a suggestive shape, like a dark-side of its inner machine...*

AxS:3 (Sector-0121) The theory of tabu involves a fully rigorous conception of Horror adequate (to its specificity of regime (zone of effect (intrinsic variation)) and) to otherwise intractable phenomena (including Sacred Mutilations (Curses (Abominations)) and Becomings (-Unhuman (whether animal, submetazoic, ameiotic, or unlife))). In every case horror designates a zone of intensity (abstract-machinic vector) which directly invests a virtual threshold of implexion (producing affects (in advance of any reference to authority (and indifferent to persons))).

*You remember now, when it cuts-out automatically.*

*True time-lapse horror finding yourself/AxSys (and it becomes you).*

AxS:31 Horror does not confuse the riddle with the secret (it is the answer that is Cryptic). If 423 is Man, then what 423? This Thing with only a number? This unknown becoming? The horror of the riddle lies in what it tells.

AxS:311 Oedipus is necessitated ((re(re(re(...)))) cursed) to guess correctly: it is Man that goes on four legs, then two, then three. Yet Oedipus is identified (solely by his lameness (his cryptic trait)).<sup>28</sup> The abnormality of limping changes to cryptic anomaly.

AxS:32 Something is Called (... and then (finally (- how terrible! -) the cause of) the plague is) Oedipus, who slew his father, mated with his mother (but that is not the Thing (the horror (... Abomination (when things unthread in (a horrific (becoming they involve only (components of (Occurrence (blocks) of )))) fate)))).

AxS:33 The cause of the plague (is you).

*EEG reads flat...terminal initiation...*

*So what is 423, you ask...*

## Glossary

**Anthrobotics.** The social effectuation of programmable technicity. Corresponds to SF-recapitulation of the Greek Novum: real abstract (transchronic) equivalence of commoditized slave-economy and capital-controlled intelligence engineering.

**Axiomatic.** Stratic mathematization based upon model/realization segmentarity. The organization of laminar synthesis in accordance with principles of application, isomorphic resonance, and logicized harmonics.

**Axis.** An applicable dimension (Grid-Space meta-element).

**AxSys.** Ultimate terrestrial order. Pure Capitalism as consummate Idea of the Geostrata and concrete historical sublime. True-name for that which is really selected from the Ur-Staat by absolute occurrence (encounter with the war-machine). In its eschatological sense: Anthrobotic Overlord of the final dominion.

**Capitalism.** Terminal configuration of terrestrial civilization, defined by sovereign axiomatics, organizing capital/cash segmentary economics and technopolitical integration. Social precursor to AxSys autonomization.

**Cipher.** Cryptonomic-index, metrically overcoded by place-value numeracy as magnitude marker.

**Chronos.** Extensive time (temporality) as standard noncurvature and reference for relative speeds. AxSys formula: Chronos equals hyperdimensionality minus Metastructure.

**Epistrata.** Stratic vertical supplements (add-ons) marking levels of axiomatic power.

**Extension.** Abstract domain of exceeded or hypersupplemented systems, defining the overall field of inferior instances (expressible content) within stratic assemblages.

**Flatline.** A concurrent trajectory of 0-redundancy, 0-dimensionality, and absolute (or continuous speed/ curvature (vortex)), defining a smooth space in itself (intensity = 0).

**Hyperspace.** Abstract superior instance correlative to extension. Real totality of Chronos plus all AxSys (actual + virtual) upgrades.

**Hyperspace-Elevator.** Intra-AxSys transportation apparatus.

**Order.** Extensive (or sequenced) sequence.

**Intensity.** Sheer sequential matter of the flatline.

**Metastructure.** AxSys epistrata.

**Sequence.** Intrinsic ordinality, defined intensively by elements of absolute gradient or speed-curvature distributed in (0-dimensional) smooth space.

Apprehended in extension as precursory (prototypic-potential) implicit series, providing ordinal matters and models.

**Smooth Space.** 0-Dimensional ‘plane’ of flatline intersection. Exochronic unlimited Now (nonsegmentary time) of concurrent multiplicity.

**Stack.** Laminar series of vertically ordered AxSys stages, constituting a stratic supersystem.

**Strata.** 1 (Tectonic) Geological units of vertical deposition, constituting macrocomponents of time-registry. 2 (Dynamic) Automatic ordering machines, coincident with laminar rezonings of dezoned elements through production of hierarchical diplostatic intercompensation.

**Ur-Staat.** Initial (and defining) configuration of the State-Idea in terrestrial actuality.

\* This text has been prepared for publication and annotated by Miskatonic University’s cross-disciplinary Stratoanalysis Group (Time-Lapse Sub-Committee). Notes marked L.T. refer to Linda Trent, whose special interest in fictional time-systems inspired her to comment at length on particular points in “Flatlines.”

### Swollen Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> “In a multilinear system, everything happens at once.” (ATP, 297) This is Oedipus’ fatal discovery. By the time he knows what has happened, he also realises that what occurs always had to be the case. Oedipus’ early, unwarranted, belief that he is master of his fate is, of course, totally necessary for his fated destiny to unfold - as it always will have done. Oedipus, as he himself says, is “unwittingly self-cursed.”

I have written elsewhere at length on tragedy as a cybernetic narrative. Briefly, the claim is that tragedy anticipates cybernetic explanation (or - and this is obviously the same point from another side - cybernetics recalls tragic fatalism). In both cases, time unravels into a flat system or singularity (feeding back into itself, recursively, rather than moving forward, successively (recursion is obviously a major pre-occupation of the “Flatlines” text, both in its themes and in its format (with parentheses used to produce recursion as a textual embedding process (like this (...)))))).

A crucial figure here is self-fulfilling prophecy; as I argue in my “Curse, Recursion, Recurrence”, “the most effective prophecies are always self-fulfilling” (36). Walter Cannon has established that self-fulfilling prophecy is a positive-feedback circuit. In his important essay, “‘Voodoo’ Death”, Cannon shows that much sorcerous cursing operates by inducing vicious circles of fear (producing more fear (producing more fear) (etc))) to the point of destroying the organism. To be told you’re going to die is therefore, in certain circumstances, quite literally a sentence of death. For a more detailed account of these tangled webs, see my “Fatal Loops: Tragedy as Cyberfiction” and “Smashed Optical Implants: From Time-Space Sunglasses to Cyberpunk Mirrorshades” (this last draws extensively, and perhaps “illegitimately”, on the work of my esteemed colleague, R. E. Templeton). (L.T.)

<sup>2</sup> A reference to the “three forms of the secret” delineated by Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus*. “Oedipus passes through all three secrets: the secret of the sphinx whose box he penetrates; the secret that weighs upon him as the infinite form of his own guilt; and finally, the secret at Colonus that makes him inaccessible and melds with the pure line of his flight and exile, he who has nothing left to hide, or, like an old No actor, has only a girl’s mask with which to cover his lack of a face.” (ATP 290) The reference here to events in Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex* and *Oedipus at Colonus* is clear.

<sup>3</sup> “*Flat multiplicities* ... are designated by indefinite articles, or rather by partitives (*some couchgrass, some of a rhizome* ...).” (ATP, 9)

<sup>4</sup> “Wherever there is a multiplicity, you will also find an exceptional individual, and it is with that individual that an alliance must be made ... Every animal swept up in its pack or multiplicity has its anomalous.” (ATP 243) “An-omalie, a Greek noun that has lost its adjective, designates the unequal, the coarse, the rough, the cutting edge of deterritorialization ... Lovecraft applies the term ‘Outsider’ to this thing or entity, the Thing which arrives and passes at the edge, which is linear yet multiple, ‘teeming, seething, swelling, foaming, spreading like an infectious disease, this nameless horror.’” (ATP, 244-245)

<sup>5</sup> Kurtz’s infamous cry at the climax of Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* (111-117), which also features in Coppola’s updated film version, *Apocalypse Now* (1979). As is well known, “The horror” was to be the epigraph of T. S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land* (as it is, Eliot used “Mistah Kurtz ... he dead” as the epigraph for the later “The Hollow Men”). Readers familiar with my essay “((P(re(cursing)))) (post)Modernist Fiction” will already know that

both of these poems, along with the earlier “The Lovesong of J. Alfred Prufrock”, enter into *Apocalypse Now* at the diegetic level: Marlon Brando’s Kurtz reads from an Eliot volume, whilst the Dennis Hopper character quotes Eliot. (L.T.)

<sup>6</sup> “[C]apitalism is the only social machine that is constructed on the basis of decoded flows, substituting for intrinsic codes an axiomatic of abstract quantities in the form of money.” (AO, 139) As an axiomatic system, capitalism replaces transcendent laws with immanent rules. (The immanence of axiomatics is attested to by the fact that Deleuze and Guattari use the axiomatic method in their discussion of the war machine - see “1227: Treatise On Nomadology - The War Machine”.)

As both Gödel’s incompleteness theorem and Cantor’s diagonal numbering have shown, axiomatic systems are intrinsically and necessarily incomplete: “... it is of the nature of axiomatics to come up against *so called undecidable propositions*, to confront *necessarily higher powers* that it cannot master.” (ATP, 461) Capitalism thus inevitably runs up against the problem of undecidable propositions or nondenumerable sets. “*At the same time as capitalism is effectuated in the denumerable sets serving as its models, it necessarily constitutes nondenumerable sets that cut across and disrupt those models.*” (ATP, 472) “Yet the very conditions that make the State or World war machine possible, in other words, constant capital (resources and equipment) and human variable capital, continually recreate unexpected possibilities for counterattack, unforeseen initiatives determining revolutionary, popular, minority, mutant machines.” (ATP, 422)

<sup>7</sup> In this sense axiomatic systems, which always involve a supplementary dimension (n+1), are directly opposed to the flatline (see glossary).

<sup>8</sup> In his lecture on the Geology of Morals, our colleague Professor Challenger, speaks of systems such as these as “stratification”. “His dream was not so much to give a lecture to humans as to provide a program for pure computers. Or else he was dreaming of an axiomatic, for axiomatics deals essentially with stratification. Challenger was addressing himself to memory only.” (ATP, 57)

<sup>9</sup> “Hence it is correct to retrospectively understand all history in light of capitalism ... In a word, universal history is not only retrospective, it is also contingent, singular, ironic and critical.” (AO, 140) “.. [T]he universal comes at the end - the body without organs and desiring production - under the conditions determined by an apparently victorious capitalism.” (AO, 139).

<sup>10</sup> To be inside history is to have a relation to Chronos. Yet (universal) history is not itself chronological. Pure Chronos - the State's (synchronic) time - can never be fully-realised, for two reasons: there is always more than one State, and the State (as a form) is always in a relation with the time-systems of the two other social regimes (the primitive socius - which "precedes" it - and capitalism - which "succeeds" it). "Before appearing the State already acts ..." (ATP 431) The State appears "all at once" as history's only break. "They come like fate ... they appear as lightening appears, too terrible, too sudden." (Nietzsche, 86) Crashing into history, the State sets off time waves that move in both directions at once. "It is necessary ... to conceptualize the contemporaneousness or coexistence of ... the two directions of time - of the primitive peoples 'before' the State, and of the State 'after' the primitive peoples - as if the two waves that seem to us to exclude or succeed each other unfolded simultaneously in an 'archaeological', micropolitical, micrological, molecular field." (ATP 431) (For more on this, see Note 15 below). Universal history is a history from the point of view of capitalism's "vague" Chronos; it is therefore always "parodic" because, as we have seen, capitalism deletes all "intrinsic code" in favour of a mobile and variable set of axioms. Parodic universal history is profoundly "anti evolutionist" because it describes the simultaneous and coextensive interaction of ostensibly successive social regimes. From the start, the two "previous" social regimes (the primitive socius and the despotic state) anticipate and ward off capitalism's "diachronic time" - "capitalism has haunted all forms of society" (AO, 140) - even though it supposedly comes "at the end".

<sup>11</sup> In *Structural Anthropology 1*, Levi-Strauss makes an important point in this regard. "Not only Sophocles, but Freud himself, should be included among the recorded versions of the Oedipus myth, on a par with earlier, or seemingly more 'authentic' versions." (217) Reconstructions of myths don't function extrinsically or transcendently, as final "interpretations", but operate immanently, recursively adding more skeins to the fictive webwork. If there is no outside of fiction, it is not because of some transcendental universal-textuality, but because fiction cannot be contained by texts; it is already Outside. (L.T.)

<sup>12</sup> A reference to the lead male character in William Gibson's *Neuromancer*.

<sup>13</sup> "Near the edge of the plateau and due east of the Second Pyramid, with a face probably altered to form a colossal portrait of Khephren, its royal restorer, stands the monstrous Sphinx - mute, sardonic and wise beyond

mankind and memory.” (Lovecraft, 241). Lovecraft puts the question that seems to plague the authors of “Flatlines”: “... *what huge and loathsome abnormality was the Sphinx originally carven to represent?*” (258) Needless to say, there have been countless speculations on the nature and origin of the Sphinx, but these are inconclusive and contradictory, no doubt because its “*huge and loathsome abnormality*” will have always exceeded any attempt to represent it. Many scholars (see for instance, Lowell Edmunds, “The Sphinx in the Oedipus Legend”) now believe that the Sphinx element in the Oedipus narrative was actually a later addition to an already existing mythic system, even though the Egyptian Sphinx is evidently much older than the Greek culture that has given us the Oedipus myth with which we are familiar. (It should be remembered that the encounter with the Sphinx is not dramatised in Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex*; it is referred to as something that has already happened.) The attempt to date the Sphinx has produced widely different speculations; with certain - controversial - estimations claiming that the Sphinx is “even older than 15,000 B.C.” (Hancock 448) With Deleuze and Guattari, though, we might want to suggest that (in at least one sense) *Oedipus is as old as humanity*, and that the Sphinx - as that which must be destroyed in order that humanity may exist - would inevitably always have to be narrated as something *preceding* the human.

Levi-Strauss links the Sphinx to other “cthonian beings”, such as the dragon. Like the dragon, “the Sphinx is a monster unwilling to permit men to live.” (215) While some, such as Carlo Ginzburg, connect the Sphinx with death (“the Sphinx is undoubtedly a mortuary animal” [228]), Levi-Strauss argues that Sphinx-myths concern “the *autochthonous origin of man*”, the idea that human individuals are born direct from the Earth (rather than through meiotic reproduction). (Ginzburg notes that Oedipus is “a cthonic hero.”) The Sphinx would then correspond to what Deleuze and Guattari call “biocosmic memory.” “Man must constitute himself through the repression of the intense germinal influx, the great biocosmic memory” (AO, 190) = Oedipus must riddle the sphinx. In a sense, then this biocosmic memory “precedes” the organism (which emerges simultaneously with death and sexuation) . But, as both “Weismannism” and the Dogon myths attest, this germinal time persists, coterminously, alongside that of the organism (see AO, 158). This may explain a puzzling feature of the Oedipus myth as it has reached us; to wit, why does a creature of such incredible power as the Sphinx allow itself to be riddled so easily? As Velikovsky puts it: “It has been observed that the answer



Oedipus gave was on the level of a schoolboy and that the monster must have been feeble-minded to leap from the precipice upon hearing it. And why should a winged sphinx die in a jump?" (207) The answer would be that the Sphinx doesn't die (it cannot, since it does not live), and that it takes advantage of Oedipus' unwarranted Self-belief only in order to invade Civilization, hidden. Which would also imply that the answer Oedipus gives to the riddle is inadequate. Or partial. (L.T.)

<sup>14</sup> Like the shaman "before" him, the Pharaoh occupies the line of deterritorialization for the socius. He is thus able to ensure that all lines of escape are reterritorialized on his own body. "The full body as socius has ceased to be the earth, it has become the body of the despot, the despot himself or his God. The prescriptions and prohibitions that often render him almost incapable of acting make of him a body without organs." (AO, 194)

<sup>15</sup> "The State was not formed in progressive stages; it appears fully armed, a master stroke executed all at once ..." (AO, 217) "*Everything is not of the State precisely because there have been States always and everywhere.*" (ATP 429)

<sup>16</sup> cf. AO, 211 "The eye ... has ceased to evaluate; it has begun rather to 'forewarn' and keep watch, to see that no surplus value escapes the overcoding of the despotic machine." Compare also William Burroughs, *The Western Lands*: "The Pharaoh, with his alabaster white face and black snake eyes, looks at you, around you, through you, looking for a dagger in your mind, listening for the whispered furtive words, smelling for the sweat of guilty fear." (104)

<sup>17</sup> "It is here that Nietzsche speaks of a break, a rupture, a leap. Who are these beings, they who come like fate? ('Some pack of blond beasts of prey, a conqueror and master race which, organized for war and with ability to organize, unhesitatingly lays its terrible claws upon a populace perhaps tremendously superior but still formless ..') Even the most Ancient African myths speak to us of these blond men. They are the *founders of the State.*" (AO, 192)

<sup>18</sup> "No doubt the war machine is realized more completely in the 'barbaric' assemblages of nomadic warriors than in the 'savage' assemblages of primitive societies." (ATP, 359) This does not mean, however, that the war machine can be equated with the Barbarians. Nomadism is not a question of belonging to a particular population, but of maintaining particular practices. "The nomad distributes himself in smooth space; he occupies, inhabits, holds that space; that is his territorial principle." (ATP,

381) The barbarians, who leave the Steppes, no longer occupy the smooth space of *nomos*. The war machine is necessarily captured the moment it leaves the desert: “nomads have a specificity that is too hastily reduced to its consequences, by including them in the empires or counting them among the migrants ...” (ATP, 410)

<sup>19</sup> “All the hypothetical meanings [of the surnames in Oedipus’s father’s line] ... refer to *difficulties in walking straight and standing upright*.” (Levi-Strauss, 215). Levi-Strauss goes on to contend that Oedipus’s lameness indicates “*the persistence of the autochthonous origin of man*.” (216) (See Note 13)

<sup>20</sup> Etymologically, of course, the name Oedipus means “swollen foot.” Velikovsky, however, argues that there is a case for reading it as “swollen leg.” “In folklore feet may stand for legs. Many languages do not have different words for legs and feet. In Greek, the word *pous* stands for both; in Egyptian, too, the word *r-d* (foot) stands also for leg. In the riddle that Oedipus solved concerning the creature that walks on four legs, on two, and on three ..., the Greek word used is *pous*, and thus the name Oedipus could, and even preferably so, mean ‘swollen legs.’” (Velikovsky, 57)

<sup>21</sup> Velikovsky argues that the Oedipus myth has been transposed from Egypt (which also has a city called Thebes). Oedipus, he suggests, was originally a Pharaoh named Akhnaton. In contemporary depictions, Akhnaton’s “most pronounced malformation [was] the shape of his thighs; they are swollen.” (55)

<sup>22</sup> It should be pointed out that, strictly speaking, there is no prehistory; prehistory is myth of the State. As we have already seen (see Note 10), from the start the primitive socius anticipates and wards off both capitalism and the State: “primitive societies are fully inside history.” (AO, 151) By the same token, though, the very fact that primitive societies are inside history means that they are not nomadic. “It is true that nomads have no history; they only have a geography.” (ATP, 393)

<sup>23</sup> Carlo Ginzburg suggests that the foot mutilations Oedipus suffers in the various versions of the legend may be references to shamanic initiation practices. He also speculates that these may have concerned calendrical rituals (the lameness indicating the imbalances necessary for certain calendric cycles to function). It is mutilation that disappears with psychoanalysis, where it is made to operate as a representation of psychical processes. Levi-Strauss makes parallels between shamanism and psychoanalysis in *Structural Anthropology* (198-202). Deleuze and Guattari would no doubt stress the way in which Freud’s

neo(anti)shamanism doubly reduces Oedipal mutilation, to metaphor, and to function. The question (posed in a number of ways throughout *Anti-Oedipus*) then becomes: how did the body construct a theatrical unconscious for which gouging out eyes ‘equals’ castration, and castration simply subtracts hedonic function?

<sup>24</sup> Eliade gives many examples of the use of iron in shamanic initiation rites. For example: “The candidate’s limbs are removed and disjoined with an iron hook; the bones are cleaned, the flesh scraped, the body fluids thrown away, and the eyes torn from its sockets.” (Eliade, 1988, 36) It is important to distinguish the strategic and subordinate use of metal in “the primitive socius” from the war machine’s necessary and intrinsic relation to metallurgy. “AXIOM III. *The Nomad war machine is the form of expression, of which itinerant metallurgy is the correlative form of content.*” (ATP, 415) The war machine populates the metal body, while the primitive socius accesses it only intermittently through the lone journeys of the shaman.

<sup>25</sup> Cthelll designates the infernal nether regions referred to in numerous mythologies of the Underworld. It refers particularly to the molten, metallic inner core of the earth. In his book on alchemy, *The Forge and the Crucible*, Eliade makes much of the connections between metallurgy, the core of the earth and shamanism. Here and in *Shamanism*, Eliade reinforces Deleuze and Guattari’s view of the smith as an ambiguous figure, aligned neither with sedentary societies nor with nomadic distributions but performing an essential function for both. Deleuze and Guattari write of “the double theft and double betrayal of the metallurgist who shuns agriculture at the same time as animal-raising.” (ATP, 414) (Another interesting connection in this regard is that between Oedipus and the smith. Deleuze and Guattari refer to Oedipus as “the Greek Cain” [ATP, 125], whilst elsewhere strongly linking Cain with the figure of the smith [ATP, 414]). For Eliade, the relationship between the smith and the shaman is close - ““Smiths and shamans are from the same nest”” - but often unstable: “According to the Dolgan, shamans cannot ‘swallow’ the souls of the smiths because smiths keep their souls in the fire; on the other hand, a smith can catch a shaman’s soul and burn it. In their turn, the smiths are constantly threatened by evil spirits.” (470)

<sup>26</sup> The shaman’s occupation of the line of deterritorialization plays a crucial role in maintaining the “dynamic equilibrium” (AO, 151) of the primitive socius; delirium never becomes collective.

<sup>27</sup> Hunter-gatherers populate a smooth space, but only by organizing upon it. “The primitive machine subdivides the people but does so on an undivided earth.” (AO, 151) Once again, this is to be differentiated from the war machine, which populates an undivided earth with a molecular multiplicity.

<sup>28</sup> “The Sphinx was an oracle, and therefore she was supposed to answer questions, not to ask them. Yet it is also true that oracular answers were often given in the form of a riddle that required interpretation, usually supplied by priests attending the oracle ... It does not seem to me that every question needs - or has - an answer ... But were it my misfortune to stand before the Sphinx with the dire prospect of never entering Thebes, I should reply to her riddle: ‘It is Oedipus’ ... An oracle’s questions and answers refer to the man who stands before it. Oedipus was exposed, a helpless infant with damaged feet, to crawl in the wasteland; he grew to be a man and a hero; his end was that of a blind wanderer in exile.” (Velikovsky, 207) “The parechesis at Soph. even suggests that it was the deformity of Oedipus’ feet that gave him the clue to the answer; and there was a tradition that Oedipus gave the answer by pointing to himself.” (Edmunds, 160)

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