DISSEMBLAGE

Machinic Capitalism and
Molecular Revolution

Gerald Raunig

Dissemblage unfolds a wild abundance of material of unruliness, from the multilingual translation machines of Al-Andalus to the queer mysticism of the High Middle Ages, from the small voices of the falsetto in 20th century jazz and soul to today's disjointures and subjunctures against the smooth city in machinic capitalism.

In this volume Gerald Raunig not only develops a conceptual ecology of concepts of joining and jointing, but also undertakes an experiment in theoretical form. Semi-fictional interweaves with meticulously researched historical sources, mystical writings with letters from friends, philosophical fragments with poetic ritornellos. More than a narrative about dissemblages from social surrounds, thing-worlds, and ghost-worlds, the book itself is a dividual multiplicity in form and content, out of joint, in the joints, dissemblage.

Gerald Raunig is philosopher at the Zurich University of the Arts and co-editor of the multilingual publishing platform *transversal texts* at eipcp, https://transversal.at. He is the author of *Art and Revolution* and *A Thousand Machines*. *Dissemblage* is the second volume of *Machinic Capitalism and Molecular Revolution*, following up on the conceptual lines of its first volume, *Dividuum*.

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I. JOINT

Joint is always both crack and seam, gap and link, whee and when something breaks and touches, divides and assembles, gapes open and braces itself. The joint does not join the one and only original break, the one cleavage, the one dichotomy. It joins many things in manyfold ways. It joins dividual multiplicity, which can never be joined exactly, never completely, never into one. It is also the point of tension where something can get out of joint at any time. But first it refers to something that is not yet joined, something that is not only out of joint, but before the joining; it refers to disjointedness. The joint designates a division before it, a division proper to the parts, and each part also has one, has its own. The joint will always have been already out of joint. Before joining, before being jointed, before complying comes the disjoint-disobedient, the dissemblage.

When only one voice resounds, an author speaks, a unified beginning, an undivided self. The author-individual speaks, it hears itself speak, its undivided self speaks itself, it speaks to itself, it speaks united with itself. Homophony of the self-sounding vowel. Soundproof speech bubble. Self-amplifier. In order to simulate the beginning as absolute, the author-individual has erased the dividual multiplicity, the dispersion from which it comes, its joints and neighboring zones, the subsistential disposability in the midst of a subjuncture.

And at the same time, in finely tuned references and proofs, the authorial-individual voice creates a completely different company: a lineage, a vertical connection from the forefathers to the sons, and back to an origin that seems before all becoming, beyond all the multiplicity of minor voices that dwells in the vocal swarms. The unisonous form of joining is vertical, injunction, all too visible and audible law and court, authorial-authoritarian jurisdiction, right after all, rule of the Father over the Son. "This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him." To the multitude the ghostly voice of the father remains mute, its solitary vibration echoes

only in the ear of the son, only Hamlet can hear and obey it: "And thy commandment all alone shall live / Within the book and volume of my brain / Unmix'd with baser matter." Unmixed, one, untouched by all multiplicity, injunction enjoins all that is disjoint.

Whatever the voice happens to speak, when only one voice speaks, the ladder of lineage overrules all other voices, it is the fathers who speak through this voice. Individual and individual and individual in a vertical relation of filiation, obedience, unison and injunction. And even the disobedient voice remains, on its own, in jointedness and compliance, bound to the natural authority of the lineage. Hamlet and Hamlet. The paternal ghost and its intellectual son. Philosopher in the soundproof speech bubble, fool in the festival costume, critical, even nonconformist intellectual, they remain enjoined. Their undivided self fails to be with the many, fails to become manifold, can only speak to the many, for and about them. This place of the intellectual is an impossible one, an intellectual will have said. That of a benefactor, an ideological patron. An insatiable desire for names and authentic-authoritative voices takes the place of the vocal swarm's stifled desire. The enjoined author-individual, narcissistic suspension of the joint, self-centered ad nauseam and in love with one's own voice, one's own word, one's own image.

"*Tearing up of the photograph of the author*. I break open my sealed-off flesh. [...] I take refuge in my shit, my blood. Somewhere bodies are being broken, so that I can live in my shit. Somewhere bodies are being carved open, so that I can be alone with my blood. My thoughts are wounds in my brain. My brain is a wound. I want to be a machine." A dividual machine, divisible and dividing, *Hamletmachine*. When it encounters its machinic quality, Hamlet's voice abandons all paternal injunction. It refuses undivided unison, sounds in the resonance of a subjuncture. On its dividual line, the voice becomes apposition, adjoining, subjoining, ever increasing the pluralilty of tones, undertones,

overtones. *"puts costume and mask down. I am not Hamlet. I play no role anymore. My words have nothing more to say to me. My thoughts suck the blood of images. My drama is cancelled."* Forget the proper name. Cover your tracks. Invent a nameless language of things. And maybe someday even an I will become possible again, as multiplicity, as many possibilities, all kinds of things: first person of the weird imagination, crooked guy and nameless wild thing, I that will never be yours, never be mine, never be of itself.

The critique of the one, individual voice often leads to its apparent opposite, communal consonance of voices. From the I to the We, from individual to community, from the one to the One. And yet, the transition from the individual-one to the all-one only opens up a mirror-image problematic, which no longer seeks the one in the individual, but in the community, in the unification, the union of voices. Unity of the unanimous mass, conjuring that only One is divine. Uniting, unifying, purifying joining of the One.

Something is lost when the voices are suspended in consonant community. If the voices are joined into the One, the dissemblage is reduced to a transition to law and order. No longer a joint that allows, lets be and cares for the wildly persistent disjointure. The Danish prince must set the joint right, must join the gaping chasm, must restore the lost unity. "The time is out of joint: O curséd spite/ That ever I was born to set it right!" Hamlet is born to set it right. He is entitled and cursed to join time, the world, his community, at its joints. "Set it right." Straighten it out, fix it, set up force again by violence, establish and restore patriarchal-heteronormative law and order. Time of jointedness, fallacy of a world without joints, without rupture, without touch. Unified community stands at the beginning and at the end, united unison takes the place of the one voice of the author-individual. Divine injunction of the many voices and of

the world that is out of joint. Even if the Holy Spirit has many tongues, they join into One as if by magic.

In times of enjoining, when the disjointedness of the joint is reduced to a transition and this transition is reduced even to the smallest, the text machines retreat to seemingly secondary subjoinings and adjoinings, to commentary and translation. That which appears as accidence, as subordinate to the substance of the original, becomes "work" itself. *Bei-Werk*, accessory, concealed writing, near, next, and under the work, subjoining, even "overwriting overpainting oversounding" the work. And suddenly dwarfs can see farther than giants, not because of the sharpness of an authorial gaze, not because they are lifted into the air by the size of giants, but because they try out other forms of joining. In the joints of the *Bei-Werk*, Hamlet and Shakespeare lose their function as auctorial-individual substance and become components of a machine. In 1976, at a time when most of his plays were banned from performance in the GDR, Heiner Müller embarked on a translation project for the Volksbühne Berlin, *Die tragische Geschichte von Hamlet, Prinz von Dänemark,* and in the same process produced the Hamlet Commentary or, as Müller called it, "Hamlet shrunken head," the nine-page *Hamletmachine.* "After an appropriate period of time, the toppling of the monument is followed by the uprising. My drama, if it were still to take place, would take place during the time of the uprising. The uprising begins as a stroll. Against the traffic regulations, during working hours. The street belongs to the pedestrians. Here and there they tip over a car."

Torn photographs of the author, discarded masks, lost text, a drama that will not have taken place. 13 years later, in the months of the fall of GDR socialism in 1989/1990, Müller, together with actors at the Deutsches Theater Berlin, joints the two components, translation and commentary, created in the last phase of the GDR's apparatus of injunction, into an eight-hour play ab-

out the transition from Stalin to Deutsche Bank. This time the transition leads to the endless joinings of machinic capitalism, to an amalgam of techno-government and neo-authoritarianism.

Time, this time, "our time" is not simply out of joint; along its undulating joints, assemblages con/join. Different things assemble differently, join and nestle together. Ensembles retuning and attuning themselves continuously, wandering joints, sleek modulations, seamless balances, slime traces. And in the joints of machinic capitalism emerge new forms of compliance. Individual obedience no longer combines only with collective submission. Machinic disposability develops transversely, dividually in the technological and social assemblages. Joining is no longer only subjugation and adaptation to God, father and given structures, but constant fitting of en/joined assemblages. Joining shapes the attitudes, the modes of conduct, the conditions.

The voices do not need to be consonant any longer, they resonate with each other in each respective case. Joining not into a One, but differently in each situation, no longer only vertically, but from all sides. Instead of identifiable individual and unisonous community in obedience, compliant conducts resonate and dissemble, join and self-enjoin.

My data feed the databases obediently. Amazon, Google, YouTube, Whatsapp, Samsung, Telegram know more about me than the state. I want to be put into service. I desire my submission. I comply. I am my prisoner. I am the data-bank. "My place, if my drama ever took place, would be at both sides of the front, between the fronts, over them. [...] I am the typewriter. I tie the noose, when the leaders arehanged, kick the stool away, break my neck. I am my own prisoner. I feed my data into the computer. My roles are spit and spittoon knife and wound teeth and gum neck and gallows. I am the data-bank."

Dividual data flow in and out of databases, and my voice

complies. Dividual flows feed voice recognition and machinic voice processing. Machine ears nestle against vocal cords, vocal folds, glottis, and capture the recurring rhythms in the voice. Reeds of the machine, tensions and relaxations. Oscilloscopes, transducers, vocoders, parlographs, sensors and voice controllers palpate my voice and my moods. And I address them if they want to play me some music or read the news. If I happen to be class- and income-wise ready to take on debt for a cozy techno-home, I no longer need my hands to turn on and off or dim the lights or to regulate the comfort zone temperature, operate the intercom. I speak the oven, the popcorn machine, the dishwasher, the washing machine, the toilet flush, the networked blinds, the TV, the door lock, the alarm system, the surveillance cameras. And Alexa and Siri provide the weather information, and they tell me jokes. And their greatest asset is that they funnel my data to the clouds and gather it there with the other data. They're good at listening, good at eavesdropping, good at interrogating. In the cloud, they learn from the desires of the swarm, they expand their learning capabilities and they adapt – to the dividual swarm and to the habits of the individual user. In this way, they will eventually be able to read my every wish from my lips – even before I have spoken it. And at some point, my voice may be silenced, and only their voices will be heard, in the smart home and in the connected car, and everywhere outside and elsewhere. Singing Siris and Autotune Alexas, word slime, speech bubbles, voice envelopment.

Time must not be out of joint, not only "our time," but every temporality. It must be thought into the indeterminate as a straight line in order to think the future determinable. And the indeterminately extended timeline not only en/joins the future, but through the future it en/joins above all the present. We are no longer simply threatened by the machinic-algorithmic attempt to predict the future. In foresight, report and calculation of the future, the future is first made determinable and

determined, in order to then adapt our present to this determined future, to adjust and balance it, to iron out all unevenness. Instead of breaking with the straight-empty time of machinic capitalism, the paradoxical pair of limited-determined future and indeterminate prolongation of the timeline consigns us to a den of machinic subservience and violent submission to the dividual cypher. The future en/joins the present, "the hens have been slaughtered. Tomorrow has been cancelled."

"Down with the the joy of oppression." Ophelia transforms from a Shakespearean figure shimmering between action and passion, "who the river could not hold. The woman on the gallows The woman with the slashed arteries The woman with the overdose [...] The woman with the head in the gas-oven" into a feminist resistance figure of the *Hamletmachine*. It is about overthrowing all relations in which beings are debased, enslaved, abandoned, despised. It is about overthrowing all modes of conduct in which subservience and disposability are not only accepted as necessary, but desired and subserviently advanced. It is about overthrowing all attitudes in which self-submission masquerades as grace, as happiness and pleasure. The Ophelia of the *Hamletmachine*: "I rip apart the instruments of my imprisonment the Stool the Table the Bed. I destroy the battlefield that was my Home. I tear the doors off their hinges to let the wind and the cry of the World inside. I smash the Window. With my bleeding hands I tear the photographs of the men who I loved and who used me on the Bed on the Table on the Chair on the Floor. I set fire to my prison. I throw my clothes into the fire. I dig the clock which was my heart out of my breast."

In 1997 Hilary Brougher releases the queer independent and low-budget film *The Sticky Fingers of Time*. Here Ofelia acts as a data dealer, watching over a huge database of transactions "in what you call the future," transactions ranging from credit cards to dentist visits. Ofelia is a *time travel business agent,* and with her kiss

(and other varieties of stimulation of the unconscious) she enjoins the queering of linear time, the possibility of time travel. It is not time as a particular time that is out of joint here, be it that of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, be it that of Heiner Müller's *Hamletmachine*, be it Ofelia's time. It is temporality itself that is out of joint.

Ofelia has an animal tail of her own construction and the power to transform humans into another life form, such as a cactus. She directly controls two characters in the film who are her machinic creatures, "damaged souls that I prepared using my own code," "extensions of my consciousness." These "extensions" take shape less according to the old desire of extending man via machine, but more as an Ofelia-machine-becoming, a technosocial machine and time machine. Through two machinic fingers, Ofelia also excerts control over Isaac, who, like her, is out of time, "an artificial time-freak, hotwiring for a non-linear time," and whose technecological role is to manage the subjunctive questions beyond the straight line of past, present, and future: "what could have been" and "what yet could be." While the progress of linear time corresponds to a journey along an inexorable line ("foot on the gas, eyes on the horizon"), Isaac re-braces time. Ofelia has amputated two of his fingers and replaced them with bio-electric implants. As Isaac casually says, "just a future thing, like remote control or contact lenses." And even if the mechanical extension of the body may not have been entirely voluntary and the machinic quality of its time machines is imperfect, it opens up a queerdividual bracing, joining, sticking of time. Isaac himself does not know exactly how this bracing works: "I can't tell you what happens if you jump the time-line. I can however tell you that non-linear time offers no easy way out. Whatever you do – or don't do, it sticks." Disjointed, time is at the same time sticky, stuck, like the fingers of the characters in the film after their time travels. In disjoining, it joins itself differently, becomes differently disposable, enables a different disposability.

Ofelia is also depicted on the cover of *The Sticky Fingers of Time,* the book written by the film's protagonist Tucker Harding in the 1950s, which in a used book store in 1997 makes its way into the hands of the second protagonist Drew, who in turn had destroyed her own draft novel at the beginning of the film before attempting suicide "with her head in the gas-oven." That same evening, she has the book with her in a bar and meets Tucker who just arrived from a time travel. "You could have helped me with the ending. I just started writing it this morning," Tucker says from the future of her writing process. Over several journeys back and forth in time, Drew and Tucker get to know each other and become a couple. At the end of the film, Drew tells Tucker her story from the 1990s in the 1950s, and it is not simply "her" story, but rather a dividually shared story in alinear time. Tucker listens to her, takes notes, and eventually works them into "her" book, which comes from a far-near time and at the same time has effects in another far-near time. It didn't take forty years to write this book, but it took the distance, the leap in time, and the dividual authorship to finish it. The farnearness, the leaping over distance, comes here from the possibility of time travel. "I still don't like the ending," Drew says at the very end of the film, and the answer is "then change it."

"You're a ghostwriter?" Tucker asks Drew. Who is whose ghost here, who is writing? Whose voice is speaking, who is listening? As the times brace, as they begin to stick, as they are traversed and recomposed in all sorts of directions, we see that the ghosts have always already joined in speaking, in writing, their voices swarming more or less audibly in the ground around. Ghosts not simply of the past or the future, but ghosts we desire, attracting us, awaiting us, from one or another of the many endings.

Not only geosocial multiplicity, then, but also dividual lines of time. In queer time, en/joining and determination of the timeline implode. Polyphonic-detuned disjoining, escape from access,

from the injunction from above, from en/joining from all sides. When time is out of joint, when it jumps off its hinges in an instant, the inexorable-violent timeline cracks, the future and its fates burst open, paternal or divine or algorithmic. Here and now is then not simply a point between past and future, but a disjointed and disobedient time, instant, nu of the dissemblage, disfigured, dissembled, dilated present. And at the same time it is a time at a standstill that resists the joining of past and future, a time of wild persistence in the joints, a time in which we stay in the joints. Not to rejoin things, to return to law and order, but to leave the voices untuned, in detuning and bracing, gaping and sticky at the same time.

Dividual time, queer time, unruly time. Dilatation of the present, staying in the joints and doing disjointure. *Orlando, Kindred, Data Thief*. Other ghosts appear, other than Hamlet's father, the Holy Spirit or Siri and Alexa in the clouds, other bracings occur than only those of the voice from father to son, those of the spirit and its tongues, and those of the obedient and joining voice assistants. Inverted en/joining, inverted disposability, as another relationship between past and becoming, as unruly joining of dividual multiplicity.

"We are drawn together as time freaks. The pull of the code is stronger than blood." What connects the time travelers are not heteronormative family ties, not blood relations and DNA, but a soul-code that mutually glues the souls together. "As DNA is to the flesh, the code is to the soul." Code kinship, soul kinship, drifty kinship. Not consanguinity in vertical injunction, and not even in the queer variant of *Kindred*, but not elective kinship either, in the sense of a choice of kinship, a possibility of choice. As in Hamlet's first words, "A little more than kin, and less than kind," a little more than consanguinity and less still than similarity. It is soul kinship beyond blood and sovereign choice, Donna's *oddkin,* uncompliant, disfigured and dissembled similarity,

which only creates farnearness with the constellations in the sky and here below.

Far away and next door, never quite alone, the minor voice resounds. And in the echoing background of the subjuncture, voices sound along in unison, but never quite in tune, the more, the more minor they become, in their subjoining, subsounding, surrounding tunes, voices that need never become substance, subsubstantial voices, subsistential voices. Only the minor voices can become dissemblage. In tinny friction and toneless resonance, a machinic-consonantal swarm of voices, animals, the dead, things, the living, swarm of ghostly voices, dividual. Grass played by the rain, trees tuned by the wind, streets hummed by the cars, Siri sung by the algorithm. But no one tunes, no one speaks, no one plays the dissemblage.

Ritornello 10, 2020/1299
Uma nova suavidade

[: Dear Gerald,

Excuse me for the delay in answering your nice letter. Like all of us, I am trying to deal with this bacterial and political pandemic (which in Brazil achieved the global record, exceeding all thresholds of the bearable). I am taking care to keep my body in a state where it can absorb and process all these affects, allowing my soul the necessary time to find the words to bring them to the collective construction we are now doing around the world. So I am fine. But I can't answer messages that are important to me as quickly as I would like to.

There is an incredible resonance between what I am dealing with now and what you are working on. Here are some points of that resonance:

1) In an online seminar I have given with three other women for a doctoral program in art at the University of Saragoza, one of them proposed a workshop in which we would multiply our age tenfold and then calculate a new year of birth, and then we would spend one hour there, and from there we could go on choosing other times after that, even actual times. My birthday was exactly at 1300, the end of the thirteenth century. And I took a whole trip feeling myself as a Jewish woman of that period. I was very moved by the memory of the knowing body experience, by the discovery that practicing and developing it was the social function of women: taking care from that perspective of the social and environmental ecology – and not only the family – in order to restore life equilibrium when needed. (Besides that, I realized, then, that taking care of the family didn't mean at all its concrete tasks to which we have been confined with the foundation of the colonial-racializing-capitalist regime of

the unconscious and its heteropatriarchal way of being). And then I felt the terror of the interruption of that practice under the violence of the Inquisition (which, of course, has an inextricable link with the latter foundation) and the urgency to run away and begin again from zero in an unknown place. And the trip went on – beginning, running, again and again until now. And I felt so good realizing that I could bring the knowing body with me, crossing those six centuries of successive waves of violence against it, reactualizing it over and over and over again today. The embryos of futures that inhabit us are never destroyed, they just have their germination interrupted. As Benjamin said, our relation with the past consists in unearthing the embryos of futures that have been buried in order to make them germinate in the present. Today, under the new fold of capitalism, the power of its regime of the unconscious over the production of subjectivity and its modes of existence (the micropolitical sphere) is so refined that struggle in this sphere becomes an unavoidable urgency. The knowing body (or eco-ethologic knowing, or just intuition) is the compass of micropolitical resistance (an ethical compass), as this knowing has been deactivated under that regime of the unconscious whose micropolitical strategy consists in splitting subjectivity of our experience as living elements among other elements, animate and inanimate, which compose the biosphere and are responsible for keeping the environmental and social ecology in equilibrium.

1) Teresa of Ávila has always interested me. I have her book and sometimes read parts of it. (Detail: I think that I took "transverberation" from her). You mention her description for the sixth and final stage of sanctification referring to the fact that she felt "the complete indwelling of her body knowledge." Traditionally, the English word "indwelling" refers to the feeling of inhabiting the holy spirit. This experience and the designation she has given to it is an act of micropolitical resistance, as the pimping of the spirit is the major micropolitical

strategy of the Roman Empire with the foundation of the Catholic Church, which provided the basis for the colonial-racialising-capitalistic empire.

2) I didn't know that when Ridley Scott re-edited *Blade Runner*, ten years after the film was released, he cut out that romantic final scene of the film (that kind of "happy ending" in which Deckard and Rachael risk to fall again into the characters of the so-called "genders," man and woman, in the normopathic and pathetic heteropatriarchal script). I laughed a lot with your supposition that perhaps Ridley Scott had read "Uma nova suavidade," my 1982 text ... Of course he didn't, but what is interesting is the resonance between him and me and so many others in 1982, in experiencing the beginning of the bodily dismantling of these characters, and again ten years later, when the experiment was already much more advanced, in creating other figures and a different fabric of relations between them.

Kisses,
Suely
São Paolo, June 2020 :]

The flow of the commentator

There they are again, the winds of the past, swirls that sweep me along into a more open time, into the self-doubts and reflections on what everything could have been had it come to this journey, this onward journey, this encounter. If I had listened less to my inner voice in Toledo then, fifty years ago, and more to the mood in the garden of translation around us, I would have moved on, north, beyond the Pyrenees, all the way to Poitiers, where lived the sage who then bore the honorary title, "the commentator." I would have made the hard journey through the vastness of the Meseta, traversed the former buffer regions in the Marches, crossed the Camino de Santiago with its fanatical pilgrim hordes, seen the legendary Roncesvalles, and taken upon myself the arduous crossing of the Pyrenees, into Aquitaine, into even more unknown terrain than the Castilian territories before. Then I could have discussed all the things that were then vaguely rushing before and around and past us, those things that seem clearer to me today, and yet, what does clear mean, even today? It would have been dangerous, but not so much because of the marauding Christian troops who at that time had already begun raiding the border villages. Further into the country, ordinary highwaymen rather than armored horsemen and crusade returnees made the situation unsafe. Still, with a sturdy escort, good horses and some stamina, it would have been doable.

The second taifa was a time of unexpected possibilities for us, but also a time of uncertainty. It was unclear how the remnants of the old Almoravid rule would act in their fragmentation, and even more unclear was what future steps the Almohad purists would take in their new power. And yet, or precisely because of this, for a time we were able to move about more freely than ever, between the individual city-states and petty empires, and

even beyond their borders and deep into the Christian-dominated borderlands of the Iberian Peninsula. More than ever we became aware of how much the sea connected the two continents, a continuous territory of water and land, how the flows of commerce and thought reached from Marrakech to Fès and Málaga, Córdoba and Toledo, all the way to Zaragoza, beyond the religious borders that were themselves on the move. We took advantage of our precarious freedom of movement, we traveled, and we also moved through unsecured spaces of knowledge whose multiplicity surprised us and which, as it would later turn out, we ourselves helped to shape, learning and teaching, with our movements and different stakes.

For the Jewish population, however, and not only those in Córdoba, it quickly became dangerous: the new Almohad masters presented them with the alternative of forced conversion or emigration, and many chose to flee to the Christian fortress of Calatrava and from there on to Toledo. This small exodus proved to be a rare stroke of luck for a few decades on the Christian side of those rapidly shifting borders. Before the religious overcoding of what Christians would later call *reconquista* – the "reconquest" of a land that had never been theirs, never the possession of any religion, never property at all – it was impossible to say exactly what Christian takeover would mean. What would spread from the north and east to Al-Andalus as a unified and unifying regime of violence was, in the first decades of the century, still a contradictory machine with different interests and very fluttering territorial weightings. Along its fraying border fringes, a multicolored flowering of sociality and intellect emerged, which, despite its small spatial and temporal extent, was to prove enormously effective for the knowledge assemblages of the coming time.

Abraham Ibn Daud had studied in Córdoba and, despite his young age, was already one of the most important Jewish scho-

lars. He made a name for himself back then mainly through independent Hebrew studies as an astronomer, chronicler and theologian. What impressed me even more, however, was his philosophical rigor, always close to the writings of the one who was simply called the philosopher, Aristotle, something quite unusual in his Jewish environment of the time. It was Ibn Daud who, in my youth in Córdoba, gave me my first intellectual access to the philosopher's texts. It was also he who insisted that philosophy should not be played off against religion, but that the two complemented each other as ways of knowing, each bearing witness to the other. Instead of being concerned with a difference between religious revelation and philosophical thought, as is so often implied, we were concerned with the complementarity of the two ways of knowing as, in the best sense, double truth. The divine-theological and the worldly-natural spheres did not need rhetorical mediation of any kind; they could stand side by side without contradiction. Ibn Daud was the Jewish master who played both sides of this double truth without playing them against each other or making them blur. As such a great example for me and many others, he had now moved to Toledo in order to continue his studies in a changed, Christian environment. Even if the path through the borderlands had proved more dangerous, I would have certainly accepted his invitation to Toledo, an invitation that I could not refuse, given all the enthusiasm that resonated about the new environment, the new activities, the new social and intellectual assemblages.

In one of his historical texts, the *Chronicle of the Kings of Israel,* Ibn Daud presented a historiography ranging from Alexander the Great to the fall of the fortress of Masada. In it, he also develops his variant of the legend of the creation of the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew-Aramaic Bible. According to this legend, King Ptolemy Philadelphus commissions 72 Jewish scholars to translate the Torah from Hebrew into Greek in 72 days. The king is up to no good with this translation: he

wants to find contradictions in the holy scripture and reasons to cast out and persecute the Jews. Instead of letting the translators work together, he divides them up and lets them do their work individually. But right through the violently separated force of translation, a supra-individual intellect becomes active: miraculously, in the end, all translations are identical. Thus the persecution of the Jews is averted, and the translators are honorably released, showered with gifts.

For Ibn Daud this miracle of uniformity does not go far enough. In his version, not only is the translation of the 72 translators identical, but also a list of thirteen changes, conjectures to the original text, the purpose of which is to prevent Ptolemy, who commissioned the translation, from being able to prove errors in the Torah. It is not only in the wording of their translation that the translators agree, but also in all these thirteen cases of correction of the Torah itself. In the main, the changes clarify theological ambiguities, reject false interpretations of polytheism, and attempt to clarify open textual questions. The most important change, however, is the first, which concerns the very first sentence: "In the beginning God created" the 72 translators, according to Ibn Daud in his Chronicle, each changed it in the same way to "God created in the beginning." Even grammatically it should be secured that nothing was before the creator, Ptolemy should not wrongly interpret God as a creature of the beginning. So at the beginning must not be the beginning, as God-created it must be preceded by God, by the One.

That the divine is One and above all beginning was common to our religions; but sometimes it became a burden, a clotted statute. Yet, this burden bothered us even less than a vague feeling, a presumption that the formula of God as Unity, had it to be applied even to the succession of words, would serve more as a conjuration, as reference and response to something that had always been around us: something without origin, without

goal, but at the same time something so completely dissembled, dwelling in many blind bends, recurring at irregular intervals, sometimes brittle rustling, sometimes broadband noise, irresistible and unruly jumble of many different tunings.

But Ibn Daud was also more than one. Not only Jewish chronicler and theologian, rabbinic man of letters, poet and astronomer, he was also engaged in Greek philosophy, especially in the reading of the Arabic sages, against the background of an enormous knowledge of the Jewish, Greek and Arabic scriptures. His first language was Arabic, but he also wrote in Hebrew and later in Latin, and in addition he spoke that Castilian-Roman dialect that would slowly become another standard language and find its way from everyday speech into writing. At his new place of activity in Toledo, Ibn Daud's multilingualism, and above all his precise knowledge of philosophical terminology in Arabic, made him shine.

The Christian masters could by no means be called friendly to the Jews, but some among them, especially the clergy interested in Greek and Arabic philosophy, had an important use for the Jewish scholars. They slowly realized that, in addition to their military strategies of mission, crusade, and holy war, they needed quite different war machines, machines of invention, of production, of translation of knowledge. And this was with us in Al-Andalus – all the knowledge that had been forgotten, burned, lost in Latin Europe, all the knowledge that we had accumulated and recomposed over the centuries around the wisdom of the ancients, all the knowledge in the form of wisdom embodied in the scholars and their modes of exchange, knowledge in the form of manuscripts and libraries, knowledge about the handling of knowledge, its negotiations and sites of transfer. The majority of strategists simply took this immense wealth as spoils of war from one empire to another, even over enormous distances of time, from Greco-Roman antiquity to

Arab-Muslim to Latin-Christian. Few understood the under-
lying, more complex process along shifting border spaces and
boundaries over several centuries. But even without a more
detailed understanding of this process, different forms of inst-
rumental appropriation of knowledge production occurred: in
the translation of our sacred scriptures in order to refute them,
in the theological and philosophical discussion of the most im-
portant questions of the competing monotheisms, and finally,
more and more, in the application of the tremendously extensi-
ve and multiple material of Greek and Arabic sciences.

If the Mediterranean region as a whole was at this time a per-
meable space of knowledge and its Iberian-Arabian west the
preferred area of its condensation, Toledo was able to assert it-
self for a few decades as a hub of knowledge in Europe. It had
already been the capital of the first Taifa; through the dhimma
Christian Mozarabs and Jews had civil rights, albeit limited,
and similar rights were given for a time by the new Christian
masters. And just as the emirs of Toledo had been bibliophiles,
this preservation and promotion of knowledge continued after
the Christian siege and nonviolent capture of Toledo. When
the opulent family library of the Banu Hud came from Zarago-
za to the cathedral quarter of Christian-ruled Toledo, the city
was able to benefit from the increase in knowledge, from the
partial freedom of movement in the second Taifa, and from
the Almohad denunciation of the dhimma. It thus became,
in a sense, the Andalusian capital of Castile, with a diverse
population structure: Mozarabic Christians, speaking Roman-
ce dialects but writing Arabic, some with old Visigothic-Arian
backgrounds, who had to struggle with the Latin clergy from
Gaul and the new Roman liturgy; Mudéjares, Muslims who
had preferred to stay in the city even after the Christian occu-
pation of Toledo; entire Jewish communities who had moved
to Toledo from Córdoba and other cities after the Almohads'
denunciation of the dhimma.

On the very day of my arrival in Toledo, I came to see Ibn Daud disputing in the midst of a small gathering of scholars in his garden. He spoke thoughtfully, more slowly than he used to speak in Córdoba, and he used the vernacular Castilian mode of speaking. I was fascinated by the intense concentration of the whole group, how attentively and actively they listened, how they interrupted the sage now and then with questions and comments. He was sitting at the top of a long table, dressed in light robes, and seemed to take particular interest in the interruptions. Apparently, a process of novel elaboration of an ancient text was underway here, led by Ibn Daud. The composition of the assembly was somewhat eccentric in its multiplicity; scholars of various faiths and backgrounds were involved. Different in dress and expression, they also handled, not least, with different languages. I had been told that conspicuous behavior as well as rash statements should be avoided, one never knew how the whims of the Christian masters would develop. In addition, knowledge of languages was and is not one of my strengths. I did not want to disturb and remained somewhat on the side, nameless young man that I was, since at that time Ibn Rushd would be remembered only as the name of my grandfather, the jurist and Qādī of Córdoba. But I was too curious, and eventually I joined them more closely in the second row around the well-shaded table, from where I tried to follow their intellectual discussion.

They were obviously debating about conceptual subtleties and linguistic differentiations in questions of the intellect and the doctrine of the soul. When I dared to lean over those seated before me, I realized that the text lying before Ibn Daud in the midst of many books and manuscripts was Ibn Sina's famous *Compendium on the Soul*. All those who were present had been occupied by this text and its subject for some time, and some were to intensify this preoccupation in the years that followed: in ongoing discussions with different religious and linguistic backgrounds about the rational justification of the existence

and essence of the soul, in the development of their own texts on the doctrine of the soul, or, as in my case, through a lifetime reading of Aristotle's texts on the subject, especially *De anima*. Already during the time of my visit to Toledo, I began to think about those supra-individual conceptions of the intellect that were to move me over the decades in ever new approaches to three commentaries on *De anima*: with never-finished questions about the history of Greek and Arabic tradition, about the most important commentaries that had unfolded over the centuries into a labyrinth of lines of interpretation, but above all about the conjunction, *ittiṣāl of* dividual-immaterial and embodied-material intellect. From the philosopher's remarks it could be learned that in everyday language we saw thinking and feeling much too much bound to an individual body and thus neglected that dividual dimension which is above all in the active intellect. But this active intellect, which thinks the things of the present world, had at the same time to be oriented towards the connection with the multiplicity of thoughts, of the thinkable, of thinking. And this was precisely the subject of the discussion in the round about Ibn Daud: How could the active intellect be detached, abstracted, abstract, if it was at the same time 'in the soul'? How was it possible to understand the dividual-abstract intellect in its connection with the many concrete assemblages of knowledge, indeed as their conjunction itself? And behind this lurked, finally, an even more far-reaching question that occupies me to this day: What if even the material intellect in its re-/perceiving function was not to be thought individually, but, like the active intellect, as dividual, as the single aspect of the soul transcending the space and time of the individual, which was otherwise limited and transient?

The source text was Ibn Sina's *Compendium on the Soul* – but Ibn Daud spoke vernacular Castilian rather than Arabic, and after some time the scales fell from my eyes: this was no ordinary, general discussion, but an attempt at a groping-exploring ma-

nyfold way of translation. With the Arabic original of Ibn Sina spread out on the table before him and many linguistic and philosophical competences on the doctrine of the soul in Greek and Arabic philosophy gathered around the table, Ibn Daud orally translated the complicated text into Castilian. When necessary, and when problematizations came from the round, he slipped in additional interpretations, comments, and questions. Often it was the questions that brought the difficulty of the text to light. Complex theorems and concepts from Greek philosophy, which had been polished in Arabic over several centuries across regions scattered throughout the Mediterranean and beyond, were now to be translated into a nascent language that was far from this sophistication. Especially in the case of central theoretical concepts, one of the difficulties of Castilian on its fledgling path to standardization was to find the most appropriate form of translation. The debate rippled back and forth for hours over when new conceptual formations required invention and when clever turns of existing terms were sufficient. Sometimes the discussions became more heated, sometimes even one or another scholar was taken aback. After all, with the conceptual alternatives, decisions of theological and political significance were also at stake. In the attempt to bring more clarity into the confusion of conceptual assemblages, the arguments became more and more entangled, and the work on the interlingual intercourse of words seemed to lead only to the accumulation of dead ends. And at the same time, the heat of dispute and affect was joined by an intense fragrance, swelling like a vapor, that came to linger between us. At first it seemed to me not exactly pleasant, ambivalent, not quite clearly distinguishable from the odor of urine. Oscillating between aromatic pleasure and disgust, my nose recalled its obvious origin in the flowering Azahar trees around us, and my perception tipped into the positive. Warm humid winds penetrated all smelling things, flowing from the aromatic expanses of the garden and

condensing around us. The intensity of the scent thwarted the intensity of the arguments, the vapors lowered, diverted the intellectual fabric and its units identifiable as egos. Becoming swath, falling into the envelopes, drifting in the haze, remaining in the joints. I began to dissipate.

Dissipation, distraction, diversion, however, seemed out of place. For there was another peculiarity in the procedure of translation, which I became aware of only in the course of the sessions: the man robed in Christian religious garb across from Ibn Daud was writing something, but he was not writing in Arabic or Hebrew script, he was writing the Latin letters in Latin. It was not simply a transcript, not a record of what was said and discussed, nor was it personal notes. What he wrote eventually revealed itself as another step of translation; what was translated from Arabic into Castilian was further translated and recorded from Castilian into Latin. The aim of the whole enterprise: Ibn Sina's Arabic text was to be made comprehensible to Christian Latins. It was precisely to them, who worked so hard for their souls, that those writings so long hidden in Greek and Arabic archives were to be made accessible, writings in which the soul was presented as touched not only by faith but by the intellect. It was Dominicus Gundissalinus with his translation into Latin who was completing what Ibn Daud, as the center of the group, propelled. Prudence was also required concerning the Latin context; it took a great deal of knowledge of the remnants of Greek and Roman philosophy and their late antique and Christian commentaries to fit the results of the multi-part transmission process into the immense framework of the Latin tradition. The central head of an expanding enterprise, Gundissalinus would acquire the greatest name of the Toledan translators in the decades to come. Often at the suggestion of Ibn Daud, with him and in several other constellations, dozens of important works were translated into Latin. There were others who tried to bring versions of the philosopher's works, long

translated into Arabic, into Latin, but it was the assemblages around Gundissalinus that provided translations of Arabic writings from all the known sciences, especially Arabic philosophy such as Ibn Sina, al-Farabi or al-Ghazali.

I was to experience this principle often and in different variations: individual groups of words and sentences were translated from Arabic into vernacular Castilian or Hebrew, and then they were interpreted, commented, discussed, and further translated into Latin. The translation assemblages juggled Classical Arabic, Hebrew, Latin, and the Arabic-Andalusian and Romance-Castilian vernaculars. The Mozarabic and Jewish populations were generally multilingual, but they also translated in a multiple, multihanded, multilingual way. Insecure as I was, I hid my linguistic weaknesses as best I could when Ibn Daud let me share in his work together with Jewish, Mozarabic, and Muslim colleagues and the Latin scholars around Gundissalinus. It was by no means a linear practice from raw translation to smoothed Latin, nor was it a matter of the purely instrumental use of different linguistic competences, translation techniques in the sense of mechanical procedures and hierarchical routines. What might appear in its result as a graduated, high-precision work of two translation experts and their assistants, I experienced as the co-operation of a heterogeneous assemblage, with experiences in different languages and different fields of knowledge disposable for the editing process. Sometimes the discussions about complicated formulations lasted for hours, and even then it could happen that the queries led from the target language back into Arabic and became questions for the tradition of the text or even the text itself.

This back and forth in the middle of translation, the mutual overflow of languages without the order of a clear social hierarchy, without the safeguard of a tested methodology, always close to losing sight of the larger picture, remained the constant

of my Toledan experience. A becoming-Al-Andalusian of the Latin, a becoming-translation of the authorities, a becoming-commentary of philosophy. Manic flowing and overflowing of groups of words, sequences of syllables, letters, sounds, tones, which merged seamlessly into the mishmash of the tangled sounds of the garden, the splashing of an invisible fountain, the cooing of doves, the murmuring of ghosts, around the translators' table the whispering of manuscripts, a mixture of which we were only aware when from time to time it grew into a shrill babble of voices, when the gulls began their feeding ritual for the freshly born offspring. Then the concentrated argument came to an end, then the discussion broke apart and we lost ourselves in smaller groups, in their desire productions and the specific topics that interested us most in relation to the concrete text. For hours, these spontaneous little groups could engage in linguistic, theological, or philosophical details, themselves becoming babbling-burbling ground around, linguistic guides off duty, unruly material of a machine out of control and cheerfully breaking down.

What I experienced in Toledo was not an accidental intensification of translation activity, but neither was it the planned institution of a pre-university school of translation. It was the formation of an assemblage of translation, a machine whose mode of production could develop precisely and only at this time and in this place. Its wheels ground the texts, its social hinges enabled connections of different fields of knowledge, and its gears were in turn inventive: even the side strands, errors, and detours of the translation machine led to new interpretations, new understandings, new texts. It was obviously a form of translation very different from that described by Ibn Daud in his legend of the translation of the Septuagint. Rather than through strict separation and miraculous unification by a holy spirit, text here was processed and manipulated many times over, with many little detours and dead ends and diversions, and

based on the recognition that manifold knowledge was neces-
sary to do justice to the complexity of the translation process.
In the constant tension of understanding, translating, re-text-
ing, in imperceptible slippage from one language to another and
between languages, what occurred was not only translation in
the narrow sense and in the spirit of the Christian mission, but
translation as conjoining of text and sociality. The joints bet-
ween languages, versions of texts, translations, gaps and breaks,
and the attempts to join them with all the finesse of the intellect
and linguistic elegance, these joints of translation corresponded
to the joints of the social assemblage dwelling in them. The
translation machine groaned, creaked, rattled, and sometimes
broke down completely. Then it was cranked up again, unruly
text, like unruly sociality, thrown from one language into the
other, boiled up, rejoined. Even in the process of appropriation
by the Christian apparatuses, the Turjuman machine retained
an unruly life of its own.

Since the beginning of our century, more and more scholars had
joined the affairs of translation in the Christian-ruled parts of
the Iberian Peninsula. Through this territory also traveled an
influential abbot of Cluny, Peter Venerabilis, visiting monas-
teries belonging to his order and pilgrimaging to Santiago de
Compostela. On his way, a major project took shape to which
a number of scholars would devote themselves in the years to
come: the collection and translation of the most important Is-
lamic scriptures for apologetic and counter-missionary purpo-
ses. The translation of the Qurán was given first priority. The
abbot had identified our Prophet as the right hand of the devil
and Islam as a plague and deadly poison that had infected more
than half the globe, and which now had to be known as well as
possible in order to attack and eradicate it. Analogous to the
original evil intention of Ptolemy Philadelphus in translating
the Septuagint, this collection and translation project was ab-
out the refutation and annihilation of Islam, precisely from the

knowledge of its writings. All this was not clear to me at the time, so enraptured I was in enthusiasm for the assemblage of translation, in the effervescent current of its forces, a current nothing could have stopped – not even the insight I lacked at the time, the ambivalence of which Ibn Daud and Gundissalinus must have consciously exploited: translation was central to the project of an ecclesiastical state apparatus that sought not only to destroy us as its opponents but also to appropriate our knowledge in the process, and at the same time it was the same Christian apparatus that, through its institutional and material support, made it possible in the first place for Toledo to become the focus of unruly work on and in translation.

Ambitious to acquire both material and immaterial goods and to drive religious competitors out of Europe, the monastic organization of the Cistercians proved to be a most powerful institution. Under Bernard of Clairvaux, the most influential player in the ecclesiastical politics of the time, it extended its little concealed dominion ever further across spiritual and worldly Europe. Far from seeing Church and worldly rule as mutually exclusive, the Cistercian apparatus permeated both with its strata. Its most significant strategy was Crusade propaganda, its most important means the forgiveness of sins and interest. It was a war against external as well as internal enemies. The external enemy, that was clear, was above all us, in both East and West: an enemy that had been recognized very late as a monotheistic competitor, then also as an economic competitor, and finally as a competitor in the field of knowledge. In comparison with Bernard, the Berber Almohad Ibn Tumart was an angel of peace. The Cistercian abbot agitated against us as evildoers in speeches and letters. Referring positively to the bloodbath of the population of Jerusalem inflicted by the Servants of the Cross fifty years earlier in their first platoon, he spoke of how "the filth of the heathen had been wiped out with the sword of the fathers." "Filth," that was us, "dogs and swine," who "profaned

their praised land" and "defiled their holy places." Those who could not be reached by the propaganda sermons were covered with letter appeals, which Bernard's chancellery sent out by the hundreds with similar wording, personalized to the respective addressee. In Bernard's sermons and promotional letters for the Crusade began the rhetoric of extermination and eradication of the enemies of the Christian name and the talk of impurity and pollution, which has not faded away to this day.

And the vision was followed by the mission. First, Christian armies set out north against the Slavic Wends to carry out mass mock baptisms and killings in accordance with Bernard's call to "baptize or die." The great move toward their "Holy Land" took them southeast to instigate large-scale battles in Asia Minor and the Levant and to suffer equally great defeats. At the same time, they led their cross to the southwest in a double envelopment around our Taifa-fragmented Al-Andalus from Porto and from Almería. Christian proselytizing and the figure of the just, defensive war went hand in hand with massive economic interests throughout the Mediterranean. They aimed not only to expand the Christian territories in the Iberian Peninsula, but also to repress our trade throughout the Mediterranean by raiding ships and coastlines.

Alongside these ventures of expansion, mission and colonization, however, there was also a seething inside the Christian spaces. Incited by the inflammatory propaganda of the ecclesiastical and worldly masters, mobs turned against the Jewish population on Christian territory. While he was reluctant to react to these pogroms, Bernard's state apparatus undertook a project of internal purges within the Church against movements springing up everywhere that did not recognize the authority of the institutionalized Church. Missionary and propaganda journeys taken by Bernard and the pope turned against these dissemblages, first giving them names, identifying leaders – the

Cathars and Neo-Manichaeans, the radical itinerant preachers Henry of Lausanne and Eon of Stella – in order to denounce them in campaigns as restless, illiterate, violent, and godless bands, fighting them and promoting their condemnation. Un-continuously indeed, yet rapidly waxing and waning, nomadic heresies appeared as outlines of a ground around the Christian Church with reference to its very scriptures, glimpses of unruly flocks of souls.

Bernard was not only obsessed with missionizing these un-settled and elusive hordes. He also set his rigid monopoly of revelation, immersion, prayerful realization, and unmediated assent to faith against the emergence of new scholastic met-hods, against rational disputation about God, and against all attempts to balance philosophy and theology. During a break in our translation efforts in Ibn Daud's garden, where I was participating more and more actively, the conversation came to these latest attempts at internal Church purges during and after the Crusade. The latter had turned into a catastrophe for Bernard and the Christian armies. One could sense the Latin scholars' agitation over these developments: a sensational trial of one of the most prominent Frankish bishops had occurred in a multi-stage process, first in Auxerre, then at a consistory court in Paris, and finally following a major council in Reims presided over by Pope Eugene. Seven years after the condemnation of his old teacher Abelard to monastic imprisonment, the burning of his writings, and the decree of a lifelong ban on publication and speech, Gilbert of Poitiers was now on trial on suspicion of her-esy. Bernard of Clairvaux took over the prosecution once again. Gilbert, then about 70 years old, had been head of the import-ant cathedral school of Chartres at an early age, had taught in Paris, and had been bishop of Poitiers for several years. He was known for his subtle rhetoric, the accuracy of his reasoning, his knowledge of the scriptures, and his enormous reputation among teachers and students. It was not known exactly what

he was charged with, but it was probably once again something about the typical idiosyncrasies of Christian theology: Christological questions, problems of the Trinity, and the distinction between God and deity.

Gilbert was rightfully bearing the honorary title "the commentator" at that time, just as they honor me today with the name *al-Sharih*. His acumen was known far beyond the Frankish territories, his interpretations and commentaries were considered the highest art of Christian thought of his time. His deeds, it was said, were as difficult to understand as his speeches. This was due not to an awkward mode of expression, but first of all to Gilbert's determined refusal to reduce in the least the necessary complexity of the texts and contexts. At the same time, as the Latin scholars explained to us, Gilbert's complicated rhetoric was a deliberately chosen and much-needed strategy to circumvent intra-Church conflicts and the recurring grips of censorship. The genre of commentary allowed Gilbert to draw on the philosophical-theological authority of the Church Fathers while at the same time going far beyond the texts on which his commentary was based.

Gilbert himself did not claim the position of authorship, but preferred that seemingly secondary position of reading, interpreting, and commenting. In this he was far more radical than I was ever to become: even today my own writing is little more than philosophical polemics addressed to the mediocre educated, the legal scholars, mere everyday writing in the wrangling of doxa. The Bishop of Poitiers had gone much further, retreating completely to the commentary form. As for me today the form of the Great Commentary, the most important form of expression of Gilbert's philosophical work was his detailed commentary on the minor theological works of Boethius, sometimes ten times as extensive as the annotated texts themselves. He thus brought the appositional practice of commentary to a climax.

For a long time this practice had been an important component of text production in a continuum of different forms of copying, preserving, and repairing, such as transcribing and archiving manuscripts, excerpting and compiling, and translating. The central task of the commentator was and is to inscribe the text that has been handed down into a virtual and dividual text, whose development in the assemblage of interpretations he undertakes to drive ever onward.

It was not easy to develop a new philosophy in a context where it flourished across religions, but at the same time was persistently threatened by the religious institutions. "Novelty" of thought was subject to the general suspicion of heresy. Our play with immanence was always dangerous, and it threatened to swallow not so much the gods as ourselves. Gilbert's divorce of the natural and divine *rationes*, his dose of what the Latins call *profana novitas*, was probably, with all due caution, too high for the tolerance levels of his Cistercian opponents. In Paris and Reims, they proceeded against the bishop with a combination of testimony and theological disputation. But the disastrous crusade defeats had weakened Bernard, and Gilbert was a tough opponent, highly respected and learned. In the long interrogations in Paris and Reims, he opened up many a new flank with his characteristic complications, for example, by saying that each person of the Trinity was by itself one, or by his logical distinction between divine essence and God. But with a mass of testimony from innumerable theological authorities whose books he had brought with him to the council and which he quoted extensively and unabridged, Gilbert was able to parry the attacks from many sides. Bernard did not turn the disputation into a heresy court, as in the case of Abelard where not whole writings were on trial but a previously produced list of *errores*, theological errors against which the accused could no longer argue. Instead Bernard ventured into a terrain he did not master well enough. Theological speculation was not his forte, and Gil-

bert convinced the assembly primarily by erudite reference to the doctrines of his theological-philosophical milieu. Bernard was able to once again swear his mainly Frankish followers to a common declaration, his own creed, which once again tore Gilbert's propositions out of their context and vehemently dismissed them as heretical. But this prejudgement caused offense among the College of Cardinals, who interpreted Bernard's unilateral action as insolent to the primacy of the Roman Curia. The pope, faced with the danger of schism, had no choice but to deny Bernard's creed its status as an official doctrinal declaration and refuse to condemn Gilbert. No clear verdict was reached on the bishop's case, and Gilbert was allowed to return to his seat without further consequences.

Enamored by the tale of the uncompliant bishop who had managed to defy the power and inquisitorial sharpness of Bernard of Clairvaux, I began to consider the possibility of going to Poitiers. What I could glean of it was not very concrete, but still attractive enough in its various aspects to fuel my desire: the Frankish area housed the most important Christian institutions of faith and knowledge; Poitiers had also been a courtly-cultural center since the first trobador, William IX of Aquitaine; and Gilbert was the outstanding proponent of a new way of thinking. For a while, the wealth of knowledge and exchange I experienced in Toledo inspired me – why not just move a bit further, to Poitiers, towards one more focal point of knowledge production? How interesting for me and my later fate it would have been to get to know the Commentator, his experiences in the confrontation with ecclesiastical authority, and his strategies in the struggle for the appropriateness of commentary, for the preservation of unruly knowledge: he who, unlike Abelard, had not only escaped with his life, had not even to endure the ignominy of exile as I do today, but had resisted the inquisitorial forces solely with the power of his discourse and his social surround.

Despite the rising summer heat, it was still hours, sometimes days, of meetings that brought us together around the table of Ibn Daud. My linguistic weaknesses were well known by then, and even my antipathy concerning the author of the text to be translated was allowed to pass as youthful folly. It seemed to me that Ibn Daud sometimes even found something beneficial in my skepticism. The conceptual work progressed briskly, the languages floated and weaved into one another and evaporated, even to the point of productive disorientations regarding the directions of translation. Gundissalinus had taken note of my fascination with Gilbert, and one day he surprised us with a text by the commentator. What he was translating and commenting on was not much more than a paragraph from Gilbert's commentary on Boethius' treatise on the Trinity, which in all its brevity provided us with material for discussion for several nights. Gundissalinus had been interested in Boethius for some time, even beyond the spectacular scandal surrounding Gilbert in his interpretations of the Boethian doctrine of the Trinity. Gilbert was commenting on the writings of a Latin scholar who had translated the philosopher from Greek and connected the latter's logic with Christian dogmas, and who thus provided decisive conceptual lines. We now found ourselves at an important hinge between ancient and new philosophy, and at the transition from Greco-Roman theory to Christian theology. Even though I made little of Gundissalinus' conflations of Ibn Sina's and Boethius' theories, and despite my lacking familiarity with the theological background, I soon recognized the explosive nature of what we were about to hear. A piece of unruly knowledge, not at all fitting to the common, well-behaved attempts of interpreting the old – philosophy in the mode of commentary. And when I look through my notes from that time today, I understand even better the potential in Gilbert's sentences. Three conceptual turns constituted the explosive power of the passage, implicit escapes from the three great dichotomous or-

ders of philosophy: transverse to identity and difference Gilbert developed a strong concept of similarity; transverse to substance and accidences he proposed subsistence as it is singular to all subsisting; transverse to individual and community he invented the concept of dividuality.

The Latin word sounds so obvious and yet is not familiar in everyday language or philosophy: *dividuum*. With this term Gilbert describes a singularity that is not characterized by the properties of individuality, wholeness, and dissimilarity. Rather, dividuality means dividedness or divisibility, though oddly enough not in relation to a whole: not only is something dividual not in-dividual, it is also not one in the sense of a whole. Dividuality implies an extension, a distribution that moves through diverse singular things, diffuses, disperses. But even though *dividuum* is in diverse single things, it is not one-sidedly opposed to the individual as a universal. It introduces a new dimension in which the parts of a non-whole are posited in a non-hierarchical relation. No universalizing separation, separateness, disjunction from the concrete, the dividual emerges in dispersion, in transversal distribution, in drawing, performing, and tracing the abstract line that traverses and concatenates concrete single things.

The *unum*, the one, is neither closing community nor totality of the individual, but the one, dividual-singular line. On it and with it and in it, the separate subsistences and subsistings, dispersed and distributed to diverse individuals, assemble. Gilbert purposely chooses two very close terms, *subsistentia* and *subsistens,* in his attempt to conceptually grasp the intertwined inner-worldly connection between that through which something is and that which is. The relation between the independently resting substance and the dependently moved accidences always remains one of externality. The subsisting, on the other hand, is through the same subsistence that is at the same time in it. Subsistence is indeed the principle that effects the concretion

of the subsisting, but unlike a universal ground it does so as the respectively specific and singular subsistence of a respectively singular, co-emergent subsisting. A subsisting single thing does not have its being from an outside, but rather from the subsistence that is in it. Conversely, a subsistence is not in diverse subsistings, but only in one. The dividual applies to both aspects, to the multiplicity of the immanent-causal subsistences and to the multiplicity of concrescent subsistings.

Finally, an implicit proposal to break the dichotomy of identity and difference appears in the excerpt from Gilbert's text. That which literally constitutes dividuality is *similitudo*: similarity is never whole, never uniform, but divided and co-forming, conformant. It does not conclude and exclude, but emphasizes the potentiality of connection, apposition, concatenation. Dividual similarity does not amount to assimilation; the Latin *conformitas* is not to be understood as a moral designation of conformity and compliance. Co-formity means that parts that share their form with others assemble along the dividual line, becoming similar. Dividuality emerges as the assemblage of co-formity to form-multiplicity, as specific resonance but not consonance of form. In this sense, co-formity, which is not uniformity, but multiformity, even co-unformedness, constitutes the dividual parts as *unum dividuum*. Non/con-forming assemblages of similarity, which do not submit, do not comply, remain dissembled, unconformable in becoming similar.

We reached the end of the passage late at night, *dividuum facit similitudo,* and the resonances of similarity, subsistence, and dividuality resounded within us. What would Gilbert's conceptualization mean for our readings and translations? How, in the midst of our religious diversity, were we to deal with the challenging philosophical and theological questions that had brought Gilbert and others close to charge of heresy? How could this complexity of thought be preserved in the face of rising dog-

matic-authoritarian claims from all sides? Chants entered the circle from somewhere, the Arabic stanzas of an Andalusian muwashshah, the male voice, its classical poetics and apparent omnipotence, the pride of the dominant voice, the order of standard language. The stanzas told of the departure and inexorability of a struggle and a love. And yet the male voice seemed to have only one goal: to announce the final lines, the kharja, the "exit." Then the gender and pathos changed, the language changed from high Arabic to something quite different. But what did we hear, slowly settling into the rhythm and melody of the kharja as we wound down our translation work? For a moment it sounded like the oral language of Castilian Romance, thoroughly saturated with Arabic, and then, almost without transition, it resounded Mozarabic with strong Castilian influences. After the Arabic standard language, after the dominant voice of the stanza singer and the major language of the poet, the abundance of the Andalusian vernaculars resounded in the middle of the new Christian Castilian capital. The minor voice made everything dance according to other rhythms, according to the beats and rhymes of the kharja.

Should I understand the domestic sounds as a call to order, to move me who had been staying in Toledo for a long time finally home to Córdoba? Or could one hear between the kharja's lines a nomadic call, a lure into the unknown? Was I making a grave mistake if I did not use my visit to Toledo to travel on to Poitiers? Were the voices right that advised me to embark on this adventure, to push deeper into Christian terrain, in search of kinships of the intellect? But a voice that claimed to be my inner voice called me to return to the family, and to the new masters in Córdoba. A new responsibility, a new service that also involved transforming the emerging dogmatic purism at home into something bearable. I felt sleep coming over me, I felt a chill. When I had unwound my turban, I looked at myself in a metal mirror. What my eyes beheld I do not know, for

no historian has described the forms of my face. Only Borges knows that I disappeared suddenly, as if becoming nothing in a fire without light, and with me disappeared the table and the unseen fountain and the books and the manuscripts and the gulls and the Azahar trees and the scents and songs and perhaps even the Tagus.

Ritornello 11, 1978/1933/1950/1904
Queer Joint

[: Never identity, not even a queer self, never queering up to difference, towards new, fixed identity. "I ... dentity / is the crisis, can't you see," sings Poly Styrene, and her queer punk has been expected. Queer joint, transversal to the alternative of identity and difference: queer becoming similar, queer reason, disjoining and rejoining of voices. In the 1930s, queer voices benefit from the latest technical invention, the microphone, and they allow themselves to sing beyond the professionalism and volume of high culture. Thin and soft, squeaky and shrill, totally incapable of deep feeling, always thin and soft and on the surface. No bold, refined, lush, rich voices, voices rather that fit into a bedroom, into a self-lost drifting, or into a radio studio, another new invention. When Orlando Roberson ends *Trees* in the early 1930s by dragging the last notes up into infinity – "Poems are made by fools like me / But only God can make a TREEEEE ..." or when, with Andy Kirk's band in *Until the real thing comes along*, Pha Terrell drives up his baritone in the eponymous final movement of the last chorus, but before that abruptly switches to a shrill falsetto – "I would rob, steal, beg, borrow, and I'd LIE!!! for you / I'd draw the stars down from the sky for you / If that ain't love, it'll have to do / Until the real thing comes aLONG" or when, singing on the other side of good and evil at the end of the 1940s with the Swan Silvertones, the Reverend Claude Jeter lets the gospel take off easily and casually into airy vocal heights at the beginning of *Toll the Bell* ... all minor voices, soft and sweet, minor masculinities that do not see nor have the need to act too normal. And the minor doubles in the name of Little Jimmy Scott, because he has a rare voice in the height of a soprano. Birdland just opened, and he sings one song with Charlie Parker at the end of a frenzied bebop program interpreting the Gershwin ballad *Embraceable You*. Speed has never been Jimmy

Scott's problem, even in this very first recorded performance: He keeps time by letting it go. He stretches out the phrases so that he almost constantly sings half a bar behind the rhythm section, which is already dragging slow and laid back. "Embrace me, my sweet embraceable you ..." Sweet the embrace, sweet the voice that sings of it. Fragile, higher still than Billie Holiday, but resembling her and the heights of the trumpet of Fats Navarro after him. When Jimmy Scott ends the song, he stabs up the "embraceable" in the last verse and then stops with the last note, "you," without resolution on the ninth, oblique fermata that hangs around the restless runs and cadences of a bird behind it. Almost 50 years later, after recurrent de-naming, non-mentioning and mistakes in names, after a few years of working as janitor, after a few records that could not come out because of legal problems, starting with *Falling in Love is Wonderful*, over-produced by Ray Charles in 1963 – the transition from sweet to saccharine is unfortunately fluid – and in the middle of a late work that finally finds its audience, Jimmy Scott records the Talking Heads song *Heaven:*

> Everyone is trying to get to the bar
> The name of the bar called Heaven
> Now the band in Heaven play my favorite song
> They play it once again they play it all night long
>
> Heaven is a place
> Where nothing ever happens ...

This place where nothing ever happens, bar, heaven, nothing, or even, as in Clarice Lispector's *Passion according to G.H.*, the interior of the maid Janair's room, actually "in my possession and in my house," but then it becomes clear "that the roach and Janair were the true inhabitants of the room," – this place of nothingness and self-disjoining emerges from and in queer refusals of identity and majority. Meanwhile, Hamlet has long been a woman, as Stephen Dedalus attempted to prove in

1904. Going to the end of the world, just not traversing your-self. God, the sun, Hamlet: having itself traversed, it is and remains that self. Just don't traverse your self, don't joint your self in consonance. And the end of the world calls: "Elias is coming!" If he would come, he would fire up the locomotive, a journey to eternity junction, the nonstop run to the end of the world. All aboard, and off we go. "Elias is coming!" Poly Bloom gets a leaflet slipped to her, but Elias is not coming (was not even in Dublin in 1904, not even as a false prophet). Elias is not coming. Elias will not come. Elias will never come. No end of the world. Instead, daily catastrophes and everyday epiphanies, weak machinic-messianic forces and manyfold break-down. Instead that which has passed longs for the queer return. Instead the world ends daily. Instead a world ends daily. No prophet to announce the end, no Elias, always only not coming, but instead a crumpled leaflet that knows the place of assembly. It is named Elias. And even if they follow none, leaf-lets they produce. Sheets in the wind, flying messages, fleeing-inventive weapons, *materiales de construcción de mundos*. Poly sings the high notes, and her lifespan will extend even further than Orlando's, 83,300 years, all a matter of proportion. :]

Ritornello 12, 2020.
Da Toni

[: Dear Gerald,

First of all, thank you for your letter. Judith and I are doing well, the lockdown is very hard, but for me it is ultimately not so new, and we still manage to make our lives work well. I envy you for Málaga, the lockdown there is undoubtedly a dream for many metropolitan beings. It is no coincidence that there and now you have begun to study the conduct of love in work and in life, echoing mine and Michael's call not to leave love to the priests, the poets, and the psychoanalysts. But to the appropriation by proletarians. To build together with them (and this is the sense of our proposal throughout our common work) an ideal model: that of the General Intellect, where in knowledge reason and affects, community and singularity are connected. In short: where in love and democracy (as the *Grundrisse* want it) "the social individual" subjectivizes itself.

I am sure that Marx grasps in the concept of the General Intellect that materialist perspective of a universal, active or passive intellect, which a materialist tradition has been developing perhaps since Avicenna and Averroes, in parallel and/or in polemical conflict with patristic and scholastic spiritualism (which Ernst Bloch has broadly shown). Let me add that in Marx labor presents itself as power. Labor power is *poverty*, which as a need and desire has the *power* to produce. This potentiality of labor is a Spinozist concept. So in Marx, as far as the concept of labor is concerned, there is certainly something of Aristotle and something of Spinoza.

And then also something of Hegel. As you have probably read the first works of Habermas, you know very well how in the young Hegel (in Jena) the dialectic of the instrument in the man/

nature relation is central. That is, the dialectic of the interaction of nature and spirit, of technology and anthropology. Habermas *formalizes* this interaction as a communicative scheme and draws clearly idealistic conclusions from it. On the other hand, in French poststructuralism, especially in Deleuze and Guattari, we find an ontological perspective of the machinic synthesis of nature and mind. This seems to me to be an important second point in your letter. For you, it is about grasping the ontological consolidation of the interaction between man and nature – of course as it has developed in variable, diverse, and diffuse forms, but ontologically consistent. The formal Habermasian nexus (*interrelation = communication*) is replaced by a *productive nexus* (*interrelation = machine*). Since I was involved with Félix Guattari at a time when he was opening his thinking to ecosophy, I believe that this way of looking at things was central to him, and that he too read the General Intellect in this sense. When Michael and I insisted on the relationship of poverty/work/anthropological constitution, we developed a perspective of property on ontological ground, an open dialectic of nature and mind, of the world and its transformation, an associative and projective basis from social affects to networks of the common. In our case, the formula is: *interrelation = love*.

Third point of your letter, in which you write about Ludd and his interpretation in more operaistic rather than Luddistic terms. I have not read Marco Deseriis' book, but I find it very appropriate to differentiate the assault on the machines: into a moral destruction of machines because they are bad, and into a political destruction of machines because they interfere with employment in a particular situation or are blackmail tools of the bosses. It may well be that the history of machine-storming has developed in a similar way to the operaists with their dispositifs of sabotage. But when Michael and I talk about Luddism, we talk about it more in absolute terms, as the term that has been handed down in the history of the labor movement wants

us to. Here Luddism means: we don't want the machines because they are instruments of exploitation, and that's that! As far as I am concerned, I do not believe that we can still assert this with such rigidity. In my opinion, the question of collaboration with the machines or their destruction must be posed and articulated in the middle of the program of re-appropriation of fixed capital (by the workers/citizens).

Let us come to Francis of Assisi and his conception of poverty: Francis is not a mystic. He moves entirely within a social dialectic that develops in the Italian communities of the thirteenth century (abstractly, within the master/servant dialectic; concretely, within the dialectic of the urban bourgeoisie against the nobility, the aristocracy). The papacy's recognition of the Franciscan order (rather than its denunciation as a heresiarchal power) can be located within this political appreciation. Francis has little to do with the medieval mysticism of poverty, where to be spiritually poor is to close oneself off, to isolate and empty oneself in order to have a better relationship with God – in Francis, the love of *carità* is an opening toward the poor, it is an aggressive giving that rises up against the rich. It consists, on the one hand, in the revolt of the servants against the masters and in the power of the poor who want to fight for wealth, and, on the other hand, it opens itself to a conception of religiosity – but above all of ethics – as a libertarian investment of the real, as an anticipation of the subversive elements of the Reformation (which were immediately crushed). In this way, poverty creating wealth is not simply a classical utopia (to be found, for example, in Plato's *Symposion*, in the tension of love vis-à-vis Diotima); in thirteenth-century Italy and in the great commercial cities of the Rhône and Rhine, it is also a determinate dystopia, the definition of a historical future under construction, a power being realized. You will need some more effort if you also want to place the Belgian Beguines in this historical cluster.

Today we have left modernity behind us, and with it Francis and his concept of love. In the age of "real subsumption" the common is constructed neither as object (Middle Ages) nor as subject (Modernity), but as subjectivation. Love is that subjective dispositive which in the multitude combines the desire of association for common happiness and the power of production. This naturally makes it necessary to work on the liberation of technologies, on the re-appropriation of fixed capital by citizens/workers, and consequently on *direct democracy* (in the political figures of love).

Above all, you asked me, what does this imply for the relationship between love and intellect today? If we start from the sequence "love-desire-multitude-production" on the basis of the General Intellect, the love-intellect relation is characterized by a greater power (a greater power of desire and production, high cooperation and subjectivation). In capitalist real subsumption, this power is extracted and transformed into surplus value/return/profit. However, this is becoming increasingly difficult for capital. The power of the multitude, in fact, resists and tends ever anew to make itself a class (productive surplus and cooperative intersection of the figures of labor, gender, and race) – it resists the extraction of surplus value and seeks to institutionalize productive surplus collectively. Sabotage, appropriation (of income and/or social support) and constituent power are, from time to time, the forms of expression in which love and intellect are expressed and articulated in the struggle of the oppressed.

Good work, and a big hug,

Toni
Paris, April 2020 :]

II. DISJOINTURE

Proximity of the distant, becoming similar, assembly of disjointure.[1] Even a nomadic text can become virtual assembly, bracing, abstract machine. Its copies, its readings and discussions, its dividual translations are joinings, condensations, approximations of the distant, and every secret meeting in a beguinage unfolds the unruliness of the disjointure. As*sem*blage, en*sem*ble, re*sem*blance, *sim*ulation, as*sim*ilation. Similarity, without fitting into one, without completely adapting, without making alike. Simulating adaptation, yes, approximating without end, as dissemblers assembling innumerable minor semblances that escape the major semblance of identity. Similarity is then becoming-similar, without ever having known absolute differences, without ever entering the same, without inner similarity prior in things, without the premise of a one that would approach a given other on the basis of that premise. A becoming, which is at the same time letting go, becoming nothing and becoming mutually similar. Assembling like the celestial bodies, by bracing, attraction, and constellation in farnearness.

There is a text by Walter Benjamin that unfolds similarity in a peculiar way, the "Doctrine of the Similar." The title may sound like one or even several books, but it is simply a six-page essay from 1933, which was followed in the same year by a second, condensed version entitled "On the Mimetic Faculty."

1   This book proposes three key neologisms that arise from compounds of the German word *Fuge*, which is translated here as joint: *Unfuge*, or disjointure, in the second chapter; *Umfuge*, or subjuncture, in the third chapter; and in the fourth chapter *Ungefüge*, or dissemblage, which not only resounds as an apposition of assemblage, but in German also with something unruly, disobedient. In addition, a whole variety of terms are introduced around the verbs *fugen/fügen*. The German *fugen* means join in a more technical sense, for example in engineering or construction, while *fügen* carries the former sense but can also mean fit in, submit, ordain, add, and more. The English translation of these terms takes recourse to several conceptual surrounds: join (conjoin, enjoin, disjoin, subjoin); assemble (assembly, assemblage, dissemble, and its connections to re/semblance); comply/obey/submit; and dispose, disposal, disposability.

It is about children's games, constellations of the stars, mystical graphology, and a mode of reading before writing. In his introduction, Benjamin distinguishes between evidence of "found similarities" and "processes which produce such similarities."[2] Perception, determination, categorization of existing similarity on the one hand, but only as "late, derived behavior"[3]; invention, production, fabrication of similarity on the other. Or — as Benjamin writes in the addendum to his first text — a "perceived world in which we are [...] capable of seeing similarity" versus (and far beyond that) the "faculty of becoming similar"[4].

Benjamin calls this faculty of becoming similar "mimetic faculty." He ascribes it as a faculty to nature as well as to man and also emphasizes the possibility of a movement of similarity through imitation from things to humans: "A child not only plays at being a grocer or a teacher, but also at being a windmill or a train."[5] The production of similarity in imitation dispenses with identification and braces things that beforehand would tend not to fit into classical notions of the similar. Thing-worlds, environments, mechanospheres join into unequal games and correspondences when similarity throws up its layers, without ground and without end.

There is a peculiarity of similarity that concerns its double time measure: according to Benjamin, its perception is "bound to an instantaneous flash. It slips past."[6] Similarity is not to be held

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2   Walter Benjamin, "Doctrine of the Similar," in: *New German Critique*, No. 17, Special Walter Benjamin Issue (Spring, 1979), pp. 65-69, here: 65.

3   Walter Benjamin, "Aufzeichnung von 1933," Benjamin-Archiv, Ms. 926, in: ibid, *Gesammelte Schriften,* II 3, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp 1991, 956.

4   Benjamin, "Doctrine of the Similar," 69.

5   Ibid, 65.

6   Ibid, 66, and in exactly the same wording in "On the Mimetic Faculty," in Walter

fast, but subjectless acceleration; it offers itself "fleetingly and transitorily as a constellation of stars."[7] The abruptness with which it appears as a joining of the instant also implies its abrupt disappearance, its material instability, its irretrievability. Only for an instant does unsensuous similarity show itself. It opens unexpectedly and closes, never to be seen again. It "flashes up fleetingly out of the stream of things in order to become immediately engulfed again." Those who want to go with it are subject to irritable lurking or holy patience, but in any case "to a necessaryspeed, or rather a critical moment."[8] Flashing, flitting past, *ein Nu*, an instant that makes similarity become "the quickest and most fleeting creature."[9]

On the other hand, this faculty, which Benjamin in the addendum to the "Doctrine of the Similar" declares forgotten in his time, is a processual faculty, a faculty of becoming similar. As much as it is subjectless flitting by, it possesses a duration of bracing. Benjamin makes use of the comparison of the flame, which needs the flowing exchange with something else in order to enter into its game of transformation: "the mimetic element [...] can, like a flame, manifest itself only through a kind of bearer."[10] Fire lets itself be carried, by something that mutates into fire. Mutation,

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Benjamin, *Reflections,* translated by Edmund Jephcott, New York: Schocken 1986 [1933], 333-336, here: 335. Jephcott translates "an ein Aufblitzen gebunden. Sie huscht vorbei" into "limited to flashes. If flits past." The formulation of something whizzing by, slipping or flitting past is also found in the fifth of Benjamin's Theses "On the Concept of History" [1940], there in reference to the time-bound nature of the "true picture of the past" (https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/benjamin/1940/history.htm).

7   Benjamin, "Doctrine of the Similar," 66.

8   Ibid, 69

9   Benjamin, "Aufzeichnung von 1933," 956.

10   Benjamin, "On the Mimetic Faculty," 213.

transmutation, becoming, perhaps these are other, better names for a form of assimilation never absorbed in the same.

> Assimilation? What assimilation? Those serious and large-scale attempts at assimilation by 19th century Jews that Walter Benjamin and his Zionist friend Gershom Sholem were so critical of, not only in the catastrophic developments of the 20th century, but already in their inherent submission? Sholem saw them – against the backdrop of his own early decision to a postassimilationist renunciation – as "these incessant brain drains through which the Jews lost the majority of their most advanced strata to the Germans," as a "total assimilation," "which the majority of their elite were prepared to pay for by disappearing."[11] And beyond the Jewish-German relationship: "The Jews waged the struggle for their emancipation [...] not in the name of their rights as a people, but in the name of their assimilation to the peoples among whom they dwelt."[12] Or that assimilation which in the most diverse forms leads to the accusation of mimicry, which implies that adapting to the normalized standard was only external, inwardly its subjects remained untouched, unassimilated? Or that assimilation which accompanies Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*[13] through his life, starting from the request of his grandfather, the freed slave, on his deathbed:
>
>> Live with your head in the lion's mouth. I want you to overcome 'em with yeses, undermine 'em with grins, agree 'em to death and destruction, let 'em swoller you till they vomit or bust wide open. (12)

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11   Gershom Scholem, "Juden und Deutsche," in: ibid, *Judaica,* vol. 2, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp 1970 [1966], 20-46, here 35, my translation.

12   Ibid, 27.

13   Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man,* New York: Signet 1968 [1952].

All his life he had remained calm, only to call himself a traitor, a spy in enemy territory, when he was dying. He speaks of his softness as a dangerous activity. And his grandson follows him, playing the invisible yes-man, to all the masters, rulers, dominators, to all those who are invisible in their very different, white, way – white, "which is not a color, but the lack of one" (313) -, including to his socialist organization:

> That was all anyone wanted of us, that we should be heard and not seen, and then heard only in one big optimistic chorus of yassuh, yassuh, yassuh! (274)

But whether he stands for or against society, whether he remains invisible or transforms into the protean trickster Rinehart, subversive affirmation always leads him into conformism. Until the last chapter, he retains the view that his grandfather must have been wrong, or that too much had changed since the 19th century (640). Only in the anarchic tumult and in the reflexive epilogue of the final pages does another possibility of saying yes appear,

> not because we would always be weak nor because we were afraid or opportunistic, but because we were older than they, in the sense of what it took to live in the world with others [....], because we, through no fault of our own, were linked to all the others in the loud, clamoring semi-visible world, [....] who were tired of being the mere pawns in the futile game of 'making history' (313).

An excess of everything that it takes "to live in the world with others," *materiales de construcción de mundos*, a plus of this connection with everyone and everything else, that is the power of becoming similar and of unruly disposability. And perhaps this antecedent power of cohabitation and transversal connection also has something to do with that assimilation in a text by Eran Schaerf, consisting of 36 footnotes on 14 pdf pages, and nothing else, which adopts the property of the footnote to not need to have much to do with what

comes before and just as little with what comes after. So very different notes can come to stand next to each other. Yet, before and after also get something to do with the in-between, already because they stand next to each other, one after the other, and because they pretend to reference a text, probably written in linear form, which could possibly give the whole thing more form. But the dramatization of the footnote wants to be self-sufficient, it emancipates itself from its reference, adjoining *Bei-Werk* without work. Here again, it is about imitation and assimilation, claim of the un/exact correspondence of the imitated by the imitation, difference between the desire for complete assimilation and a reenactment without claims of ownership of the reenacted, difference between the exchange of one attribution for another and the very escape from attributions, always questioning them anew, finally Levantinism as a failure of imitation and precisely for that reason as a site of resistance. Levantinism, according to Eran Schaerf, is a socio-political risk endeavor. And that is why, in the concluding footnote 36,

British Prime Minister May says:

'If you believe you are a citizen of the world, you're a citizen of nowhere'.

On the lectern where she spoke was written 'Global Britain.' This was translated into the image, but otherwise received no attention, except on a radio program reporting a jingle from the BBC,

'Wherever you are,' it said, 'you are with the BBC.'

The program was not yet over when, in his mind, its reenactment already began. A woman stands on a wooden box in London's Hyde Park and shouts: Citizens of nowhere! You are with the BBC. A group of passers-by shouts back in chorus: Proletarians of every country, you are with the BBC. The woman shouts back, Citizens of nowhere! Unite!

However, the text by Eran Schaerf, invocation to becoming similar, is titled: *Citizens of Nowhere, Imitate!*[14]

Walter Benjamin traces similarity above all in mystical-magical realms of knowledge production. The forgotten faculty of similarity once concerned "great areas of occult knowledge,"[15] they are "magical correspondences" that begin their machinic language beyond the striating-stratifying apparatuses of scientific reason. "Reading before all languages, from the entrails, the stars, or dances."[16] Not in assembling the respectively nearest, but in the constellation of near and far, similarity arises. Especially in reading from the stars, this act of approximation is accomplished: "It is not a matter of celestial influences or forces, but of the archaic capacity of man to resemble the celestial position of an hour. It is the hour of birth; in it once the first, incomparably far-bearing act of an adaptation may have taken place: the adaptation to the whole cosmos by the approximation to it."[17] An approximation to the vast, the distant, the most remote, the most obscure, not only in the archaic, but also in an animate thing-world around 1900, above all surrounding the earliest childhood, and extending from the constellation of things in the nursery to the position of the stars. "Could it not be that it begins with the remotest thing? First, at the moment of birth, making itself similar to the most distant in the deepest unconscious layer of one's own existence"?[18]

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14   Eran Schaerf, "Citizens of Nowhere, Imitate!,"
       https://transversal. at/blog/citizens-of-nowhere-imitate, 10/2020, my translation.

15   Benjamin, "Doctrine of the Similar," 65.

16   Benjamin, "On the Mimetic Faculty," 336.

17   Benjamin, "Aufzeichnung von 1933," 956.

18   Walter Benjamin, Studien zur "Lampe," in: ders., *Gesammelte Schriften,* VII 2,
       Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp 1991, 792.

Somewhat counterintuitively, Walter Benjamin improvises in his two small texts the concept of a "nonsensuous similarity." He insinuates the concept rather than developing it, and so it makes little sense to pin it down here either. "The concept is obviously a relative one,"[19] yet this relation is not based on mediation. Nonsensuous similarity does not operate via sensual perception, via comparison, matching, approximation. It is similarity at a distance, similarity in dissimilarity. Not a similarity removed from experience, detached from concrete situatedness, but rather "certain empirical – albeit nonsensuous – similarity." It flashes "always at a heterogeneous substrate."[20] This heterogeneity is needed to generate nonsensuous similarity in the bracing of the many.

Nonsensuous similarity is not a contrast to an – earlier, mystical – sensuous similarity, but rather its gradual departure and immigration into a similarity beyond sense. Beyond sense, beyond meaning, beyond the etymological lineage, there are typefaces, onomatopoeia and soundscapes, beyond sense also lurks nonsense. Disjointure upsets the regulated order of language and knowledge, dismisses meaning, disfigures grounds. Disfiguring-disfigured similarity dissembles the compulsive urge to all origin, the access to all "natural correspondences." And at the same time, it opens many doors to unexpected relatives and environments that awaited us until Walter Benjamin could say about his *Berlin Childhood around 1900*: "I was disfigured by similarity to all that surrounded me."[21]

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19   Benjamin, "Doctrine of the Similar," 207.

20   Walter Benjamin, "Antithetisches über Wort und Name," in ibid, *Gesammelte Schriften,* VII 2, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp 1991, 795f.

21   Walter Benjamin, *Berlin Childhood around 1900*, translated by Howard Eiland, Cambridge: Belknap 2006, here: 98, translation slightly changed. The story of the Mummerehlen takes its starting point from the disfiguration of things in a child's perception, from a whole disfigured world of childhood. Cf. also "Zum Bil-

Benjamin's nonsensuous similarity does not operate through sensual mediation, but through *Verspannungen*, bracings.[22] Bracings are correspondences of a very dissimilar nature that form together what is dispersed in different places, or not. Sometimes these bracings signify spasms, contractions, condensations of territories, sometimes they relax, expand, and throw out ropes that brace distant locations. Even being held violently contains proximity, and nonsensuous similarity braces the most distant: bracing and tension, *iugum of* the near and far, tensors of intensity and extension, of intensity in extension. Producing tension in the stretching out, bracing, extending, and in the tending to something, being attracted, in the rapprochement of the far. In nonsensous similarity the forms form apart and together, at the same time co-forming and nonconforming, assembling and dissembling, unruly joining. Nobody calls the assembly, nobody starts it, nobody leads it: no conductor, no reverend, no Elias. Bracing and assembling those who are of similar spirit, who become of similar spirit, because they establish similarity only through their assembly, and this becoming similar in the assembly remains incomplete, unjointed and in the joints. Tense and bracing assembly, dissembled-jointed multiplicity, farnear correspondence.[23]

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de Prousts" (*Gesammelte Schriften*, II 1, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp 1991, 314): "[...] homesickness for the world disfigured in the state of similarity, in which the true surrealistic face of existence comes to its breakthrough."

22　Benjamin, "Doctrine of the Similar," 67. Knut Tarnowski translates "Verspannung" as "connection."

23　Many of Benjamin's conceptual components of similarity can be found again in Gilles Deleuze, in a movement from lifelong skepticism of similarity to the "reclamation of similarity": similarity as effect, its distinction as producer and product, its flash-like appearance, its production from dissimilarities, and finally an end in only apparent opposition to Benjamin, with the concept of a *ressemblance sensible*. In *Difference and Repetition* (translated by Paul Patton, New York: Columbia 1994 [1968]), similarity and the similar, *ressemblance* and *semblable*, belong to the realm of identity and representation. "Resemblance is in any case an effect, a functional product, an external result" (120), "[...] an 'effect' which it would be wrong to

take for a cause or condition" (277), and "[...] only differences are alike" (116). In the original French of *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation* (translated by Daniel W. Smith, London et al.: Bloomsbury 2017 [1981]), a subheading of the thirteenth chapter reads *La ressemblance retrouvée*. Here Deleuze differentiates similarity as "the producer or the product" (79) [*productrice ou produite*]. When relations of the elements of one thing pass directly into another thing, similarity is producer. Different is a similarity produced as a product of dissimilar means, in which abruptly, brusquely, brutally, completely different relations emerge: "a resemblance through nonresembling means" (80) [*faire ressemblant par des moyens non ressemblants*]. This "sensible resemblance," *ressemblance sensible*, paradoxically not so far removed in its function from Benjamin's "nonsensuous similarity," is product, but "instead of being produced symbolically, through the detour of a code, it is produced 'sensually' [*sensuellement],* through sensation" (80) [*par la sensation*]. In the *Logic of Sense* (translated by Mark Lester and Charles Stivale, New York: Columbia 1990 [1969]), Deleuze already spoke of a "play of sense and nonsense" (XIII), *sens* and *non-sens*. The logic of sense is "necessarily determined to posit between sense and nonsense an original type of intrinsic relation, a mode of co-presence" (94). Perhaps, then, in reading Benjamin and Deleuze together, we should speak of a co-presence of sensuous and nonsensuous similarity, or even of a non/sensuous similarity, a joining similarity of disjointure. In *What is Philosophy?* (translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchill, London: Verso 1994 [1991]), Deleuze finally writes with Félix Guattari that the history of philosophy is not about making similar [*faire ressemblant*] in the sense of assimilation, "that is, about repeating what a philosopher said but rather of producing resemblance [*produire la ressemblance*] by separating out both the plane of immanence s/he instituted and the new concepts s/he created" (55, slightly modified translation). And even Benjamin's formulation of a disfigured similarity can be found in *Difference and Repetition* (301): The eternal return "produces an image of resemblance as the external *effect* of 'the disparate'. [...] products of the functioning of simulacra. It employs them each time [...] to distort the similar [*défigurer le semblable*] [...]. For it is true that there are [...] only distorted similarities [...]" [*pas d'autres ressemblances que les défigurées*].

Ritornello 13, 1148/1248.
Aesthetic probability

[: The route via Pamplona could have been taken by Ibn Rushd (1126-1198), a hundred years ago, if he had set out for Poitiers, the flourishing city whose Duchess Eleanor of Aquitaine (1122-1204), co-inventor of courtly culture, granddaughter of the first trobador, had already become Queen of France at that time. And now, a century later, those in the Latin-Christian territory who read his writings, learn from his commentaries, and advance his theses, are persecuted as Averroists, condemned as false teachers for their theses against a rigid Christian Church, theses similar to those that the commentator had presented against his opponents in the Arab-Muslim Al-Andalus. And yet, it is not probable, *veri-simile*, "similar to truth" that Ibn Rushd himself took the road to Poitiers, and therefore such a fiction is absent.

At the end of the 1240s, two young women from St. Florian, Wilbirg and Mechthild, cross this untraveled path of the commentator. On their pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela they are part of a mass movement. From all regions of the Christian world, people walk the Camino de Santiago to ask for redemption from their sins, to obtain healing from illnesses, to make decisions that have become necessary. The pilgrimage is not only onerous and arduous, but also dangerous. Thunderstorms, loss of orientation, theft, foot ailments, persistent fever, violence threatening on all sides. What will the future bring to these young women? What are their prospects beyond marriage and convent life? By now it is no longer purely secret knowledge that there are women who try out alternative ways of living outside marriage and religious rules.[24] These *mulieres*

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24   In the social and religious struggles of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, in

religiosae, women living religiously, unmarried, and in poverty,

the anti-institutional life forms of mysticism, in the inventive forms of resistance, especially by women, an unruly prehistory of Silvia Federici's research appears, of what she writes about the relationship between "witch hunts" and the "transition" from feudalism to capitalism. In the two centuries before the advent of the first "witch hunts," there was a massive influx of women into the newly emerging ecclesiastical orders, but also a general spread of alternative ways of life of women who, in various ways, did not live (or cohabitate) according to religious rules. "Only if we evoke these struggles [...], can we understand the role that women had in the crisis of feudalism, and why their power had to be destroyed for capitalism to develop, as it was by the three-century-long persecution of the witches." Repression and mass persecution, especially of women, are from this perspective an attack by ecclesiastical and secular state apparatuses on nascent alternatives to the "development" of capitalism: "Capitalism was the counter-revolution that destroyed the possibilities that had emerged from the anti-feudal struggle." (Silvia Federici, *Caliban and the Witch. Women, the Body, and Primitive Accumulation,* New York: Autonomedia 2004, 21)

In Michel Foucault's 1978 lectures on the history of governmentality (*Security, Territory, Population,* translated by Graham Burchell, New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2009) one finds further considerations of these struggles before that capitalist counter-revolution. Foucault, however, is increasingly interested in alternative modes of conduct, revolts of conduct, and counter-conduct – distinguishing, but not separating these from political revolts against sovereign power and economic revolts against exploitation. In the eighth lecture (256-283), Foucault brings numerous references to the various high and late medieval resistances to government and pastorate. He locates the most important movements on the ever-shifting boundary between internal and external critiques of the Church and refers here and there to individual specifics of the movements of counter-conduct. He mentions not only witchcraft and the well-known heresies, but a multitude of smaller and larger abnormalities at the edges of ecclesiastical immanence. Waldensians, Utraquists, Calixtines, Taborites, Amalrians, Flagellants, Rhenish nun mysticism, the Society of the Poor and Jeanne Dabenton, Beguines and Beghards, and the Brothers of the Free Spirit populate space and time in this marginal cartography of alternative modes of conduct and life from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries (see especially 261-263 and 277-279). Foucault, however, does not elaborate on any of these examples of counter-conduct. His restriction to a movement along the surface has its primary cause in the precarious source situation, which is determined by the fact that sources from the point of view of the actors barely exist, as reaction and inquisition destroyed them so extensively and exclusively entered their own interpretation into the archives. Foucault therefore gathers single aspects from all possible areas that constitute individual and collective counter-conduct (not only) in the late Middle Ages: the election and deselection of the pastor among the Taborites, the importance of the status of women especially for the Beghards and

are referred to by the enigmatic collective name of Beguines. Outside the marital and domestic force of men, without the authority of a religious order and without male leadership, they transform the gendered forms of reproduction and cohabitation. Outside of direct institutional leadership, they live without fixed rule and lifelong commitment. Against wealth, indeed against property and possessions in general, they situate themselves in neighborhood, sometimes in competition with the Franciscan Minorites and other mendicant orders. And it is precisely in these affinities and overlaps that the risks of the Beguine way of living become evident: depending on the authoritative interpretation, the geographical and historical context, and the outcome of the respective trials, the Beguines are persecuted or venerated, described as possessed or holy, inscribed in lists of heretics or the calendar of saints. In all this unpredictability, three possible ways of life crystallize for the young women: isolation as a recluse into a life of mystical retreat and ecstasy, the collective practice of living together without a religious rule, and the nomadic form of the mendicant itinerant preacher.[25]

Beguines, the new forms of "counter-society" among the Society of the Poor, the emphasis on common property and the rejection of personal ownership of goods. All these forms of counter-conduct develop in conjunction with political revolts against power as sovereignty and economic revolts against power as exploitation: above all, however, "you also find revolts, or resistances of conduct linked to the completely different but crucial problem of the status of women" (261).

25   On the Beguines and women mystics in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, see Caroline Walker Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption,* New York: Zone Books 1992; Gerda Lerner, *The Emergence of Feminist Consciousness,* Frankfurt/New York: Campus 1993; especially 87-107; Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages*, New York: Oxford 1970 [1957], especially 148-186; Luisa Muraro, *Le amiche di Dio. Margherita e le altre*, second edition, Napoli: D'Auria 2014; Raoul Vaneigem, *La résistance au christianisme: les hérésies des origines au XVIIIe siècle*, Paris: Fayard 1993, esp. ch. 31 u. 32; Grace M. Jantzen, "Disrupting the Sacred. Religion And Gender In The City," in Janet K. Ruffing (ed.), *Mysticism & Social Transformation, Syracuse*: Syracuse University Press

There is not only probability of the historiographical kind, there is also an aesthetic probability. The latter concerns the construction not of history, but of a story. Just as the paths of Ibn Rushd did not cross, even in fiction, with the bishop of Poitiers called Gilbertus Porreta (c. 1080-1155), nor with Wilbirg and Mechthild, for reasons of aesthetic probability, so is it extremely unlikely that the accusations against the Porretans and the Averroists ever overlapped. Or that Marguerite, who was also called Porete (ca. 1250-1310), had read Gilbert, as one of her first biographers, Marie Bertho, wants to suggest,[26] and gotten involved in his figures of *id quod est* and *id quo est*.

Not infrequently, however, it is aesthetic probability that tips the scales in favor of conviction or acquittal. In 1148, at the end of his life, Bernard de Clairvaux was too imprecise in the preparation and composition of his indictment, so that Gilbert wasacquitted. The French Inquisitor General William of Paris was infinitely more successful in a multi-stage trial of Marguerite Porete in 1307 to 1310. What Bernard had begun in the middle of the twelfth century came to a climax and first conclusion at the end of the 13th: in 1277, in the course of a whole chain of condemnations of "Aristotelianism," "Averroism" and Arabic innovations in particular were condemned. Nevertheless, the resistance against the import of Arabic thought to Europe remained unsuccessful. The term "Averroism" alone, from its use in Thomas Aquinas' title *De unitate intellectus contra averroistas* (1270) to its continued use over the centuries, describes how medieval Arab thought spread across Europe far beyond the impact of the commentator.

Wilbirg and Marguerite will each take a path very different from the Averroists and Porretans. But however different the life

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2001, 29-44.

26   Marie Bertho, *Le Miroir des âmes simples et anéanties de Marguerite Porete: une vie blessée d'amour*, Paris: Larousse 1993.

forms of Beguine mysticism and the radical readers of holy scrip-
turesmay be, they are peaks of a monstrously unruly subjuncture
surrounding both the fundamentalist crusading fanatics and the
scholastics, and by the turn of the 14th century it will become a
molecular mutation, aesthetic probability willing ... :]

The walled woman
... und alle unvuoge verbirt

In the first half of the 13th century, an author named "the Stricker," who remains almost without context, writes the tale of an evil woman, *Von einem übelen wîbe*.[27] In his didactic-moralizing narrative forms of fable, *märe*, and oration, the Stricker pursues a course that forcefully fortifies the divine order and the existing social order. The tale about the *übel wîp*, written in Middle High German and in rhyming couplets, is a misogynous didactic tale about, against, and to disobedient women, women out of joint.[28]

As the Stricker himself reflects in the last verses of his tale, he is concerned with bringing peace and deliverance from the unruly-sinful woman, *from übeler wîbe meisterschaft, / die mit ganzer übel sint behaft*. (399f.) Exemplarily, *daz aller wirseste wîp, / diu ie gewan wîbes lîp* (361f.) is presented, the most evil woman that ever existed, but this exemplary figure demonstrates most of all the whole cycle of punishment and conversion as an eternal return of divine-patriarchal violence.

To convert evil women (*übeliu wîp bekere*, 264), to drive the evil out of them (*ich kann von übelen wîben / ir übel wol vertrîben*, 271f.), is the political program of the Stricker. Wickedness and sin, *übel sint*, consist here primarily in female disobedience. The *übel wîp* must be turned obedient by all means, made disposable and forced entirely under the violent male control and injunction.

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27 I follow the text of the bilingual (Middle High and modern Standard German) Reclam edition by Otfrid Ehrismann and its verse references: *Der Stricker. Erzählungen, Fabeln, Reden*, Stuttgart: Reclam 1992. The tale *Von einem übelen wîbe* is printed under the title "Die eingemauerte Frau" on pages 120-143. The translations and paraphrases are my attempts.

28 In other verse narratives, too, the Stricker indulges in the most aggressive misogynistic tones. Cf. e.g. "Das Ehescheidungsgespräch," ibid, 142-151, especially 144.

The unruly woman is confronted by the doctrine of *vuoge* and *gevüege*,[29] enjoined by the dominant order, subjected to the ruling raison, supposed to adopt a reasonable and compliant attitude. The meaning of *vuoge* and *gevüege* as fitting and adapting oscillates between subjective artistry and the legal/moral (like in the Old High German *gifuognissa*). Seemliness as moral-legal figure, skillfulness as subjective quality, and fate beyond subjectivity converge in this frame. Whoever or whatever complies is enjoined by a ruling order, to what is proper and what is suitable. In the Stricker's tale, the enforcement of the doctrine of *vuoge* and *gevüege* is accompanied by extreme violence, corporal punishment and mutilation, permanent confinement, and cutting off from the social surround.

Thus begins the tale, thus are the methods of the "virtuous knight" who subdues his wife with excruciating violence:

> Ein ritter tugende rîche
> nam ein wîp êlîche,
> dô wolde si ir willen hân
> und des sînen niht begân.
> daz mohte er niht erlîden
> und hiez siz gar vermîden.
> dô si durch slege noch durch bete

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29   *Vuoge* and *gevüege* are the etymological precursors of *Fuge*, joint, and *Gefüge*, assemblage, here rather in the sense of forcibly being joint. On the linguistic, aesthetic, and literary-theoretical aspects of *vuoge*, see: Annette Gerok-Reiter, "Die 'Kunst der vuoge': Stil als relationale Kategorie. Reflections on Minnesang," in Elizabeth Andersen, Ricarda Bauschke-Hartung, Silvia Reuvekamp (eds.), *Literary Style. Mittelalterliche Dichtung zwischen Konvention und Innovation*, Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter 2015, 97-118; Nina Nowakowski, "Übersetzungen als Interpretationen mittelhochdeutscher Literatur. Überlegungen zu Verständnismöglichkeiten von Strickers Kurzerzählung 'Der kluge Knecht,'" in Lydia Jones, Bodo Plachta, Gaby Pailer, Catherine Karen Roy (eds.), *Scholarly Editing and German Literature. Revision, Revaluation, Edition,* Leiden/Boston: Brill Rodopi 2016, 231-251; Nina Nowakowski, *Sprechen und Erzählen beim Stricker. Kommunikative Formate in mittelhochdeutschen Kurzerzählungen*, Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter 2018.

> deste baz noch deste rehter tete,
> dô dröuwete er ir sêre –
> dô dröuwete si im noch mêre,
> er sluoc ir einen voustslac,
> er sprach: „nu ist mir umbe den sac
> als maere sam umbe daz sacbant!"
> er brach ir abe ir gewant,
> einen swaeren knütel er gevie,
> er sluoc ein lange wîle
> mit kreften und mit île,
> unz im der arm tet sô wê,
> daz er niht slahen mohte mê
> und ir ein sîte alsô zebrach,
> daz man niht anders dâ ensach
> wan zerbrochen hût und bluot. (1–23)

The wife of the virtuous knight resists her husband's will, wants to have her own way. The husband does not linger long with exhortations to change her behavior. Neither by blows nor pleas he can convince her, and in response to his threats she only threatens him more. He begins to beat her with his fist, tears off her robe and grabs a heavy club. Full of rage, he beats her so long, so brutally and so violently until his arm hurts so much that he can't beat her any more. He breaks her side until nothing can be seen but skin in shreds and blood.

So much for the extremely violent reality of the chivalric setting, which has nothing whatsoever to do with the suave courtship of trobador lyric. One can assume that the Stricker has not embellished or exaggerated much. Excruciating domestic violence, the unrestrained *munt* of the chivalrous master of the house, up to and including the explicit "breaking" of the woman, must be assumed as everyday experience. But even in this extreme excess of violence, she does not submit at all, does not let the physical violence take her down. On the

contrary, even now, severely injured, she promises the man *ungevüegen schaden,* disproportionate, immense harm, harm that comes from disobedience and drives their relationship out of joint. Yet this threatens not only their relation, their family bliss and reputation to come out of joint, but also the territory of the household. The knight defends himself with a further, reterritorializing response that radically enjoins the space and disposes of it:

> *si gehiez im ungevüegen schaden.*
> *dô hiez er mûren ein gaden.*
> *daz wart gemachet âne tür;*
> *ein venster kêrte er her vür.*
> *d*â *wart si inne vermûret.*
> (35–39)

The woman's threat to do the knight *ungevüegen schaden* is followed by a further escalation of male violence. The man has a doorless room walled up, only one window is left out, and in it the woman is immured, *vermûret.*

In the tale of the Stricker, the walling-in in the doorless chamber is first of all a spatial confinement. Territorial isolation, the worst food and deprivation of any kind of marital communication are supposed to break the resistance, to joint the *vuoge*. However, even this form of total territorial isolation does not tip the scales in favor of abandoning unruliness. At the height of injunction, the "virtuous knight" bribes the woman's family and friends to isolate her not only spatially but also socially (72-105). The relatives turn away from her, and whoever tries to intercede for her is persuaded by the knight with moral pressure and gifts, *daz si die bete alle liezen* (101), to refrain from all intercession. It is the social detachment of the woman from her surroundings that finally leads to his goal, to compliance and joining: *sus schiet er von dem wîbe / ir vriunde alle gemeine, / dô wart si alters eine*. (106-108) Neither physical excesses of violence, nor

spatial separation from her husband establish disconnection and separation, only being divorced from all social surround, only understanding that the surround has been silenced (110) breaks female unruliness. When subjuncture collapses, disjointure is enjoined. *Dô vuoren die tîvel von dem wege, / die sie heten in ir pflege* (115f.). The devils who had cared for her scatter. Instead of being possessed and cared by the many, the disjointure joins into one possession. Patriarchal order and divine order are one again, the will of God is fulfilled in obedience to the husband: *daz si gehôrsam waere ir man, / dâ taete si gotes willen an* (243f.).

The tale of the Stricker wants to be a doctrinal piece on the domestication of the unruly woman, and so the tale itself explicitly suggests to spread the doctrine further, to practice the doctrine of enjoining and compliance. In the final pages, the Stricker tells how the news of the conversion of the *übel wîp* through immurement rushes through the whole country. (369-374) Everywhere people tell of the extreme conditions of confinement in the doorless chamber, of how the woman barely survived her disobedience, of her distress, but also of the turn from *übel wîp* to *vil guot wip*. With this turn, she herself becomes the instrument of moral instruction and of the rejoining of the disjointure, *unvuoge*: she can now convert every *übel wîp, daz si gote und im rehte wirt / und alle unvuoge verbirt* (344f.). The new task of the convert is to make other unruly women give up their *unvuoge* and become man-pleasing and God-pleasing. The task of rejoining the disjointure is transferred from the violent man to the converted woman, who in turn becomes a means of patriarchal injunction.

Another of the Stricker's tales, entitled *Der kluge Knecht* ("The Smart Servant"),[30] ends with the moral about the *gevüege kündikeit*,

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30 *Der Stricker. Erzählungen, Fabeln, Reden,* 96-115, here: 114f.; on the interpretation of *gevüege kündikeit*, see Friedrich Michael Dimpel, Martin Sebastian Hammer, "Prägnanz und Polyvalenz – Rezeptionsangebote im 'Klugen Knecht' und im

a subservient form of intellect, reason according to the rule. It brings together two terms that succinctly describe the conceptual field of the Stricker's violent order: *daz war allez hingeleit / mit einer gevüegen kündikeit./ des enhazze ich kündikeit niht, / dâ si mit vuoge noch geschiht.* (355-358) Everything is guided by *gevüege kündikeit*, intellect applied *mit vuoge*, according to the rule. It is this sort of reason that is to become the unquestioned norm: *kündikeit*, which is done rightly, *gevüege,* orderly, legally, according to the law and order of the house, of God, of the patriarch. Orderly application of intellect as common sense. Reason as obedience to the lord as God, as houselord, as territorial lord – from the walling of the woman to the service of the regional sovereignty and to the service of God.

In the narrative of the Stricker, patriarchal and divine order form a cycle that cannot be escaped. The unruly woman seems lost in the eternal repetition of fate and injunction. Yet the very figure of the "walled woman," her enduring resistance and persistence, shows that disjointure poses a massive problem for the maintenance of law and order. Going far beyond the trivializing meaning of the German word "Unfug" as foolishness and mischief, it shakes patriarchal divine morality and threatens its violent order. Disjointure, *unvuoge,* is immoral conduct, disgrace, dangerously rebellious counter-conduct, at the same time soft beginning of a dissemblage that already can be sensed spreading beneath the radar of violence and rule.

'Schneekind,'" in Friedrich Michael Dimpel, Silvan Wagner (eds.), *Prägnantes Erzählen*, Oldenburg: Brevitas 2019, 319-340, here especially 322-333.

Ritornello 14, 1982/2020.
Une nouvelle douceur?

[: Dear Suely,

In *Micropolitica. Cartografias do Deseo*,[31] that many-voiced documentation of Félix Guattari's and your journey through Brazil in the transition of 1982, a small excerpt of an informal discussion in Salvador is printed among many other documents: Mauricio Lissovski asks here about a term Guattari used in an earlier text, and one does not quite know whether in passing or as a strong concept: *nouvelle douceur / nova suavidade*. Guattari answers succinctly by explaining that it is no longer only physical, military, industrial machines with their phallocratic and brutal competition, but also new forms of subjectivity that can invent new social orders, expressing themselves through their becoming-desire, testing a new softness, *une nouvelle douceur* (283).

You seem to have been attracted by this concept back when you started putting the book together, and so you wrote a little text that is printed below the discussion (284-290). It is entitled "Amor: o impossível … e uma nova suavidade." "Love: the impossible … and a new softness." In it, you start from a critique of what remains of the heteronormative nuclear family, "a certain figure of man, a certain figure of woman, a certain heterosexuality, and all this deprived of any sense." (284) You name the two variants of this fixed play of static figures beyond any softness in shortest form as fear of vs. fascination of deterritorialization. And when (for reasons of survival or simply out of humor) you

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31 Félix Guattari / Suely Rolnik, *Micropolítica. Cartografias do Deseo*, 4th edition, Petrópolis: Vozes 1996. The English version was published as *Molecular Revolution in Brazil*, translated by Karel Clapshow and Brian Holmes, Los Angeles: Semiotext(e) 2007.

find yourself looking for alternative "frequencies," you happen to come across Ridley Scott's movie *Blade Runner* ...

Blade Runner, released in June 1982, is set in Los Angeles in November 2019. Its fiction is still ahead of our time in certain aspects, but in others it lags behind our reality today, half a year after its fictional setting. It is the story of the revolt of replicants against the principle of their programmed obsolescence – they only have a life expectancy of four years for security reasons. But how, in the search for new forms of softness, do you come across replicants? You describe this unexpected combination in a double movement of revolt: on the one hand, the replicants want to overcome not only their artificial intelligence that enslaves them, but also the conditions of their own lack of affections. On the other hand, they can also change the situation of humans, liberate the affections appropriated and valorized by capitalism,[32] and awaken the vulnerability that humans are capable of. In the film this is achieved by the Blade Runner Deckard, a human who mutates into a "quasi-replicant," and Rachael, the "last quasi-human replicant." (289) While Blade Runner officially works for "retiring" such aberrations, he becomes increasingly doubtful over the course of the film and finally becomes a comrade of molecular mutation.

It is up to us to test the use of this mutation and let it emanate. You write: *Quase replicantes que somos, já sabemos também de que é feito esse empenho: ele é feito de amor. Mas, por enquanto, pouco ou nada sabemos acerca dessa espécie de amor. [...] E, no entanto, nos momentos em que, desavisados, conseguimos suportá-lo, descobrimos com certo*

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32   You later described this movement of partially voluntary valorization of affects and creativity as pimping, as *cafetinagem das forças subjetivas e de criação – um tipo de relação de poder que se dá basicamente por meio do feitiço da sedução*: "the pimping of subjective and creative forces – a type of power relationship that is fundamentally created by the spell of seduction" ("The Geopolitics of Pimping," translated by Brian Holmes, https://transversal.at/transversal/1106/rolnik/en).

alívio que [...] destila-se já uma nova suavidade [...] (290) "Quasi-re-
plicants that we are, we already know what this commitment
is made of: it is made of love. But for the time being, we still
know little or nothing about this kind of love. [...] And yet, in
moments when we experience it unexpectedly, we realize with a
certain relief that a new softness is already spreading [...]."

"It's hard not to fall for the happy ending," you write in 1982, and
as if he had read the text, the final scene leading to the happy
ending is missing from Ridley Scott's 1992 director's cut. In 2017,
Blade Runner 2049 is released, set in 2049, 30 years after the first
episode. Although the issue of replication remains prominent,
the love affair here is not one between a male human pseudo-
replicant and a female pseudo-human replicant, but between a
male replicant (whose gender and replicant nature both prove
uncertain as the plot unfolds) and a hologram, a simulation of
a female body (whose soul seems less and less simulated as the
film progresses). It becomes clear that the appropriation of af-
fection and memory (in *Blade Runner 2049* a subcontractor to
the supercapitalist Wallace) not only shapes modes of subjec-
tivation ever more completely, but is also increasingly caught
up in the maelstrom of machinic capitalism. The machinic sub-
servience that Guattari has repeatedly emphasized concerns
all forms of machines, technical, social, desiring machines and
their components, whether more human or more technical-
replicant. What is missing, however, even more than in *Blade
Runner* 1982, are references to molecular modes of organization
that go beyond traditional images of the disorganized lumpen-
proletariat, or in *Blade Runner 2049,* of the lumpen-replicariat
led by a female figure. Here, the option of machinic-molecular
mutation is completely pushed into the background.

Guattari's earlier text to which the informal conversation in Sal-
vador referred is published under the title "Les huit principes"

in *L'inconscient machinique*.[33] Here Guattari raises the question of whether schizoanalysis is "a new cult of the machine." The answer is: on the one hand, yes, with Marx and the old Marxist dream of the machine, but on the other hand, with the clear premise that new forms of social organization are needed: "Nothing can be resolved except through the establishment of highly differentiated assemblages." Schizoanalysis is then not useful as a new psychological method, but rather from the perspective of a "micropolitical practice which will only take its direction from a gigantic rhizome of molecular revolutions spreading through a multiplicity of mutant becomings: becoming-woman, becoming-child, becoming-elderly, becoming-animal, becoming-plant, becoming-cosmos, becoming-invisible – as so many ways of inventing, of 'machining' new sensibilities, new intelligences of existence, a new softness."[34]

The new softness returns once again in Guattari's last book of 1992, *Chaosmosis*: "This is to say that generalised ecology – or ecosophy – will work as a science of ecosystems, as a bid for political regeneration, and as an ethical, aesthetic and analytic engagement. It will tend to create new systems of valorisation, a new taste for life, a new softness between the sexes, the ages, ethnic groups, races..."[35] As far as the new sensibilities and intelligences are concerned, in your texts from recent years you suggest going beyond concepts such as "empathy" and "vulnerability," for example with terms such as "body knowledge" or "transverberation." Teresa of Ávila's term for the sixth and final

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33   Félix Guattari, *L'inconscient machinique. Essai de schizo-analyse*, Paris: Recherches 1979, here 216-221.

34   Félix Guattari, *The Machinic Unconscious: Essays in Schizoanalysis*, translated by Taylor Adkins, Los Angeles: Semiotext(e) 2011, 195, translation slightly changed.

35   Félix Guattari, *Chaosmosis. An Ethico-Aesthetic Paradigm,* translated by Paul Bains and Julian Prefanis, Bloomington: Indiana 1995 [1992], 91f., translation slightly changed.

stage of sanctification refers to the fact that she felt with it "the complete indwelling of her body knowledge"[36]: transverberation as echo, reverberation, intense resonance, resonance between affects. For Teresa, too, *suavidad*, softness, was a central concept. How can we connect this mystical softness to the micropolitical *douceur* that co-produces the molecular revolution today?

Hugs,

g.
Málaga, April 2020 :]

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36   See, for example, Suely Rolnik in conversation with Marie Bardet, "¿Cómo hacernos un cuerpo?"
http://lobosuelto.com/como-hacernos-un-cuerpo-entrevista-con-suely-rolnik-marie-bardet/.

Wilbirg of St. Florian
... inmortalitatis similitudine in novam transtulerat creaturam

In 1289, the recluse Wilbirg dies in the Austrian monastery of St. Florian after a life of retreat as a visionary ecstatic mystic. In the decades that follow, Einwik, an Augustinian canon, writes the Vita Wilbirgis.[37] The Vita is not a linear description of Wilbirg's life – her "outer" life is not eventful enough for that – but a mixture of saint's vita and revelatory writing. It is part of a whole wave of texts of female compassion and bridal mysticism that spread across Europe from the end of the twelfth century onwards, accompanied by a transformation of modes of subjectivation and ways of life. Like most such texts, the Vita does not chronologically recount the life of a saint, nor, like the vision books of the earlier Middle Ages, of a single great vision. Einwik arranges the life of Wilbirg into 117 short chapters according to loose thematic groupings: youth up to pilgrimage and confinement, ascetic exercises and techniques of self-injury, challenges by the devil, consolations and intercessions, healings, interventions in the afterlife, prophecies, central visions, death.[38]

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37   The references and quotations are based on the critical edition of Lukas Sainitzer, *Die Vita Wilbirgis des Einwik Weizlan,* Linz: Oberösterreichisches Landesarchiv 1999. The translations and paraphrases are my attempts. For a more general introduction to the lives of the incluses and recluses, see Bernard McGinn, *The Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism, vol. III: The Flowering of Mysticism. Men and Women in the New Mysticism (1200-1350),* New York: Crossroad 1998 (hereafter McGinn 3), 186-208, as well as Anna Benvenuti, "Religiöse Frauen im Florenz des 13. und 14. Jahrhundert," in Martina Wehrli-Johns, Claudia Opitz (eds.), *Fromme Frauen oder Ketzerinnen. Leben und Verfolgung der Beginen im Mittelalter*, Freiburg/Basel/Vienna: Herder 1998, 53-93, here: 53-62.

38   The publication of the Vita should lever Wilbirg's beatification and the monastery's prominence – Einwik was not only Wilbirg's confessor, but later also provost of St. Florian. Linguistic style and composition are mainly pious-erudite and include numerous biblical quotations, but Einwik does not shy away from drastic

The territory and stage of Wilbirg's life is her hermitage in the St. Florian monastery, where she lived enclosed for 41 years until her death. The hermitage is the place of enclosure sought by the recluse, but above all it is the site of *imitatio Christi*, of resembling, of rapprochement to the Son of God. On the 16-year-old Wilbirg's pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, a prophecy leads to the decision to be enclosed (ch. 24). After her return, Wilbirg asks the provost of the monastery for a plot of land next to the monastery church of St. Florian (ch. 25). A house, *domus specialis,* is built there, and Wilbirg locks herself in her *cella* on Ascension Day in 1248. In Wilbirg's case, this practice of self-isolation does not mean complete withdrawal as a hermit into the solitude of her hermitage. While living a secluded life, she has a mate in the house, her friend Mechthild, contact and communication with the brothers in the monastery, and receives visits from acquaintances and strangers who seek her advice. And when the cell becomes the an all-too-dark place of depression in Wilbirg's youth, it is suddenly transformed into a wonderful garden of consolation, adorned with green branches and given the springtime appearance of a paradise in bloom. (ch. 105)

While attempts to wed young Wilbirg before her confinement remarkably end several times with the death[39] of the fiancé (ch.

descriptions of violence (especially of the recluse against herself) or from stereotypical propaganda, anti-Jewish narratives, and anti-Muslim proto-racist images in the tradition of Bernard of Clairvaux. In Chapter 33, for example, Wilbirg sees herself transported in a vision to a tiny raft on the high seas and attacked, screaming eerily, by smelly, ugly black men. In chapter 102, Wilbirg herself, stimulated in her imagination by Palm Sunday Mass, attacks a Jew who comes too close to Jesus. In unintentional comedy, Einwik describes how Wilbirg becomes so excited in the scene that the force of her blow against the mirage causes her to throw herself to the ground and receive a wound in her face. The political background and environment of these stereotypical discourses are the anti-Muslim campaigns of the *reconquista* around the Mediterranean and the propaganda against Jews, which lead to pogroms as a recurring component of violence in the twelfth century crusades.

39   Power over death and life also becomes a theme at another point in Wilbirg's vita.

8),[40] Wilbirg remains a "bride of Christ" all her life. Already as a child, a snow-white bird abducts her above the clouds, but on divine command brings her back unharmed: *avis candidissima ... rediens ipsum puerum, quem iussu divino super altitudinem nubium raptum evexerat, eiusdem imperio restituit incolomem.* (Ch. 5) The *sacramentum*, the "sacred mystery" of this *raptus*, will repeat itself several times over Wilbirg's life. As a girl, she is frightened at the first experience of the Son of God becoming physical and alive:

> *Videbatur ei, quod imago crucifixi brachia complicaret, ut ipsam reciperet in amplexus. Puer autem de re tam insolita expavit et retrocedens exclamavit. Adest mater, assunt et alii clamoris causam studiosius inquirentes. Qui digito demonstrans crucifixum puerile verbo respondit. "Hoc," inquiens, "me voluit amplexari."* (ch. 11)

When she steps up to the decorated cross in the convent church, the figure of the Crucified seems to reach out to embrace her.[41] When asked about the reason for her outcry, the girl points to the crucifix and explains to the adults, "That wanted to embrace me."

The convergence of girl and crucified, *imago crucifixi* and imagination of the young Wilbirg is a simulation, but not in the

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In a spectacular first prophecy of her youth – especially when measured against the later, carefully worded stories of Wilbirg's miracles – Wilbirg points her finger at a girl and says, "Today we will say mass for you." This girl dies the same week. (ch. 11)

40   Wilbirg also experiences male violence, "scourgings, raw beatings to the blood," *duris eam verberibus usque ad effusionem sanguinis cruciavit.* That said, the main issue of the Vita text at this point is Wilbirg's preservation of sexual integrity: *virgo inviolata permanens* (ch. 8).

41   *Amplexus* scenes, the living crucifix, and the embraces of the crucified have accumulated in various versions since the twelfth century, for example, according to legend also in Bernard of Clairvaux. Cf. Peter Dinzelbacher, *Mittelalterliche Frauenmystik,* Paderborn: Schöningh 1993, 154.

everyday-language sense of pretending something that "in reality" was quite different. This issue was subject of investigations in the High Middle Ages, in which spirits were to be distinguished not as a question of real and unreal in the modern sense, but in order to clarify whether the one, Holy Spirit or many spirits had taken possession. In Wilbirg's case, the institutional balance of power and Wilbirg's specific way of life decide in favor of the one. In her *imitatio Christi,* however, the mystic is less concerned with imitation of a model or rash simulation of oneness. The mystical "imitation" consists in a becoming-similar of radically dissimilar, in the coming close of the immeasurably distant to each other.

Becoming similar here is anything but harmless, painless, nonviolent. The early allusions to *raptus* in Wilbirg's biography hint at the mystical experience in its full ambiguity. Since Latin antiquity, *rapere* has denoted violent acts ranging from robbery to kidnapping to sexual violence. Women figure as prey, as the object of the robbery of gods and not-so-divine figures, from the "Rape of Europa" to the abduction from the *manus* of the patriarch and concrete enslavement. None of these meanings is lost in the medieval use of thirteenth-century mysticism.[42] The mystical *raptus*, however, is never pure violence, never pure sacrifice. Sexuality and mystical experience, rape and surrender, self-harm and sexual violence interweave in varying nuances. The juridical and religious discourses intertwine and always carry this ambiguity with them, including the similarly ambiguous sexual connotation. The intermediate tones between act and passion, from abrupt ripping, tearing, letting oneself be carried away, to the complete disappearance of any actor of the *raptus*,

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42   Cf. Julie B. Miller, "Eroticized Violence in Medieval Women's Mystical Literature," in *Journal for Feminist Studies in Religion* 15/2 (Fall 1999), 25-49, who describes the language of *imitatio Christi* and bridal mysticism as often brutal and violent, full of descriptions of assault and annihilation, agony and suffering. (27)

are missing in inadequate translations as "rape" and "rapture." As Elizabeth Casteen has pointed out the high medieval vites deliberately played with the conceptual range and oscillation of *raptus,* evoking multiple meanings simultaneously.[43]

It is precisely because of this oscillating semiotic and discursive range that the mystical *raptus* can also become an important component of mystical practice as emancipation. In this context, the retreat into enclosure is not only to be understood reactively, as an escape from *manus*, paternal *munt*, and ecclesiastical violence, as a disregard for the world (*ei vilesceret mundus,* ch. 14), or as a protection of sexual integrity, but also as a spatial precondition for an alternative way of life that leads to an active approach to the divine beloved. In *Fragmentation and Redemption,* Caroline Walker Bynum has shown the connection in this regard between the roles assigned to women in the High Middle Ages and the affirmation of a distinctly physical proximity to God: over the course of the twelfth century, notions and practices of *imitatio* grew increasingly literal, increasingly corporeal, and at the same time "women were also told that, allegorically speaking, woman was to man what matter is to spirit."[44] Such notions of woman as the inferior sex of physicality have pervaded misogynistic gender theories since antiquity. Rather than inferring a fundamental deficiency from these doctrines, however, women mystics like Wilbirg affirmed and emphasized corporeality as a sign of their proximity

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43   Cf. the central essay differentiating the interwoven juridical and religious discourses on *raptus*: Elizabeth I. Casteen, "Rape and Rapture: Violence, Ambiguity and *Raptus* in Medieval Thought," in David J. Collins, *The Sacred and the Sinister*, University Park: Penn State University Press 2019, 91-116, 95.

44   Walker Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption*, 147, see also 182. This relationship extends into the hierarchy of masculinely connoted speculative or "intellectual" and femininely connoted "affective mysticism," see also Amy Hollywood, *Sensible Ecstasy. Mysticism, Sexual Difference, and the Demands of History*, Chicago: University of Chicago 2002, 12.

to Christ.[45] If the latter's becoming human is manifested in his corporeality, women mystics also interpret this corporeal, vulnerable humanity as their strength: "To soar toward Christ as lover and bride, to sink into the stench and torment of the Crucifixion, to eat God, was for the woman only to give religious significance to what she already was."[46] Here a very different aspect of imitation becomes apparent, the transition to the other side of *raptus*: the abrupt and often violent rapture is joined by an affection of sweetness, tenderness, softness. The affirmation of vulnerability and corporeality in the bridal mystical experience is accompanied by the spread of *dulcedo* and *suavitas*.[47]

Nec inmerito eam, cui carnalis delectationis amplexus subtraxerat, Dominus sue dulcedinis recipit in amplexus. "Not for nothing does

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45 Cf. Helena Stadler, "Körper und Subjekt in der Frauenmystik," in Ingrid Bennewitz, Ingrid Kastner (eds.), *Genderdiskurse und Körperbilder im Mittelalter,* Münster: LIT 2002, 233-254. Stadler describes here how the female mystics "take up the misogynous moment of male discourse and deepen the connection – handed down since antiquity – between woman and corporeality by making their own unworthiness the productive core of their mysticism. Female deficiency becomes a programmatic striving for nothingness." (240)

46 Walker Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption*, 149. See also ibid, 222: "But women mystics often simply became the flesh of Christ, because their flesh could do what his could do: bleed, feed, die and give life to others."

47 There is no explicit conceptual history of *dulcedo* and its linguistic development as *doulceur,* etc., or its overlap with the linguistic derivatives of *suavitas*. Catherine Malabou writes in her preface to the English edition of Anne Dufourmantelle's *Puissance de la douceur* (*Power of Gentleness: Meditations on the Risk of Living*, New York: Fordham University 2018): "No thinker has ever considered the question thematically. Here gentleness must therefore present itself. But since rigid conceptual determination does not suit it, gentleness appears gradually through a series of tableaux that shape it." Important steps in the development of the conceptual field in medieval mysticism were Hugh of St. Victor, *Solilo quium de arrha animae*; Bernard of Clairvaux, *Sermones super Cantica Canticorum* 36-86; Bonaventure, *De Triplici Via, alias Incendium Amoris,* ch. II 9 (*De sex gradibus dilectionis Dei*), later Richard Rolle and Margery Kempe. For an initial overview, see Mary Carruthers, "Sweetness," in *Speculum* 81 (2006), 999-1013.

the Lord take her, whom he had denied the embraces of carnal joy, into his embraces of sweetness," reads Chapter 11 of the *Vita Wilbirgis*, as a general interpretation of the young Wilbirg's vision being embraced by the Crucified. Wilbirg's own "sweetest devotion," *dulcissima devocio* (ch. 13), *suavitas devocionis* (ch. 109) correlates with an *odor suavitatis*, a breath, a sensual foreshadowing of his softness. (Ch. 13) He is her beloved, *dilector suus* (chs. 10, 14), *solus in desiderio,* her only desire, she is engaged to him as one and only, *desponsata … uni viro Christo* (ch. 14), and the culmination of this engagement occurs "on the day when the Lord led his bride into the solitude of the hermitage, there to speak more intimately to her heart and inspire her to the softest praise of his sweetness." *In die igitur, qua Deus ascendit in iubilacione, in solitudinem reclusorii duxit Dominus sponsam suam, ut ibi ad cor eius familiarius loqueretur et eam ad suavissimum sue dulcedinis iubilum provocaret.* (ch. 26). The cell becomes the place of sweet rejoicing, of engagement, of softness. Christ himself is the bridegroom, he is reward and "most perfect consolation" for the privations of his bride, and he also addresses Wilbirg as such: *Ego enim ero merces tua et ego in presenti et in futuro ero cunctarum necessitatum tuarum perfectissmus consolator.* (ch. 46)

The climactic vision in Wilbirg's Vita is the Christmas apparition of Jesus as a boy in Wilbirg's cell. During Advent, she has asked her confessor to bring her the "Body of the Lord," and fasts and prays for weeks in the presence of the Host carefully sealed in a capsule. At Christmas midnight, the boy extends his hand from the host, and the cell shines with the brightest radiance. Then he emerges from it in his entirety and so arouses the devotedly loving Wilbirg that she can hardly contain herself with sweet love: *tanta devocione et dilectione ipsam accendit, ut pre amoris dulcedine vix caperet semetipsam.* (Ch. 42) He stays with her for a long time in the exuberance of affection. Before returning to the Host, he blesses her and says, *Venies ad me dilecta mea.* "You

will come to me again as my beloved!" Then he returns to the capsule, and miraculously – as with the exit, also with the entrance – the bolts of the vessel remain unopened, intact as the body of his mother Mary and that of Wilbirg.

Affective terms such as *dulcedo*, *suavitas*, and *desiderium* are not used purely metaphorically in the genre of bridal mysticism, nor are the constellations of entry and exit. Rather, they are real expressions of the sensual experiences of the mystics and clearly also carry connotations of sexual affection.[48] Even more significant for rapprochement and resemblance, however, is the aspect of abrupt opening, of unmediated access precisely in the excess of the mystical self. *Per oracionum aliarumque piarum devocionum instancias ei se diligibilem reddere non cessabat.* (ch. 14) It is through the vehemence of her prayers and other techniques of devotion that Wilbirg wants to approach her beloved as often and with as much intensity as possible.

Where do these moments of urgency, irruption, affect, vehemence, all so clearly reflected in terms like *instanciae*, *excessus*, and *raptus*, come from? What exactly are the techniques of pious devotion when they go beyond prayers? First of all, they are seemingly random events in which prayer develops beyond immersion and first injuries occur.

> *Accidit autem sepius, ut cum ipsa nocte oracionis causa surgeret, in excessu mentis effecta caput in fenum nesciens reclinaret, sicque alienate aculei feni totam faciem lacerabant. Ad se autem reversa, quod factum fuerat, ignorabat.* (ch. 14)

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48   The first lines in this direction of interpretation were laid by an – in the best sense of the word – interdisciplinary seminar on history and psychoanalysis, conducted by the medievalist Heide Dienst and the analyst Hans Lobner in the summer semester of 1989 at the University of Vienna. My memory of the contents of the seminar is not very clear; at any rate its queer approach aroused my interest in the text of the Vita and the figure of Wilbirg.

Wilbirg sleeps with her mother in a room where hay and straw are stored for feeding the domestic animals. There, while praying, without perceiving it in the excess of ecstasy, she leans her head back and, out of her senses, injures her whole face on the sharp ends of hay. After regaining consciousness she no longer knows what happened, despite the obvious wounds[49] on her face.

Since Augustine, the Greek *ékstasis* has been translated into Latin as *excessus mentis*, exodus, surplus, excess of the power of thinking. The point here is not that mystics like Wilbirg "lost their minds" even for a time in the strict sense, or that the human mind moves out to make room for indwelling by God. The frequent formulation *in mentis excessum venire* or *in extasim venire*, "coming into ecstasy," indicates the tendency to deliberately leave passive and active variants undecided, to understand ecstasy as a mutual approaching of the human and the divine.

Wilbirg no longer knows what is happening to her (*nesciens, ignorabat*), she is described as *alienata,* estranged from herself, no longer in possession of herself. She is – as can also be seen *ex negativo* in the genre-typical formulation *ad se reversa* – for a certain time one who loses herself, abandons, leaves her self. *Excessus mentis* is excess of the self, stepping out of oneself, letting go of the self. The exodus of the power of thinking in ecstasy does not just imply a problematic separation of body and mind, but the disjoining of the self as condition of potential assembly. The return to the self, on the other hand, is a painful fact that mystical ecstatics must take upon themselves throughout their lives.

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49 Such wounds are understood by some as marks of the devil (*vulnera diabolum*, also in ch. 14), which also points to the ambivalence of the interpretation of deviant conduct and phenomena. The *discretio spirituum*, the distinction of good from evil spirits, is a constant business of mysticism. Wilbirg herself must often examine more closely, for example, whether a beautiful youth who appears to her is an angel of light or of darkness (ch. 40), and whether mortification with her iron belt is humility or pride (ch. 44).

Michel Foucault has described practices of asceticism from the Egyptian and Syrian anachoretism of the third and fourth centuries up to the Middle Ages as a reversal of the extreme relation of obedience in the Christian pastorate, turning this relationship around and "making it a challenge of the exercise of the self on the self."[50] According to this, an excess already lies in the excessive, uninterrupted, and unlimited obedience of the pastorate, as reflected in the hierarchical organization of power and the submission to the superior in monastic rules. Seen with Foucault, asceticism inverts this excessive obedience through an excessive self-relation: the excess of ecstasy lies in the challenge of the self to itself, thus also in self-government and a specific form of self-care. But the ecstatic practice of Wilbirg and other mystics demonstrates more than just care, challenge, or exaggeration of the self. A desertion from the self occurs in *excessio mentis*, a defection, an escape. The self itself does not seem to participate in this process of destitution, just as Wilbirg at first appeared to be completely uninvolved in her state. And yet it is not a purely reactive process, but an act and a passion at the same time: the temporary decoupling of body and mind results in the loss of the self, is an excess that leads out of the self.

Disjoining the self: leaving the self, engaging in excess. Self-dispossession as de-selfing, getting rid of the self, self-disjoining, and as deserting from property itself, from the self as something to be possessed. The desertion from the world through the confinement in the hermitage is followed by a second desertion from the self.

Over time, Wilbirg begins to develop a practice of *devociones*, different techniques of self-disjoining, which she refines more and more through multiple repetition. Events of self-destitution that initially seemed accidental are increasingly evoked by

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50   Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population,* 275.

devotional, strenuous and stressful exercises (*devocio et labor*, ch. 27, *oraciones, lacrimas et labores,* ch. 60), which are introduced, categorized, and treated in detail relatively early in Wilbirg's Vita. First, Wilbirg learns to understand the relationship to sleep as struggle: against the violence of sleep (*sompni violencia*) she poses the technique of sleep refusal. She renounces any fixed place of rest and sinks down wherever sleep seizes her. However, sleep is also a symbol of all those who still slumber in their sins, and for them and their awakening Wilbirg prays without sleep in a regular rhythm at least three times each night. (Ch. 27) Another form of abstinence concerns the restriction of food. She reduces forms and quantity of nourishment, eats no meat and few cooked and fried foods, and through intermittent extreme fasting she pushes her body to its limits. (ch. 28f.)

Wilbirg inflicts pain on herself in various forms of self-injury: *castigaciones, flagella, plagae* (ch. 28). She chastises herself with a hundred blows with the thorny rod in the morning, then with fifty blows every hour, which she does not miss even on her pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela (ch. 20). She draws the rod not only over the back, but over the whole body and all the limbs. She never bathes, never wears shoes or linen on her body, but only the coarsest penitential clothes (chap. 32). At the highpoint of her self-mortification, she wears an iron belt (*circulus ferreus*, ch. 43f.), which she tightens or loosens as needed, but then fastens so that she cannot loosen it at all. She wears the belt for two years until it causes her flesh to fester, and the festering flesh overflows and grows over the belt so that it finally bursts into four pieces. As it disintegrates, it still takes a part of the rotten flesh with it. Nevertheless, Wilbirg wants to tie herself again with the same belt. But the craftsman who had made the belt had died, and then Virgin Mary appears to her one night, comes to her aid, and rejoins the parts with flowers from her crown. Finding the belt restored after her vision, Wilbirg laces herself with even greater devotion and martyrs herself

severely until the belt breaks again and is finally turned to dust by divine intervention.[51]

By no means is this drastic and dramatic nature of self-injury to be understood simply in its logic as a technical exercise to induce ecstasy. Nor is the mortification practice for Wilbirg a contest of agony, either with others or with herself. Phases of extreme self-harm are followed by phases of healing and regeneration of the battered body. The recluse does not aim at a new ascetic perfection, but rather takes up each new ecstatic situation anew. "Control, discipline, even torture of the flesh," writes Caroline Walker Bynum, "is, in medieval devotion, not so much the rejection of physicality as the elevation of it – a horrible yet delicious elevation – into a means of access to the divine."[52] The *imitatio of Christ* as bride, mother and sister of Jesus is for the mystics of the High Middle Ages "an accepting and continuing of what they were".[53] From this feeds the double experience of self-disjoining and compassion with the suffering of Christ. *Talibus dedita devocionibus sic cepit dominice passionis memoria estuare.* "When she gave herself to such exercises, she glowed with remembrance of the Lord's suffering." (ch. 28) The *dominice passionis memoria* does not simply recall past suffering; it is actualization in repetition, in co-suffering, in compassion. In Wilbirg's affection there is not so much spiritual empathy or imitation of mythical suffering as a compassion in self-disjoining, the dividual co-presence of a shared injury.

The practice of becoming similar, classically called *imitatio Christi*, is a transmutation, not a one-sided adaptation or assi-

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51   Cf. also the renewed mortification with an iron chain (*cathena ferrea*) in Chapter 68.

52   Walker Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption*, 182. Cf. also *Holy Feast and Holy Fast*, Berkeley / Los Angeles: University of California 1987, 8f.

53   Walker Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption*, 48.

milation into the one. Sharing the passion means for the mystic to actualize Jesus' corporeality and vulnerability. In their mutual resembling, not only does Christ become human, the mystic also experiences a fleeting sense of glory. In Wilbirg's moments of immanent transgression, glory flits by, and toward the end of her life she is shown "still in her corruptible body some gifts of that boundless glory." *In corpore adhuc corruptibili [...] dotes aliquas illius interminabilis glorie.* In her excesses she simulates and assimilates and mutates until she is – though only for an instance – recreated: *animam eius et splendor veritatis et ardor caritatis [...] inmortalitatis similitudine in novam transtulerat creaturam.* "The splendor of truth and the ardor of *caritas* had transformed her soul into a new creature in similitude of immortality." (ch. 112)

Thus Einwik interpreted the final climax of Wilbirg's visions as transformation by becoming similar. In this vision Wilbirg is led by an angel from her cell to the tabernacle in the church, where Jesus nods to her from his throne. Then Wilbirg sees the entire heavenly curia, from the symphony of heavenly virtues to the harmony of the patriarchs and prophets and the singular song of the virgins, and she sees it in purest contemplation, manifestly, face-to-face, eye-to-eye, not simply represented by a mirror or mystery: *manifeste non per speculum nec in enigmate, sed facie ad faciem oculo ad oculum contemplacione limpidissima ibi vidit.* (Ch. 111) Herein lies the potential institutional critique of the mystical visionary: her vision is a direct experience, not a mediated one. She does not need institutional mediation, nor does she need the institutionalized rituals of the Church. This is no turning away from Christian principles, but rather an attempt to intensify, reinterpret, and rewrite them, excessively applying and surpassing the rule, overaffirming and exaggerating the precepts. In mystical experiences – and this is the implicit scandal of mysticism – non-clerics, lay people, the unconsecrated can refer to extra-biblical revelations, to direct access to Jesus Christ.

Ecstasy based on certain forms of experience thus enters into competition with the mediating role of the Church.[54] And the ascetic-ecstatic practice of the recluse is cast in a light of diso-bedience to ecclesiastical power. While Christianity can be un-derstood with Foucault as tending to be anti-ascetic, asceticism becomes a kind of "element of reversal by which certain themes of Christian theology or religious experience are utilized against these structures of power. Asceticism is a sort of exasperated and reversed obedience that has become egoistic self-mastery. Let's say that in asceticism there is a specific excess that denies access to an external power."[55]

Reversal and exaggeration of obedience in assuming and af-firming what is there anyway – vulnerability, fragility, softness – as "reversed obedience," as unruliness that arises in self-dis-joining. Wilbirg disjoins her self, transmutes in the excess of becoming similar. When the self is at the disposal of men and priests, marked by the man's *munt* and the permanent judgment of confession, the point is to get rid of this enjoined self, and any means will do. Asceticism, meditation, ecstasy, glossolalic speech, extended use of herbs and other substances, stickings, joinings and bracings with not (any more) living, not (any more) animate. Wilbirg no longer has to master her individual self, she leaves this self, lets it go, leaves it behind, lets go of it, lets it be, releases it. Becoming similar means discharging, disjoining, disfiguring, dissembling the self. Disjointure now, in the excess and in self-disjoining.

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54 Cf. Foucault's remarks on the dimorphism of clergy and laity in *Security, Territory, Population,* 269f. as well as 272: In asceticism, "the authority, presence, and gaze of someone else is, if not impossible, at least unnecessary." Only confession and guidance by the confessor remain as the new cornerstone of ecclesiastical order, fortified by the Fourth Lateran Council, but even Einwik as confessor, in his func-tion as scribe of the Vita Wilbirgis, shows himself not as a *conducteur,* but rather as a subservient reporter of miracles.

55 Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population,* 275.

Ritornello 15, 2000/2020.
For Toni, with love

[: "It is unwise to leave love to the priests, poets, and psycho-analysts."[56]

Dear Toni,

In "Kairòs, Alma Venus, Multitudo" you describe how reason, *Ragione,* magically transforms itself by becoming physical, but above all by becoming common. A once hopelessly lost figure, emblematic of dominating and striating forms of perception and their institutions, can become enormously productive if only it connects, concatenates, braces with other capacities: affect and knowledge recompose themselves in the body against all transcendental division of body and soul, body and mind. Affect absorbs the common power of knowledge that pervades the production of life: "In other words, the common intellect (that is, the *General Intellect*), discovers *eros,* and love is intelligent."[57]

In the 1960s, you and your Italian comrades found and reinvented Marx's machine fragment, and reinvented it again and again. You chose the strange and equally rare Marxian concept of the general intellect as a central conceptual tool. No wonder, what a discovery, and what a pity that Marx himself did not develop his intuition in the late 1850s. He certainly would have had a lot to say about the Averroistic interpretations of Aristoteles' active intellect and the mystical heresies of a knowledge of love.

So the theories of a non-individual form of intellect were taken up again a hundred years later in quite different heresies, in the communist heresies of Italian Autonomia and in the mingling

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56 Michael Hardt / Antonio Negri, *Commonwealth,* Cambridge: Belknap 2009, 179.

57 Antonio Negri, *Time for Revolution,* New York/London: Continuum 2003, 205.

of activist forms with poststructural French theory, especially by your friend Félix Guattari. This is probably also the point at which the machines from Marx's *Grundrisse* first came into conceptual contact with desire, and in the aftermath of 1968, with concepts like desire production and desiring machines. You describe it some 30 years later like this: "… machinic desire becomes fused with the desire that seeks to generate new life, new bodies and new machines from poverty."[58]

How does poverty come into play here? The poor are above all an attempt to describe a subject of social struggle that transcends the proletariat of industrial capitalism in all directions – both historically and geopolitically. In your brief derivation in "Kairòs, Alma Venus, Multitudo," you nevertheless return to the early 19th century. At that historical moment, it is initially a relation of hatred and resistance that leads the poor to storm the machines, because the capitalist appropriation of the machines impoverishes and destroys the common productivity of the poor. But as Marco Deseriis has described in his interesting book *Improper Names*,[59] the very collective name General Ludd, after which the movement of machine-storming was called Luddite, stands not only for technophobic destruction of machines but also for social struggles and their inventiveness. The Luddites destroyed only certain machines that were considered to be the main factors in the reduction of wages. They also invented the practice of sending threatening letters to the factory owners, always signed with the same name: Ned Ludd. A wide range of texts, ballads, declarations, and manifestos soon developed under this name. Ned Ludd's letters and early sabotage practices were thus not only resistance to a new form of capitalism and its machines, they were machines themselves: a

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58   Ibid, 206.

59   Marco Deseriis, *Improper Names. Collective Pseudonyms from the Luddites to Anonymous*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota 2015.

contemporary form of class struggle within the industrial-capitalist mode of production, and this inventive struggle of the poor produced new textual forms. Concatenation of social machines and textual machines, invention and struggle.

In your theory of the *kairos*, love and multiplicity, you link poverty with love. "Without poverty there is no love. To speak of poverty is in some sense to speak of love. […] One of the greatest evils perpetrated by Christian philosophy consists in considering the poor person not as the subject but as the object of love."[60] Against this normalizing mainstream of Christian philosophy, a position develops as early as the twelfth century in which *caritas* is conceived not in terms of an objectifying "charity" and as solution shifted into the kingdom of God,[61] but as immanent mutual care. It is mysticism that tilts the idea of the poor as an object into a subject of love, or perhaps even more, into a sea of love where there is no object, no subject, but millions and millions of drops, a multiplicity of nameless currents that feed on immeasurable inflows.

In your conception of 2000, love is not simply technical composition of multiplicity, its experience also leads to a political composition: "the experience of love is an activity of construction of the common." The construction of the common in multiplicity is brought into the world by the creative relationship between poverty and love. "From this perspective one can say without any doubt that the relation between poverty and love is configured as an eternal return of the power of love to the location of poverty."[62] If you conceptualize love as an eternal return of the power of love to locate poverty, how is this location

60   Negri, *Time for Revolution*, 209.

61   Ibid, 217.

62   Ibid, 210.

constituted to which love returns? In the historical context of the poverty movements, Francis of Assisi and the nomadic Beguines, it emerges in a double movement of becoming nothing and at the same time becoming more.

Becoming nothing means here not only to give up property, as far as one has some, but further still, to give up the proper, to give up the proper name, to give up the self. With Spinoza, becoming more is love, happiness, "the increase of our power to act and think."[63] This is what you refer to when you return to love in *Commonwealth* with Michael Hardt in 2009. Against corrupted forms of love ("identitarian love," "love as unification"[64]) here you posit love as constitution and as (re)composition: "Love composes singularities, like themes in a musical score, not in unity, but as a network of social relations."[65]

"Understanding love as a material, political act,"[66] this ritornello resounds already at the end of *Empire*, the first volume of the trilogy, where you call for a militancy that transforms "rebellion into a project of love."[67] Around 2000, when your book and the alter-globalization movement became an exemplary concatenation of a text machine with social machines, there were especially fierce discussions about the final legend in which you outlined the future of communist militancy. I think the turmoil in reception was generated mostly by the poetic style and terminology of your concluding paragraph, but St. Francis of Assisi as a model of militancy was a good provocation in itself.

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63   Hardt/Negri, *Commonwealth,* 181.

64   Ibid, 182f.

65   Ibid, 184.

66   Ibid.

67   Michael Hardt / Antonio Negri, *Empire*, Cambridge: Harvard 2000, 413.

"Sister moon, brother sun, the birds of the field, the poor and exploited people [...]. Cooperation and revolution united in love [...]."[68] Instead of leaving love to the poets, you yourselves have become such.

But that was 20 years ago, since then a lot has happened. I ask myself, what does the machinic-materialistic conception of a concatenation of love and general intellect, of affect and collective intelligence look like today, that "intelligent love," at the same time intellect of love?

Hugs,

g.
Málaga, April 2020 :]

68   Ibid.

Marguerite Porete.
Comment ceste Ame est semblable
a la Deité

Attribution confused. At first glance, it can be read as conceptual inaccuracy, but the philosophical complexity of the text looms precisely in these apparent contradictions. In the first chapter, "the soul who had this book written" (1,34f.: *l'Ame qui ce livre fist escrire*)[69] speaks about a distant king whom she never saw, but who nevertheless, in order to "remind her of him, gave her this book" (1,39: *pour moy souvenir de lui il me donna ce livre*). So there are initially two components in the production of "this book," the first one has had it written or has written it (cf. 84,23; 97,30), and paradoxically, even before that, the second one has given it away to the first. But then, in the second chapter, love, *l'Amour,* also appears and addresses readers in her own dedication: "It is you for whom I have made this book" (2,4: *pour vous ay je fait ce livre*). Writing, making, giving, increasingly confused sequence, confusion of voices, many entrances into a book.[70]

A writing soul, *l'Ame*; love, *l'Amour,* who made the book; a never-seen king who gives the book as a souvenir. As the book progresses, we learn that the diverse components of the book's production are not at odds with one another, but rather affirm their multiplicity in love. *Amour a fait faire ce livre, et [...] j'ai l'ay escript*. "Love had this book made, [...] and I wrote it." (84,22f.)

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69   I follow the edition of Romana Guarnieri, *Marguerite Porete. Le Mirouer des Simples Ames*, CCCM 69, Turnholt: Brepols 1986. The translations and paraphrases are my attempts.

70   The fundamental literature on the *Mirouer* continues to be the monograph by Irene Leicht, *Marguerite Porete – eine fromme Intellektuelle und die Inquisition,* Freiburg: Herder 1999, which is key for the German-speaking world, as well as Amy Hollywood's comparative study, *The Soul as Virgin Wife,* Notre Dame / London: University of Notre Dame 1995.

L'Ame, this one soul, continues to insist that she made or caused it to be written down, but she is surrounded by a more-than-individual authorship. It is the *emprinse d'Amour* (118,3f.) upon which something is stated, discussed, and written. Love's advances surround the writing soul; love seizes the soul or makes her find something in her nobility, for example, the more than one hundred lines of verse in the final song (122,35f.: *Amour m'a fait par noblece / Ces vers de chançon trouver*).

While love is the master, *maitresse* of this book (11,140f.), the other writing protagonist, the soul, loses her name for love (28,14f.). She mutates into a flowing, streaming, dripping part of a whole sea of joy, she transforms into joy itself (*Joye, qui l'a muee en luy,* 28,7), and in return she receives her right name from the nothingness in which she dwells. Having come from the sea of nothingness, the soul had a name for a time, but having returned to the sea, she loses it (81,3f.; 82,47-49). The soul is now *sans nom*, nameless, and she bears the name of the mutation, *muance,* into which love caused her to mutate (83,3f.). *Muer,* from the Latin *mutare*, *muance* as mutual transformation, becoming, transmutation.[71]

And for a long time, many centuries, "this book"[72] also circulates anonymously. Written in the late thirteenth century, it spreads over much of Europe, to the chagrin of the Catholic Church. Translated into Middle Latin, Old Italian, and Middle English in the fourteenth century, it is continually subject to confiscation,

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71 Cf. Hollywood, who emphasizes the diverse levels of transformation in *The Soul as Virgin Wife*: "The process of writing the book transforms or transfigures the author in the same way that the Soul is transformed in the text, and the same transfiguration is meant to be brought about in the reader." (114f.)

72 On the different qualities of the *Mirouer* as a book, see Imke de Gier, "'Ce livre monstrera a tous vraye lumiere de verité'. The Role of *The Mirror of Simple Souls* as a Book," in Wendy R. Terry and Robert Stauffer (eds.), *A Companion to Marguerite Porete and* The Mirror of Simple Souls, Leiden/Boston: Brill 2017, 120-151.

destruction and accusations of heresy in the late Middle Ages and early modern period.[73] Only after six and a half centuries, in 1946, does Romana Guarnieri attribute it to Marguerite Porete and later also publish it.

The book, like its author and its readers, seems to evade identification because it is exposed to persecution by the Inquisition: through its offensive institutional critique, through the novelty of its theoretical content, and through its unruly form. In this sense one can also understand the statement that s_he "does not find who names such a soul: her enemies get no answer from her." (*ne trouve telle Ame qui l'appelle: ses ennemis n'ont plus d'elle response,* 85,10f.) Whoever names, calls, identifies the soul as an individual author, whoever summons her to the court of attribution gets no answer. And even whoever gets hold of her will not get an answer. She will also evade testimony in all courts. Yet the conceptual reason for remaining anonymous goes beyond the risks to the unruly, truthspeaking mystic and her readers: Marguerite Porete remains untraceable, unidentifiable, undisposable as author-individual because she sees herself as a component of dividual authorship.

Dividual thinking of love goes beyond reason. *L'Entendement d'Amour* is not simply an ideology that opposes the content of reason (*Raison*) in certain questions, nor is it anti-intellectual. It is a fundamentally different form of thinking. The format of dialogical disputation, which dominates over long stretches of the book, gives the impression that the game of questions (of

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73   On the history of the Mirror's reception, see Robert E. Lerner, The Heresy of the Free Spirit, Berkeley: University of California 1972, 71-78; Louise Gnädinger, "Margareta Porete, eine Begine," in Margareta Porete, Der Spiegel der einfachen Seelen, translated by Louise Gnädinger, Zurich: Artemis 1987, 215-239, here: 230-232; Leicht, 34-42; McGinn 3, 246; Geneviève Hasenohr, "The Tradition of The Mirror of Simple Souls in the Fifteenth Century: From Marguerite Porete (†1310) to Marguerite of Navarre (†1549)," in Terry/Stauffer (eds.), A Companion to Marguerite Porete, 155-185, and other texts in the same volume.

Raison) and answers (of *Amour*) takes place on the same level, but we are dealing here with a veritable asymmetry between striating and streaking thought. Insistent technique of striating argument, and machinic-inventive evasions that streak this argument, pass through it, drift beyond it. While subverting patterns of reasoning and knowledge apparatuses of *Raison* streaking thinking lets individual understanding mutate (*mutacion de mon entendement*, 119,24).

The book is already written when it is being written by the soul.[74] "Love has opened her book to me," says the soul, *Amour me ouvrit son livre* (101,18f.). Writing is reading, and even before that, waiting for the opening, the opening of a book, the opening of many books. That the book is opened, that love opens the book, completes the work of the soul. *Car ce livre est de telle condicion, que si toust que Amour l'ouvre, l'Ame scet tout, et si a tout, et si est toute oeuvre de parfection en elle emplie par l'ouverture de ce livre.* "The book is such that as soon as love opens it, the soul knows everything and has everything, and all the work of perfection is fulfilled in her by the opening of this book." (101,19-21) A book is opened, the writing of the book begins, and at the same time it is already completed. Love opens it, and the writing soul, from the beginning, at the *ouverture,* is already filled with the many themes that run through the book, the work, the *oeuvre.* The overture is at the same time the completion of the œuvre. The opening allows the soul to find and reproduce what comes from the divine thought of love, to take what is hers without appropriation and expropriation, and to dwell in it. Writing is waiting, opening a book, perhaps on any page, reading, listening,

74 On the paradox of action and passion in the various mystical techniques, cf. the fourth characteristic of mystical experience, passivity, in William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience,* London and New York: Routledge 2002 [1902], 295f. With Clarice Lispector, passion is "creating whatever happened to me." (Clarice Lispector, *The Passion according to G.H.*, from the Portuguese by Idra Novey, New York: New Directions 2012 [1963], 13).

talking with those present and absent, whether in time or in space. Dividual thinking gives his_her book to a soul.

This one soul writes and is at the same time the precious parchment on which the lesson of love is inscribed (66:15-17). She is not an individual author-soul, she is a disjointed self, singular component of dividual thought. *Ainsi m'a Droit, par droit, rendu le mien, et monstré nuement que je ne suis mie; et pource veult, par droit, que je ne m'aye mie; ce droit est escript en my le milieu du livre de vie.* "Thus the right has rightfully restored to me what is mine, and has soberly shown me that I am not. And therefore it wants that I do not possess myself according to the law. This right is written in the middle of the book of life." (101,27-30)

Self-disjoining in the middle, in the *milieu*, in the never quite jointed joining of writing. And there is this small, not so much hidden punch line at the beginning of Chapter 52, where love welcomes the soul into her estate, the only free estate, into which no one else is admitted. *Amour* addresses the soul as *precieuse marguerite*, and by this she probably does not mean some "precious pearl" or daisy flower. If Marguerite's individual self has also disjoined as disjointure, the singular authorship of a marguerite, the unique voice of the simple soul is still there and desires her share of dividuality of the excessively many voices in the genitivus obiectivus/subiectivus of the souls becoming nothing.

In the Old French manuscript there is this wonderfully detailed title of the book: *Le mirouer des simples ames anienties et qui seulement demourent en vouloir et désir d'amour*. "Mirror of the simple souls having become nothing, who dwell solely in the will and desire of love."[75] The term *mirouer*, mirror, *speculum* initially

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[75] In the thirteenth chapter, a shorter title, *Le mirouer des simples ames qui en vouloir et en désir demourent*, is mentioned, which some authors consider more appropriate. Cf. especially Muraro, 120f.

situates the book in a context of behavioral textbooks, didactic-informative texts typically written for a particular class in the High Middle Ages. The *Mirouer*'s audience, however, remains obscure and strangely diffuse, like Marguerite Porete's diverse milieus, evident in the book's variations of expression and genre. Most chapters are composed in dialogue form, as erudite conversations between the three main characters, *Amour, Raison*, and *Ame*.[76] Love and soul are in a relationship of benevolent teacher and erring student, and they often throw punch lines at each other, while the dispute of love and soul with reason is confrontational and increasingly asymmetrical. The disputation shows *Raison* first in a questioning, sometimes also repetitive mode, in the function of insisting on classical argumentation and proper proof, and less frequently also pointing out supposed contradictions, *paroles contraires* (21,7). Often the litany-like repetitions and "stupid questions" she asks on behalf of *les communes gens* (13,3) tend to caricature reason. Sometimes she remains without any understanding or is completely horrified by the deviant positions of love. But at no point does incomprehension and horror turn into rebellion.

It is the text itself that rebels against any ordering reading. Although it simulates the form of scholastic disputation, it is on the whole constructed against any systematic,[77] a stream of

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76   Surprisingly, every now and then, the three main characters are complemented by secondary characters who emerge suddenly, sometimes even appearing in chorus. The Holy Church, the Holy Spirit, God, Truth, as well as figures with accidental components appear: "One of those who have to justify themselves" (75) or "The soul that is amazed in thinking nothing" (84) or "The capacity of souls that have become nothing" (102).

77   This anti-systematic construction earned the text negative literary-historical reviews for a long time. Cf. Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit*, 201, Fn. 4: "assai povera e mal costruita" und 202: "poorly organized and repetitive"; Edmund Colledge / J.C. Marler, "'Poverty of the Will'. Ruusbroec, Eckhart and The Mirror of Simple Souls," in: Paul Mommaers, Norbert de Paepe (Hg.), *Jan van Ruusbroec. The Sources,*

discourse that sometimes seems to run in circles,[78] then again spills over the banks of its content and in new paths picks up new inflows from other milieus. What stays regular is only the stalling and swirling of the disputation, the many (apparent) repetitions, detours, and reroutings. Conceptual neologisms and unexpected linguistic turns,[79] confusions of content, changes of style and tempo characterize its trajectories. In repeated attempts, the text starts anew, breaks apart here and there, and spirals ever deeper. And where the form suggests a tendency toward the systematic, as in enumerations, punctuations, or the summary of the seven modes of being in Chapter 118, the delimitation of the seemingly delimited material quickly collapses again. Unruly form corresponds to unruly expression.

In the *Mirouer,* theological scholarly discourse and scholastic disputation intermingle with the Beguine language of mystical revelation, and the high style of courtly poetry. The text moves through the different tones, oscillating between them and often blending them in such a way that the transitions become

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Content and Sequels of his Mysticism, Leuven: Leuven University 1984, 14-47, 25: "Her book is inordinately diffuse ... Margaret shows a marked inability to control her material and to deal with it in orderly fashion." It was not until Peter Dronke's study *Women Writers in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University 1984, 217-228) that a more nuanced literary appreciation began.

78   With Leicht, 156-162 as well as 267, some elements of a "concentric composition" can be discerned, especially around the beginning, the end, and the "centerpiece" around the exact middle of the text. As McGinn (3, 453) writes, however, the *Mirouer* does not attempt to "create systems or formulate ontological statements," but "on the contrary, wants to break up systems and turn ontological statements inside out."

79   Written in the evolving vernacular Old French language, the *Mirouer* is highly inventive in some of its key terms. Marguerite Porete was able to draw on the courtly vocabulary of vernacular Old French, but many discursive elements derive from scholastic theology and thus from Middle Latin, where much linguistic reshaping and reformatting became necessary. The Bible, too, first had to be translated into French for more or less free citations.

blurred. The same is true of literary forms and techniques. Parables, catalogs, punctuations, biblical reflections, sample narratives, internal references, songs, hymns, prayers appear in irregular succession. Different prose forms fall into rhymed passages without further ado, to dissolve fully into courtly verse forms at concise points.[80] Descriptions of ecstatic exercises and revelations, common dramaturgical climaxes of compassion and bridal mysticism are completely absent;[81] their place is taken by affections through form, style, and expression. Where the voice of reason fails and the realms of *Raison* are fully left behind, density, rhythmization, and versification of language intensify.

Who would want to read, hear, and spread such a thing? In view of the concrete addresses in the text, Beguine and Beguine-like groups of women can be assumed as central reception machines. Even if the Beguines themselves are projected as future critics of the *Mirouer* in the final song (*Beguines dient que je erre*, 122,98), other passages suggest them as recipients.[82] *Entre vous, dames, a*

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80 Cf. Dronke, 218. The song at the beginning of the *Mirouer* is a canzone, the beginning of the lyric finale is a rondo, both specific and canonized lyric forms, and beyond that, Dronke notes countless borderline passages in which modern editors must decide whether to classify and typeset them as prose or verse.

81 In strict contrast to the Vita Wilbirgis, the *Mirouer* does not contain any revelation reports or vision descriptions. For this reason, however, it cannot simply be categorized as belonging to the "male" genre of speculative mysticism. Even if the text contains passages critical of the elements of mediation and asceticism, one cannot assume a dichotomy of ecstatic bodily experiences and incorporeal becomingnothing. Cf. Hollywood, *Sensible Ecstasy,* 10-13 and 97f.

82 Contemporary chronicles also refer to Marguerite Porete herself as a Beguine. Perhaps she experienced both Beguine reterritorialization and deterritorialization at different stages of her life, in the collective Beguine houses and as a nomadic Beguine, with communal readings in the houses and preachy speeches in more or less public places. On the forms of life and persecution of the Beguines, see Leicht, 92-111 and 404-423. Leicht also quotes the relevant formulation of the Minorite Gilbert de Tournai for the Council of Lyon in 1274: "There are women among us who call themselves Beguines, and some of them excel in sophistry and delight in

qui Dieu a ceste vie de sa bonté divine habondanment donnee sans nul retour, et non mye ceste vie seulement que nous disons, mais encore celluy avec ceste, dont oncques ne parla homs, vous recognoistrez en ce livre vostre usage. "You ladies, to whom God has given this life out of his divine goodness in abundance and without recompense, and not only this life of which we speak, but at the same time that of which no man has ever spoken: You shall recognize your usage in this book." (98:13-17) But it is not only *usage*, the way of life and custom of an identifiable group that can be recognized. When the genitive in the title is read as obiectivus, mirroring the becoming nothing of souls and learning from it how souls dwell solely in the will and desire to love, this potentially affects all souls.

So does the common *lignage* (98,19; 98,27; 100,11), the heavenly-courtly lineage acquire explosive meaning. The court meant here is not a royal one, not a princely one, not a court delimited by class-specifics. The line drawn on its terrain is dividual, it does not go from one individual to another, it runs through very different times and spaces. Instead of elitist exaltation of the courtly and its rituals, this court forms a revolutionary line of flight that connects the very smallest with the very largest. (100,1015) In this courtly-molecular way of life, the soul is "free, freer, supremely free, unsurpassably free, at the root, at the trunk, at all her branches and all the fruits of her branches": *franche, mais plus franche, mais tres franche, mais surmontamment franche, et de plante et de stocs et de toutes ses branches, et de tous le fruiz de ses branches.* (85,3-6) The line of kinship without blood, without will, without choice which shares this unsurpassable freedom does not lead to a closed caste or class; it is an origin-

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novelties. They have interpreted in the vernacular the mysteries of the Scriptures, which are difficult to fathom even for people versed in the sacred Scriptures. They read them together, without reverence, impudently, in gatherings, in hidden corners and public places." (407f.)

less and endless and therefore free *lignage*. Its freedom allows it to leap, to cross, to pass through all parts until the plane of immanence is recomposed. Then the genitive in the title ("mirror of souls") can at the same time also be read subjectively, as *genitivus subiectivus*, then the souls becoming nothing are not only audience, readership, object, but also subject of the mirror. Then also is the *mirouer* as a product to be attributed to the souls, then they constitute – and constitute themselves as – that unruly multitude and dividual multiplicity that the transversal intellect brings with it.

Far-Near

The prologue of the *Mirouer* has at its center a parable from the world of worldly and courtly love, an *exemple de l'amour du monde*. It serves not only as a model for the loving soul, but also as an insight into the production process of the book itself. "Once upon a time there was a young woman, a king's daughter, who had a great heart, nobility, and noble courage, but she was dwelling in a foreign land. It happened that this young woman heard talk of the great courtesy and nobility of King Alexander. And she desired and loved him because of his great fame and softness. But the young woman was so far away from this great lord to whom all her love was devoted that she could neither see him nor have him. Therefore she was deeply inconsolable, for no love but this one was enough for her. And when she saw that this far love was very near within her, but so far away on the outside, she thought of relieving her grief by imagining a figure of her friend, for whom she was so often grieved in her heart. So she had a picture painted that represented the semblance of the king she loved, as close as possible to how she loved him in her imagination, and in the affect of the love that seized her. And

combining this painting with other usages, she created the king himself." (1,16-33)

Especially in Indian, Persian and Arabic literature, narratives about lovers who know the other only through stories, dreams, or images are widespread. The motif of long-distance love entered Provençal trobador poetry as *amor de lonh* in the eleventh century via Arabic AlAndalus. In the twelveth century, three different versions of specific poetry referred to as the *Alexander Romance* emerged in the French region. The subject matter of this introductory example is widely known in one way or another. It is about the simultaneity of separation and rapprochement, the distance and intensity of two lovers, with the particular feature that the beloved does not need to know anything about the love. The key passage of the original describes how the young woman braces proximity and distance:

> *Et quant elle vit que ceste amour loingtaigne, qui luy estoit si prouchaine ou dedans d'elle, estoit si loing dehors, elle se pensa que elle conforterait sa masaise par ymaginacion d'aucune figure de son amy dont elle estoit souvent au cueur navree. Adonc fist elle paindre ung ymage qui representait la semblance du roy, qu'elle amoit, au plus pres qu'elle peut de la presentacion dont elle l'amoit et en l'affection de l'amour dont elle estoit sourprinse, et par le moyen de ceste ymage avec ses autres usages songa le roy mesmes.* (1,25-33)

It is the one-sided-singular affection of love that makes the king's daughter imagine her royal lover. It is enough for her to use unspecified practices, techniques, customs, *usages*,[83] and among

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83   Dronke, 219, suggests that we should understand *usages* primarily as meditation and prayer practices of revelatory mysticism. Going beyond this, I believe that the usages of the *Mirouer* are more generally about exercises, routines, techniques, everyday practices, conducts that, according to a concise passage at the end of the book (139,20), yield in their totality the *usage de vie* in the singular, the way of life. If one gives weight to the aspect of the Alexander passage according to which the usages are to be found in the book itself, then these practices can be seen to con-

them above all the play of imagination and image. Imagination starts from the semblance of the king, an appearance that is similar to him, related to him, that bears his features, but is actually entirely imagined, envisioned, simulated. Imagination, vision, simulacrum: semblance is not about discovering similarity, but inventing it. This invented semblance is to be represented in painting. The painterly representation should come as close as possible to the presentation, which is imagination. This secondary invention, too, is not about identicality, but about a farreaching rapprochement borne by the affection of the lovers. Resembling the dissimilarity of the semblance, the image invented by imagination itself gives enough material to imagine the distant king. No longer is only man created *ad imaginem et similitudinem Dei*, no longer does only the soul become similar to the deity (*ceste Ame soit semblable a la Deité,* 51,2f.); the distant himself is imagined, or rather becomes similar. Where there is no archetype, the image returns without archetype, semblance is simulated, similarity is invented.

After the first version presented by love in the prologue of the *Mirouer* follows a mirroring of the courtly legend onto the experience of the soul in writing the book. The story she now has to tell, comments the soul "who had this book written down," is similar to the Alexander example. But as much as the narrative echoes the legend, she tells what she tells as a lived experience: "I heard talk about a very powerful king, who was a noble Alexander by his courtesy, by his great and courtly nobility and largesse. However, he was so far away from me and I from him that I could not console myself; and to assist me he gave me this book, which in various usages represents his love itself. But

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sist more in the idiosyncratic discourse of love and soul than in meditation, and especially in the practical examples of how the soul frees itself, loses nature and spirit, works and will, becomes nothing. Usage remains a dazzling concept in the context of the *Mirouer,* and it shall continue to dazzle here.

even though I now have his image, I am in a foreign land and far away from the palace where the very noble friends of this lord dwell, who are completely pure, fine and free through the gifts of this king with whom they dwell." (1,34-44)

The repetition and transmission of the parable remains faithful to the courtly vocabulary of the source material, but places the protagonist in the theological inbetween world of (divine) love and free souls. The main strands of the two parts of the parable correspond to each other down to the details of the formulation – the hearsay (*oit parler*) as a prerequisite of imagination, the *grant courtoisie* and *noblece* of the king, the circumstance of insurmountable distance, and finally the attempt to overcome the distance by a form of resembling.

> *mais si loing es toit de moy et moy de luy, que je ne savoie pran-dre confort de moy mesmes, et pour moy souvenir de lui il me donna ce livre qui represente en aucuns usages l'amour de lui mesmes.* (1,37-40)

Obviously, however, the divine Alexander spoken of here in contrast to the distant love in the first, worldly example, knows very well about the loving soul. Here he becomes active himself and stands by the soul comfortingly by "giving her this book." *Souvenir* takes on a double meaning, on the one hand still resounding with the Latin *subvenire*, "to assist," "to come to the aid," on the other hand also assimilating the newer Old French meaning of "to become aware," "to remember." Of course, the gift of the distant is a support for the soul, but the second component of meaning proximates the process of semblance as in the first (Alexander) example: the soul is to envision, to remember, to actualize something she has never seen. Here, too, the king maintains distance, remains unseen, but instead of unilateral affect one could speak here of mutual asymmetrical affection. Instead of his presence, he gives the soul "this book," the *Mirouer*, which is supposed to "represent" him and his love, *l'Amour*.

Here, the question of similarity is raised differently: a reciprocal relationship exists, however asymmetrical it may be. But again, the representation can only go so far as to represent love with the help of "several" usages in the book, which are themselves quite different. Thus similarity can become, resemblance of the two dissimilar lovers. Since the soul has no access to the royal palace, she too must work with a representation, here not an image but a book, and at the same time it is the soul who invents the semblance, who discovers, manufactures, produces the similarities of the dissimilar, who imagines farnearness: the soul begins to write a book given to her by the distant king.

The courtly discourse extends far beyond the parable of the prologue; it permeates the book and its terminology. *Courtoisie* and *noblesse* are two frequently recurring markers of this milieu, and from the beginning love is drawn as a bond between divine friend, *amy,* and soul, *ame,* as precious friend, *amye precieuse.* The main body of the book also ends with a hymn to the beloved, the friend to whom the soul is promised (122,112-141). In high courtly pathos, we learn here of the lover's lovely love for the beloved, and this beloved always beholds her beloved in lovely love (112,6-8: *l'amour amiable de l'amant en l'aymee; laquelle ayme regarde de l'amour amiable tousdis son amant*). In the stylization of the bridal mystical discourse, the soul also bears the name *espouse de paix*, bride of peace (74:9). The bridegroom, *espoux*, frees the bride not only from the hand of the father and the *servaige* of reason, but from all service (36,4-7: *l'espoux afranchisse l'espouse*).

The beloved friend is – like in the Alexander example in the prologue – at the same time infinitely near and infinitely far. The powerful conceptualization that Marguerite Porete develops for this is *le Loingprés*, the far-near. The one who is far away also bears the courtly attributes of softness and sweetness, he is *gentile* (60,22f.; 61,11f.) and *tres doulx* (80,24f.); he gives the *ame/amye* his *noble don* (73,42). The soul is "so far from loving,

recognizing, praising you": *tant esloignee de vous amer et cognoistre et louer.* (38,12f.) And at the same time, she is always near, in greatest proximity to the far-near (*parce y est pres la paix de ce Loingprés,* 88,38; *plus pres du Loingprés,* 134,4), and the far-near is her neighbor (*mon proesme*, 80,25), her all-nearest (*son plus proesme,* 84,13).

In the course of the soul's earthly life, distance, difference, and detachment remain. Only the seventh of seven modes of being promises the dissolution of difference in eternal glory when the soul has left the body (118:204-206). But on this side of the transcendent resolution of difference, after the renunciation of sin, pleasure, good works, and contemplative exercises, in the fifth and sixth modes of being the soul and the far-near approach each other precisely in distance. In the fifth mode of being, the soul "dwells at the bottom of the valley and sees the mountain top of the mountain, the mountain of the mountain top. No in-between can oppress her." (*Car elle se siet ou fons de la vallee, dont elle voit le mont de la montaigne, dont elle voit la montaigne de mont. Nul entredeux ne se peut la embatre*, 74,9-11). From her seat in the deep valley, the soul sees mountain and mountain top at the same time, dividual multiplicity and eventful singularity. Although her distance is the farthest possible, the soul needs no *entredeux*, no intermediate position between herself and the far-near. The emanation of divine love shows the soul "suddenly him and me at the same time. That is, him at the very top and me so far below that I could not rise and help myself; and there my best was born." (132,31-36). When she sits down all the way, there is nothing to prevent her from seeing, and then she sees herself and the far-near at the same time. In the fifth mode of being, the soul is with her beloved despite all spatial distance; she is with him, *avec son amant* (58,7).

The fifth mode of being is also the precondition of an eventful state in which the soul is torn out of her rest in the deep valley. From here she is moved into the sixth mode of being, carried

away in love, into a middle that sweeps away distance and proximity. The *raptus* appears in the *Mirouer* in the Old French form *ravissable*, that is, only as an adjective, and it is an attribute of the far-near in only one of five places. Otherwise, *ravissable* is used to denote the opening, the brightness, the elevation, the emanation that accompany the event of *raptus*.

The verb *ravir* is used with a subject only once. The soul is torn to and fro, *ravie,* and if there is an agent in this tearing, it is love that carries away the soul and the use of her senses.[84] This displacement of *raptus* strikes right at the heart of the joining of gender relations. In the courtly mystical setting of the *Mirouer, raptus* loses the connotations of robbing and sexual violence, indeed it loses any clear assignment of active and passive, subject and object. *Ravissable* are opening and closing, rapturer and rapturous, soul and far-near. Far-near rapture is subjectless milieu, rampant center of mutation: *Le sourhaulcement ravissable qui me sourprent et joinct au milieu de la mouelle de Divine Amour.* (80,3235) Rapturous enhancement that overcomes the soul and joins it to the milieu of divine love.

Substitute for the suspended subject is speed. Rapture happens in a flash and fleetingly.[85] "It is a lightning-like opening followed by a rapid closure, and never can one dwell long in it": *Car c'est une ouverture a maniere de esclar*[86] *et de hastive closure, ou l'en ne peut longuement demourer* (58,9f.). In mutual proximity there is no

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84 7,11-13; 49,24; 110,28.

85 Cf. the third characteristic of mystical experience, *transiency*, in James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, 295.

86 *Esclar* here is not so much striking lightning, but rather *es-clar* of clarification, complete clarity, even transfiguration. Cf. also 91:12-14: *Clarifiement de Dieu, qui se voit des yeulx de sa majesté, qui en ce point l'a de luy clarifiee.* In this image of transfiguring clarification there is also an image of superluminosity, "that in this light the soul is deprived of all possibility of perception." (Light, 293, footnote 467).

prolonged persistence. Barely opened, it closes to become distance again. Dissimilarity accelerated into similarity becomes dissimilar again in an instant. Here, too, similarity flits by.

Speed and lightning are not violent, but soft, sweet, like the "opening of the sweet movement of glory that the soft far-near gives": *l'ouverture du doulx mouvement de gloire, que le gentil Loing-prés donne* (61,11). As much as Marguerite's discourse draws from the courtly context and its gender asymmetry between *amy* and *amye*, *espoux* and *espouse,* the relational forms are transformed in the theological-spiritual discourse of love.[87] For all the asymmetry between the distant friend, lover, husband and his friend, it is said: *en compaignie d'amy et d'amye n'avoit point de seigneurie*. "In the company of friend and friend, there is no dominion." (31,11)

The concept of *doulceur* often appears at the end of chapters, when the tone elevates, when the soul takes off, for instance as a consoling feeling in prayer (*sentement de doulceur d'oraison*, 26,13f.) or as the sweetness of love that overcomes the soul if she only comes near (*la doulceur du desduit de son amour, qui sourprent l'Ame, si tost qu'elle s'aprouche d'elle,* 108,89f.), or in rhythmicized and rhyming form as a characteristic of a praised land: *ouquel pays, courtoisie est loy, et amour mesure, et bonté pasture; la doulceur m'en trait, la beaulté m'en plaist, la bonté m'en paist* ("in this land decency is law, and love the measure, and goodness the food; sweetness attracts me, beauty pleases me, goodness feeds me," 68,18-20).

Doulce is therefore the land of free souls (cf. also 52,21; 65,33), a plane of immanence arising already in the fifth mode of being. But *doulce* is above all the relation between soul and love. The fact that lightning and gathering in the *Mirouer* do not appear

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as violent, but as sweet and soft, is related to the fact that far-nearness mutates into a relationship between the two female protagonists. With Chapter 30 a condensation of mutual address as *doulce Amour* and *doulce Ame* begins, and thus also the approaching and intensification of the relationship, until *Amour* makes the soul "mistress of virtues, daughter of divinity, sister of wisdom, and bride of love": *Ceste Ame, dit Amour, est dame des Vertuz, fille de Deité, seur de Sapience, et espouse d'Amour.* (87,3f.) The biblical characters explicitly mentioned in the *Mirouer* are to a large extent female,[88] and the audience, when addressed, is also mostly addressed as female. It is primarily *dames* who read and hear the book.

Decisive for a feminist reading, however, is the feminine gender of *Amour* in Middle French, because through it divinity is represented over long stretches in a way that is implicitly and explicitly feminine.[89] "Mistress in the house" is love even in the first song. In the middle of the book there is a chapter in which *Amour* even assumes the function of the bridegroom. The chapter is about the preparation of the perfect soul, who may speak to her only when she "no longer refers to herself": "in my secret chamber, where no one has access unless he is adorned" (73,21). Entirely in the courtly tone of the farnear, love speaks of the soul and the conditions for her to become "my friend" (73:22), "my bride" (73:26). While the relationship between the soul and the farnear is determined by distance, that of love and soul develops over long stretches as a benevolent debate between two

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88 Cf. Leicht, 115, footnote 223.

89 Hollywood, *The Soul as Virgin Wife*, 100f., highlights the feminization of the divine through the use of the likewise grammatically feminine trinity: "Her emphasis is on the absolute unity of the Trinity in its source. When this union is achieved the soul is not made masculine, but rather the divine is feminized. [...] Where the masculine Farnearness represents the divine in its separateness from the soul, God in union with the soul is called *Trinité*, thereby effectively feminizing the divine and highlighting the soul's divination."

female actors facing one other. This goes so far that towards the end of the book *Amour* directly calls the soul friend, *amye* (cf. 132,13). [90]

The "small church" and its reason

The church fought the *Mirouer* and its author throughout her life, and it cannot be emphasized enough that in the case of Marguerite Porete, it was precisely the name of a female author that would remain invisible for centuries, not to mention the modesty of the resonance found by her conceptually inventive and formally powerful experimental text in philosophical discourses.[91] Marguerite was an unruly woman who radically opposed the gendered order of ecclesiastical institutions as well as any womanhood altogether that was associated with subordination. For her contemporaries, this subject position seems to have been barely within the realm of the conceivable. It is not by chance that Marguerite is called a *pseudo-mulier*[92] in the trial records, a sham woman, a woman-simulation, a fake woman. For the ecclesiastical actors, it was inconceivable to attribute this mixture of diverse educational background, irrepressible writing competence, and disobedience to a woman. While in

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90 Sexual affect also resonates in these affectionate dialogues of love. Amy Hollywood speaks of "an intensely homoerotic valence" (*Acute Melancholia and Other Essays. Mysticism, History, and the Study of Religion,* Columbia University 2016, 158).

91 This ignorance in the philosophical canons stands in stark contrast to the rapid dissemination of the text in various translations in Europe. On the manuscripts, the translations, and the thirteen textual witnesses in Old French, Middle Latin, Middle English, and Italian, see Leicht, 116-120 and Sean L. Field, "Debating the Historical Marguerite Porete," in Terry/Stauffer (eds.), *A Companion to Marguerite Porete*, 9-37.

92 Quoted in Hollywood, *Acute Melancholia,* 135.

principle perceived as a version of the male dominant,[93] the female variation is considered too inferior to be trusted with such deviance. The author of the *Mirouer* must be simulating a woman, as a "pseudo-woman" she moves in an in-between space that cannot be grasped by ecclesiastical authority. This is the space that Amy Hollywood has called "queerness in relation to modern conceptions of heteronormativity," the space of "nonnormative gender performances found within medieval mystical writing," and finally the interstice of "anarchic refusal of gender binaries."[94] And it is precisely in the dominant power of attribution that the unruliness of this queer mysticism comes to light: by marking Marguerite as *pseudo-mulier* against the denunciatory intent of the term, the inquisition confirms the practices of becoming, of farnearness, of queer resemblance that are generally at stake in the *Mirouer.*

After the *Mirouer* had been publicly confiscated and burned in Valenciennes around 1300 and its distribution forbidden, Marguerite was arrested and imprisoned by the Inquisitor General in Paris around 1307. The procedure of the ecclesiastical condemnation proceeded as it had since the times of Bernard of Clairvaux: arbitrary decontextualization of fifteen sentences from the *Mirouer* and their interpretation as heretical by twenty-one experts led to the condemnation of Marguerite as a relapsed heretic. On June 1, 1310, she was burned at the stake in Paris.[95]

What is behind the rabid decontextualization and misinterpretation of sentences from a piece of experimental philosophy

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93 Cf. Thomas Laqueur's study of the "one-sex model" up to the 18th century: *Making Sex: Body and Gender From the Greeks to Freud,* Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1990.

94 Hollywood, *Acute Melancholia,* 107.

95 On the trial and the beginnings of the Inquisition in general, see Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit*, 71-78, and especially Leicht, 369-400.

that tipped the scales in favor of the verdict? In this period before the strategically organized "witch hunt," Marguerite Porete was probably the first author to be sentenced to death solely on the basis of the content of her writing. This gives an idea of the *Mirouer*'s explosive power with respect to the institutions. While the practices of mystics were always subject to *discretio spiritum*, ecstatic exercises and the *raptus* could be interpreted as sacred rapture or demon possession, depending on the context and power relations. One aspect, however, was decisive for the Church's aggressive attacks: the mystical practice promised a far more direct access to the experience of God than the multiply stratified and regimented rituals of Church institutions. It was designed to attack the principle of mediation, the dominance of Scripture, and the institutional monopoly of the Church.

Il n'a nul moyen entre elles et la Deité, is written in the *Mirouer* about the souls who have become nothing: "There is no mediation between them and the deity." (64,6) Accustomed to speak without fuss and directly with divine love, the soul of the *Mirouer* rejects everything that comes about through means: *Elle ne vieult plus chose qui viengne par moyen.* (5,18) In a comparison with the highest of the nine angelic choirs, the seraphim, the soul comes to know that any mediation is dispensable. *C'est le propre estre des Seraphins: il n'y a nul moyen entre leur amour et l'amour divine. Ilz ont tousjours nouvelle sans moyen, et aussi a ceste Ame, car elle ne quiert pas la science divine entre les maistres de ce siecle* (5,19-22). The seraphim surround God and are always in his closest proximity, with no need for mediation between their love and divine love. Thus should neither the soul of the *Mirouer* desire the teaching of God from the teachers of this earthly world and instead seek the unmediated proximity to divine love. *Comment il y a grant différence entre don d'amy par moyen a amie et don qui est sans moyen d'amy a amye!* "What a great difference between the mediated and the unmediated gift of the *amy* to the *amye*!" (5,23-25)

Like the seraphim, the simple souls are close to divine love and do not need sacraments, mass or sermon, nor fasting or prayer (*ne messe ne sermon, ne jeune ne oraison* 9,20). The Church, however, and in her name *Raison,* has determined all this to be desirable and indispensable (13,28f. and 35f.), to be food for souls (16,22f.). But love keeps on insisting that the soul has no need of sacraments (16,20f.) and that even the Holy Scripture does not cover everything (7,9f.). Only they who seek God not only in churches and monasteries, but in all places, have good and beneficial times. (69,47f.)

Consequentially in chapter nineteen it is written that the Holy Church would probably be astonished and puzzled at this book. *Amour* responds to this with a concise differentiation: the astonishment is true with regard to the *Saincte Eglise la Petite,* which is governed by reason, but not at all with regard to the *Saincte Eglise la Grant,* which is governed by love. (19,11-13)

The name alone is provocation: the "small church" is the molar institution, the state apparatus that only appears to be strong and great, a church that sticks to the doctrine of reason in everything. (43,13f.) From the perspective of the *Mirouer,* this church is small and subordinate to the souls *(dessoubz*, 43,5 and 11). *Amour* rejoices that the soul has left behind this small church and the works of virtue (66,10f.). The school of the soul is no longer the small church and its teachers, but *divine escole, a bouce close, que sens humain ne peut mectre en parole,* "the divine school, with mouth closed, and human sense cannot put it into words." (66,18f.) This school begins to read and write where the small church, its reason and its virtues reach their limits.

La Saincte Eglise la Grant, the "great church," on the other hand, is the church of free souls.[96] It spreads out without visible

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96   Cf. Muraro, 143f., for whom the great church is characterized above all by three "characteristics" of free souls: famelessness, commonality, and independence.

power, without becoming institutionally manifest, as dispersed, dividual, molecular shape of souls becoming nothing. Great is this church in the sense of its expansion. Instead of reason, love rules and dwells in it. It is the souls, therefore, that are to be called Holy Church, for they sustain, teach, and nourish the whole church (43,6-8). The "great church" of the *Mirouer* is the abstract machine, dispersing, spreading and emanating immanence to all simple souls, sedentary and nomadic, dwelling in place and becoming viral at the same time.

With this molecular conception of church, Marguerite does not simply take an antiinstitutional position, but concretely takes a stand against the molar church and its moral and epistemological apparatuses. To stand against these structures, as Caroline Walker Bynum suggests, is not to flee from all social organization, but rather to reflect female experience insofar as it is experience of the irrelevance and misery of very concrete structures.[97] Not wanting to govern and be governed in this way then also means organizing differently, instituting differently, governing (oneself) differently. And as little as there is to be read concretely about it in the *Mirouer*, the potentiality of the many-sided, "many-souled" government becomes clearly evident: *Telles gens, dit Amour, gouverneroient ung pays, se il en estoit besoing, et tout sans elles.* "If necessary, such people can also govern a country, and all without their own doing." (58,39f.)

The molar church arouses the disobedience of free souls not only as an institutional form and state apparatus, but also through its moral instances. "The virtues," *les Vertuz*, are the moral machines meant to direct souls in accordance with the values of the molar church, governmental organs of machinic subservience. (8,37f.) The text emphasizes this subservience of the soul in two particularly concise, rhythmic prose passages

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97   Walker Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption*, 49.

that merge into songs at the beginning and end of the book. In chapter six, the soul begins her song about the virtues, and love prefaces it by stating that the soul has stood at the service of the virtues for a long time, for too many days: *Ceste Ame, dit Amour mesmes, peut dire aux Vertuz qu'elle a esté par long temps et par mainte journee en leur servage.* (6,3-5) The song itself speaks of arduous service (6,12 *Voustre service est troup coustant*) as a slave, of restlessness, torment, suffering, and the impossibility of escape: *J'avoie en vous tout mon cueur mis, bien le sçay / Donc je verscu ung tandis en grant esmay. / Souffert en ay maint gref tourment, mainte paine enduree / Merveilles est quant nullement en suis vive eschappee.* (6,1619) The subservience of the soul, however, is not consistently described as unilateral slavery, but also as service from the heart without reservation, in total surrender: *Je mis ung temps mon cueur en vous, sans nulle dessevree / Vous savez que je estoie a vous trestoute habandonnee; / Je estoie adonc serve de vous* (6,13-15). It is this mixture of voluntary subservience and institutional submission that makes possible the government of souls, not only as vertical form of institutional hierarchy, but also as horizontal concatenation through the virtues as moral machines and the self-government of souls.

This life of the soul in servitude and subservience returns as a theme in the great concluding song of the soul in Chapter 122. At the beginning of this song, the soul revisits the "bestial time" in which she was at the service of the virtues: *Si beste estoie / Ou temps que les servoie* (122,12f.). She describes these services rendered to the virtues as lowly and small (122,24 *de leur petit service*). But love is ready to free the soul from this lowly service of virtue, and so both songs become hymns to discharging the virtues. The first song in particular is a song of jubilation at the soul's release from servitude. *De voz dangers partie sui, ou je esté en maint ennuy / Onques mais franche ne fui, fors de vous dessevree / Partie suis de voz dangers, en paix suis demouree.* "From your clutches I escaped, which gave me so much trouble / Never was I free except

divorced from you / Escaped from your clutches, I now dwell in peace." (6,22-24)

Once the souls are liberated in love, the relationship between the souls and the virtues is reversed, and the virtues without protest now serve the souls: *les Vertuz servent a elles sans nul contredit et sans travail de telles Ames.* (8,20f.) They do everything that the souls want, acknowledge the souls as their masters (*Mais ainçoys les Virtuz font tout ce que telles Ames veullent, sans danger et sans contredit, car telles Ames sont leurs maistresses.* 8,41f.; cf. also 19,27-35), and now it is the virtues that serve the souls in perfect obedience. (21:13) No strife, no conflict, no war brings about this reversal of machinic subservience. Rather, it is a learning process, as in the parable of the servant who learns so much from his master that he becomes richer and wiser than the master. The servant does leave his former master to find a better one, but the master remains with him in obedience because he himself realizes that his former subordinate now knows more than he does. (21,15-22) Thus, a recurring pattern of the *Mirouer* becomes evident: even if the tone sometimes grows rough, the turns occur as transformations, mutations, transitions.

Serves (8,14 and 8,16) are the souls, as long as they remain in obedience to *Raison* and the other virtues. It is reason that, as long as being the teacher of the souls, teaches them to obey the virtues until the end of their lives. (21,23-31) The *Raison* of the *Mirouer* is a degenerated form of intellect. Left to itself and overcoded by the state apparatus of the small church, it begins the same work across time and space: it stratifies, institutionalizes, indoctrinates, domesticates through fear, rule, and ordinance. From the beginning to the end of the text, therefore, it will be a matter of "going beyond reason" (introductory song, 13: *surmonter Raison*), indeed of "not leaving reason unscathed" (122,104: *non fais sauve leur Raison*). Divine instruction means beginning to read where reason ends (66,105).

Reason is the third protagonist in the format of the dialogue, along with love and the soul. Its terrain is the naive question, the recurring fright at ever new twists and turns of the discourse of love, the step-by-step learning of the well-behaved student of logic, and at times also the hidden aggression. It thus becomes the central figure through which the form of scholastic disputation and its formalized rituals are critically ironized. But behind the practice of this dim-witted, relentless questioning, one can also see the prefiguration of a very different form of interview, the rigorous interrogation of the Inquisition.[98] While love remains undisputed authority, there is a glimpse of this interrogation in the direct confrontation between soul and reason. In Chapter 35, reason blatantly threatens and warns the soul to watch her words, to make sure she does not fall into error (35,18f.: *gardez que vous ne cheez en errour,*). Heretical error resonates with the word choice of *errour*, and *Raison* wants to flex once again her institutional muscles asking the soul to prove what she claims (35,23: *Or prouvez, dame Ame, dit Raison, ce que vous dictes*).

Before the soul follows this invitation, she makes fun of reason and insults her as *ennuyeuse*, boring. *Raison* is a frequent object of derision in general. Drawn as rude (74,5; 84,32: *rude*), obtuse (79,45; 84,28; 84,32: *encombree),* and narrow-minded (43,24f.; 116,14-23: *borgne*), reason only understands the coarse things and neglects the subtle ones (*n'entend que le gros et laisse la subtilité*, 8,3f.). But it is precisely this subtlety that constitutes the dividual thinking of love, *l'entendement d'amour,* and the forms of understanding propagated by love and soul.[99] Because of *Raison's* limitations, *Amour* feels compelled to repeat, albeit increasingly

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98   Cf. Hollywood, *Acute Melancholia,* 141.

99   Cf. the second characteristic of mystical experience in William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience,* the "noetic quality" of "states of insight into depths of truth unplumbed by the discursive intellect." (295)

impatiently, the most important aspects of her discourse. *Comme je vous ay dit devant, et encores le vous dis je, que tous les maistres de sens de nature, ne tous les maistres d'escripture, ne tous ceulx qui demourent en amour de l'obedience des Vertuz, ne l'entendent et ne l'entendront, [...] seulement celuy qui Fine Amour et Charité demande.* "As I have already told you, I say it again: all the teachers of nature, all the teachers of Scripture, all those who persist in love of obedience to the virtues, do not understand and do not comprehend, [...] only he who demands love and care." (9, 29-38)

Impatience and indignance characterize the soul's relationship to reason. From her point of view, it does not help when things are explained to reason, who even when listening carefully, understands nothing. The dullness of reason goes so far as to endanger the receptivity of the whole text: "Your questions have already put this book to shame and made it rot, for many would have understood it in a few words, and your questions have made it all too long, along with the answers you needed, only for you and for those you nourished, who move at a snail's pace." (53,8f.)

Yet it is precisely this snail's pace, the many repetitions and their small deviations that constitute one of the book's key techniques. In this respect, *Amour* is an early master of deconstruction, which, hijacking the monkish principle of rumination and using dull reason as an instrument, distinguishes and declarifies (13,15: *distincte et declaire*) in loops and spirals without ever coming to an end, without achieving a real clarification of *doubles mots* (13,9) or *motz couvers* (53,7), without clearing up the *entendement trop base* (12,30). In reference to the authority of love, reason finally submits, promises to be obedient and peaceful. (35,44f.) Analogous to the reversal of obedience between virtues and soul, the debt relation of reason and soul also reverses (*les debtes tournees*), as the "noble nobility of her bridegroom" does not allow the soul to remain in *servaige* of reason. (36,36) Reason

thus promises to serve the soul: *je serve du tout a elle, comme sa pure serve [...] estre serve de telle dame.* (39,4-6)

But even at this point, when reason commits to ready and joyful submission to the soul, it still remains skeptical about intelligibility for those who adhere to its doctrine. It has to govern a people whom it assumes will not be able to find in this soul any ordering guidance of their external affairs and usages: *peuple que j'ay gouverner, qui ne verra plus en ceste Ame, nulle ordonnance en ces usages et affaires de dehors.* (39,9-11) From the point of view of reason, that not-chosen, blind people needs ordinance, ordering and orderly government, and permanent orientation to works of virtue, always according to the advice of *Discrecion* and *Raison.* (39,19f.)

From the point of view of *Amour* and *Ame,* however, it is precisely the doctrine of *Raison* (43,24f.) that blinds people and keeps them stupid forever. The people (68,9: *tres petite gent*) who live according to the advice of reason become as small as the small church and the service of its virtues: they grow crude and of bad behavior, such beasts, such asses that the soul cannot express herself in her own language, and because of their rudeness, because of their cloddish manner must instead deny and hide it (68,9-17). Those who live according to the doctrine of *Raison* no longer understand anything but the language of a reason without reason, *raison sans raison* (86,10). The small minds of the disciples of the small church cannot understand anything when reason does not teach them. *Petit sens ne peut [...] entendre chose dont Raison ne soit maistresse* (84,39f.). The soul responds with growing irritation to the striated, limited, and limiting order of reason and finally demands that reason now be quiet and no longer interfere in her affairs (35,39f.). This wish remains unheard for a long time, until the grotesque unexpectedly comes to a head when the soul announces that in short time *Raison* will no longer be alive. (87,6f.) And indeed, at this very moment reason's heart fails and she breathes her last, and the soul rejoices: *Or est*

morte Raison, "now reason is dead" (87,19). For one chapter, love and soul assume reason's roles in the dialogue (87,20f.; 88,4f.). But from the next chapter on, reason returns unawares another four times, only to finally come to rest in Chapter 107.

A sea of love

The *Mirouer* needs the relatively flat and exaggerated foil of *Raison*, not to replace all thinking with blind faith, but precisely to make clear the lack of thinking that oppresses institutionalized reason. Thought is imprisoned in the laws and striations of the small church, in the moral-machinic government of its virtues, in the epistemic ordinance of its reason. Instead of *Raison's* ordering and striating, love is out to try a streaking-machinic art of thinking. Suspending reason, immersing in love, in another form of thinking and understanding.

Qui quiert ce qu'il a, c'est faulte de cognoissance ; il n'a l'art qui donne telle science. "He who seeks what he already has lacks cognition; he does not have the art that gives such knowledge." (109,56f.) What is this art that exceeds the knowledge of one who seeks what he already has? *C'est ung engin soubtil dont entendement naist, qui donne cognoissance en Ame.* (110, 5f.) "It is a subtle plant, an engine, a machine, and in this machine a thinking arises that gives knowledge inside the soul." Within the soul and in machinic exchange with the intellect of love, the subtle, cunning, inventive machine, *engin* and *ingenium*, is at work, and it makes possible a thinking that transcends reason. Its faculty lies in the easeful repose of understanding and hearing rather than in the labor of reasoning speech: *l'entendant se repouse, et le parlant laboure.* (110,9) But the art of this subtle machine is also agile, brisk, swift (*ysnel*, 110,11). Instead of the linear movement from the subject of the statement to the receiver and its mechanics of mediation and

representation, streaking thought moves in floating exchange of the inventive-receiving soul and her surrounding. It implies machinations of thinking that spread out in the exchanges and interstices between the interior of the soul and the transversal intellect of love.

Love is subjuncture that extends across souls, that traverses them, surrounds them. The single soul roams this subjuncture, she drifts and sinks, lets herself being flown aroundshe mutates in this flowing subjuncture, into this flowing subjuncture. In two key parables of the *Mirouer* this flowing surround appears as fire transforming all matter (becoming) and as sea, measureless in its inflows (multiplicity).

> *Ceste Ame, dit Amour, est entree es habondances et affluences de divine amour, non mye, dit Amour, par ataînte de divine cognoissance, car ce ne peut estre que nul entendement, tant soit enluminé, puisse nient ataindre des affluences de divine Amour, mais l'amour de telle Ame est si conjoincte aux affluences du plus de celle oultre divine Amour (non mye par l'ataînte d'Entendement d'Amour, mais par l'ataînte de son oultre amour), que elle est aournee des aournemens de celle oultre paix, en laquelle elle vit, et dure, et est, et fut, et sera sans estre. Car tout ainsy, dit Amour, comme le fer est vestu du feu, et a la semblance perdue de luy, pource que le feu est plus fort qui l'a muee en luy; tout aussi est ceste Ame vestue de ce plus, et nourrie et muee en ce plus, pour l'amour de ce plus.* (52,6-19)

"This soul, says love, is immersed in the overflows and inflows of divine love, not, as love says, by attaining theological knowledge: it cannot be that any understanding, however enlightened, reaches the inflows of divine love." Knowledge and science of god, cognitive enlightenment may try as hard as they can, they never reach the flowing between soul and love, their flows, their overflowing, inflowing and flowing surround. The soul immerses herself in love, which thereby constantly grows; soul

currents, soul lines which, when drawn, develop, expand, advance love's plane of immanence, shift its boundaries. "It is the love of such a soul that conjoins with the inflows of the more of this overflowing divine love – not by attaining an understanding of love, but because she has attained his love that transcends understanding." The subtle workings of the machine connect the soul to the all-surpassing, overflowing, overabundant love. Ultra-love, dividual thinking above all understanding. A more, a plus, an abundance flows around the soul. "She is adorned by the jewels of the overflowing peace in which she lives and continues and is and was and will be without being. For just as, says love, iron is enveloped by fire and has lost the similarity with itself because the fire is stronger and has transformed it into itself, this soul is enveloped by this more and nourishes herself from it and mutates into this more, for love of this more." In this first parable, it is the fire that surrounds the iron and melts it in the subjuncture, as a figure of processual transformation. Matter is drawn into the fire (cf. also 83,7) and is transformed in the process, as is the fire itself. If it seems here that the one is cancelled into the other, if the soul "has lost the similarity with herself," it is precisely this loss of self-similarity that enables a becoming-similar without unification of flowing surround and surrounded, of gas and solid, fire and iron.

The soul folds into her enfolding, she unfolds into a more of love, mutates into it. She becomes similar to the more and thereby increases love, and the fire appears in its measurelessness as a hardly unified and controllable element. The *plus*, the mystical more, indexes the increase of possibilities in love. The mystic approaches this more that subjoins her, she affirms it, resembles it, increases it.[100] Never destructive, always instructive (79,47f.), love teaches, nourishes, and supports those who trust in her.

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100 William James develops the figure of MORE as connectedness in: *Varieties of Religious Experience*, 392-396.

She is the more, multiplied by the souls, excess that exceeds everything, increased and increasing potential.

In the second image, the immeasurable more becomes the sea. The soul is transformed into this more and at the same time can no longer be found in it as such (*se demoure et est muee en ce plus de oultre parmanable paix, sans ce que on la trouve, 52,19-21*). Flowing into the sea of love, she becomes imperceptible, loses her individual character, leaves her name:

> *Ainsi comme feroit une eaue qui vient de la mer, qui a aucun nom, comme l'en pourroit dire Aise, ou Sene, ou une aultre riviere ; et quant celle eaue ou riviere rentre en mer, elle pert son cours et le nom d'elle, dont elle couroit en plusieurs pays en faisant son œuvre. Or est elle en mer, la ou elle se repouse, et ainsi a perdu tel labour. Pareillement est il de ceste Ame.*

> As a water that comes from the sea and has any name, as the Oise or the Seine or any other river, after it has flowed through several countries, has done its work, when returning to the sea, it loses its course and its name: now it is in the sea, where it finds rest and lets go of such labor. So it is with this soul.
> (82,37-46)

Returned to the sea, all waters lose their names. In becoming sea not only the proper name is lost, but also the possibility of locating, naming, and attributing individuals.[101] The name of the soul loses its meaning when she flows into the sea of love. There, at high sea, she lets her will go under in the multiplicity of the waves. (80,9) The individual will of the soul becomes dividual desire, a *vouloir et désir d'amour* as in the title of *Mirouer*, traversing much (not all) that is individual. Then, "she always dwells in complete sufficiency, swims in it, flows, floats and is

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101 Cf. James's first characteristic of mystical experience, "ineffability," ibid., 295.

surrounded by divine peace, without moving from its inside, without causing anything outside." (*Elle est toujours en plaine souffisance, en laquelle elle noe et onde et flote et suronde de divine paix, sans soy mouvoir de son dedans et sans son œuvre de par dehors.* 81,14-16) Love is ab-undant, exceeding, overflowing, over-unding, she under-flows and surrounds, her waves traverse, transwave, she surunds, she orbits, as surround, circle, environment, subground, less abyss[102] than under-ground, ground around, subjuncture.

An immeasurable sea which, if it is not to be a unifying apparatus, cares for and holds open becoming, multitude, multiplicity. For example, like this: "There is a verge of the mind which these things haunt; and whispers therefrom mingle with the operations of our understanding, even as the waters of the infinite ocean send their waves to break among the pebbles that lie upon our shores."[103] Or like this: "A single and same voice for the whole thousand-voiced multiple, a single and same Ocean for all the drops, a single clamour of Being for all beings: on condition that each being, each drop and each voice has reached the state of excess – in other words, the difference which displaces and disguises them and, in turning upon its mobile cusp, causes them to return."[104]

Or, to turn to another figure of multiplicity and reciprocity with view to an immanent reading of the *Mirouer*: *Charité est si saige marchande, qu'elle gaigne partout, la ou les autres perdent, et se eschappe*

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102   In the *Mirouer,* the soul is above all in spaces of abyss, depth, groundless ground: *abysme abysmee sans fons, la se trouve elle, sans trouver et sans fons.* 118,134f.; *fons de bas, la ou il n'a point de fons,* 118,147f.; *abysme dessoubs moins que nient sans mesure*, 51,8f. Cf. also Hadewijch, who introduces the terms *gront* (Middle Dutch for "ground"), *afgront* (for "abyss")*,* and *grondeloesheit* (for "groundlessness"). Eckhart understands by the "ground of the soul" a realm from which all imagination and conceptual thinking is excluded in principle.

103   James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, 326.

104   Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 304, slightly modified translation.

des lyens ou les autres se lient, et ainsi elle a grant multipliance de ce qui plaist a Amour. "Care is a wise merchant, she wins all around where others lose, and she flees the ropes in which others get entangled. Thus she has great multiplicity in what pleases love." (4:17-19) Love shows up in the *Mirouer* in two conceptual guises: as *Amour*, courtly-divine love, sea/fire, transversal affect-intellect, and as *Charité,* mutual care. In the second chapter, *Amour* explains the goal of the book as the "perfection of life and being at peace, to which the creature can come through the virtue of perfect care" (*la perfection de vie et l'estre de paix, ouquel creature peut venir par la vertu de parfaicte charité,* 2,5f.). Manifold care is the figure of love that emphasizes reciprocity, love's component of multiplicity. It obeys nothing and no one but love (*Charité n'obbeist a chose creee fors que a Amour,* 4,3).

Through the expanse of this mutual care, the soul is braced on all sides, common, *commune*: *Elle est commune a tous par largesse de pure charité, et si ne demande nient de nully par la noblesse de la courtoisie de pure bonté [...].* "She is common to all in the expanse of pure care, and through the noble decency of pure kindness she demands nothing from anyone [...]." (22,15-17) Love, *Amour*, brings to the soul her singularity, and care, *charité,* promises multiplicity and commonality. *Et elle est commune a tous par la largesse de parfaicte charité, et seule en Dieu par la divine emprise de Fine Amour.* "And it is common to all in the generosity of perfect care, and alone in God through the divine efficacy of fine love." (25:26-28) When shaped by love and care, souls are at once singular and common in all things (*seules en toutes choses, et comunes en toutes choses,* 24:17).

Charité is a "wise merchant," but what is its trade, what is its economy? Not a market of possessions, where property is traded from individual to individual. *Charité* does not get entangled in the ropes of property and (self-)appropriation. With the manifold communality of *Charité,* all that is proper in the sense

of possession becomes problematic. *Charité n'a point de propre, et pouse qu'elle ait aucune chose, si ne dit elle point qu'il soy a luy.* "Mutual care knows no property, and if it had anything, it would never say it was its own." (4,4) Instead of owning things, instead of appropriating things, the *Mirouer* is about *prendre* and *user*, taking and using. *Telles Ames usent de toutes choses faictes et creees, dont Nature a besoing, en autelle paix de cueur, comme elles font de la terre sur quoy elles marchent.* "Such souls make use of all things made and created, as nature has need of them, with such peace in their hearts as they cherish toward the earth on which they walk." (17:47-50) The alternative to appropriation is to use things in a caring way, to enjoy them, to make use of them without thereby abusing them or depriving others of them. Usage, in this economic sense, is also a use that does not resort to the legal title of ownership, but instead focuses on the caring use of things. *[...] se repose du moins ou plus, mais elle <se> sert de toutes choses.* (52,39f.) "The soul finds rest in the less and in the more, making use of all things."

Trade without property, an economy of mutuality as care, the *commune* as traversing emanation of care, this is all key to *Mirouer*'s concept of freedom. For the souls becoming nothing, *franchise* does not mean individual freedom and sovereignty of will, but dividual liberation from the self, from the proper name, and from property. This concept of liberation also informs becoming-nothing, the central notion of the *Mirouer*. As souls gain freedom in their becoming-nothing, they move away from all that is proper. *Vous n'avez que tarder a relenquir vous mesmes, car nul ne peut reposer ou haultiesme reposable, se il n'est devant lassez.* "Do not hesitate to leave yourselves, for no one will rest in the most restful repose if he has not left himself before." (94,6-8)

With the abandonment of the proper name and the self, the soul becomes nothing. She disjoins her self. This soul has become nothing (7,14), she is not in herself (27,3f.), she is not with

herself (41,11), she is without herself (59,8f.) *Elle n'est nulle part d'elle, ne en Dieu ne en elle, ne en ses proesmes, mais en l'anientissement.* "She is nowhere of herself, not in God, not in herself, not in her neighbors, but only in becoming nothing" (59:14-21).[105]

It is precisely through the disjoining of the self, through destitution and desubjectivation,[106] that the soul is clarified in becoming nothing (101,12f.). But nothingness is not emptiness, it is a process of becoming full with love in self-disjoining, nothingness that is filled and filling multitude: the soul "has no emptiness in herself that would not be completely full of me [love]." *Elle n'a rien vuide en elle, qui tout ne soit rempli de moy.* (79,26f.)

Comment ceste Ame est semblable a la Deité? How is the soul then similar to the deity? By letting her self get out of joint. When she gets rid of her disconnected-jointed self, she can become similar. Disjointed, the soul flows into the sea of love, she lets herself float there and – without necessarily experiencing annulment, dissolution – she meets other disjointed and in this sense free souls. Self-disjoining releases singularity into dividual multiplicity. Tangling, swarming, tumbling multiplicity of love and the more.

However, the way of the soul is everything but a straight line. While in the first four modes of being in the *Mirouer*, it seems to lead upwards, this is no longer certain in the later modes.[107]

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105 On different versions of becoming-nothing, see Barbara Newman, "Annihilation and Authorship: Three Women Mystics of the 1290s," in *Speculum* 91/3 (July 2016).

106 Simone Weil and Anne Carson will call it "decreation." Cf. Simone Weil, *Gravity and Grace,* translated by Emma Crawford and Mario von der Ruhr, London and New York: Routledge 2003, 32-39; Anne Carson, Decreation. *Poetry, Essays, Opera*, New York: Knopf 2015.

107 Sometimes it appears that the modes of being are simultaneous, sometimes even that they are reversed in order. For example, the *raptus* into the sixth mode of being seems to be a prerequisite for being able to dwell afterwards in the safe rest

Rather than steady progress towards heaven, with regard to the fifth mode of being there is talk of falling and letting fall. The soul, having gotten rid of works, virtues, and exercises, falls into an abyss of poverty, into which love places the gift of grace (38,14-20; 80,11; 119,9f.). This falling, fallen soul does not go to hell; it is precisely from poverty that the soul can sink into the knowledge of the more (46,4f.), into desiring nothing (47,9), into knowing nothing (81,9). Instead of ascending, the soul lets herself fall, further and further. She sinks from virtue into love, from love into nothingness (90,34). No ladder of success, no ladder of heaven, no narrative of ascent, no steps of increasingly difficult exercises. Works and devotions play only a preparatory role. Fall, descent, let fall to the ground, sink deep into the valley of the soul, into the abyss: *Or est ceste Ame cheue d'amour en nient, sans lequel nient elle ne peut toute estre. Laquelle cheue est si parfont cheue, se elle est adroit cheue, que l'Ame ne se peut de telle abysme relever; et aussi faire ne le doit, ainçoys y doit elle demourer.* "Now the soul has fallen from love into nothingness, and without this nothingness she cannot be everything. This fall is such a deep fall that the soul cannot rise from such an abyss. Nor must she, for she can dwell there." (118:159-162) Having fallen from love into nothingness, the fall of the soul is such a perfect fall that the soul cannot, and need not, rise up from that abyss.

As in the *Mirouer* in general, it is where the text proceeds in an apparently logical ordering and categorical manner that the least straightforward developments can be found. And so can little be determined from the explanations of the stages to nothingness that appear to be well arranged by numbering. They concern different modes of being, *estres,* but they are presented differently in different parts of the book.[108] In chapters 55,

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of the fifth.

108 Attempts at systematization can be found, for example, in Leicht, 173-179; Hollywood, *The Soul as Virgin Wife,* 98f., and Simon Critchley, "Mystical Anarchism," in

56, and 57, the distinction is first made between the perished (*les perriz*), who live an apparently perfect life of the supposedly best mode of being through works of virtue, and the lost, who at least glimpse that there is a better mode of being. It is then an extremely long journey from erring (*les Marriz*) in the land of virtues, through oblivion (*les Obliz*), to the clarification of the clarified (*les Clarifiez*) who have become nothing (95:3-5). In the most elaborate passages, there is talk of seven stages leading to nothingness, for example, the *sept estaz sans comparaison* in Chapter 61,1-18. But even towards the end of the book in Chapter 118, where the modes of being are summarized and described in somewhat greater detail in their own subchapters, the order remains deceptive. Put in the briefest terms: in the first stage, the soul leaves sin behind by following the commandments. In the second stage, she falls away from nature and lives in poverty beyond pleasure and honor. In the third stage, she separates herself from all good works. In the fourth stage, the soul leaves behind all exercises, including obedience. In the fifth stage, she returns her will and everything of her own to God; she is now zero and nothing. On this basis, in the sixth stage, she can become clarified for an instant. Finally, the seventh stage is the stage of lasting glory, to be experienced only when the sou

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The Faith of the Faithless. Experiments in Political Theology, Verso: London 2012, 103-154, here 124-129.

Ritornello 16, 1940/1992.
Anthem (with Walter Benjamin and Leonard Cohen)

[: Die Türe sang
Nach Mitternacht
Vom Neuanfang
Bin aufgewacht
Lass dich nicht ein
Auf Sehers Macht
Auf was im Kommen sei

Und die Stimmen
Der Betroffenen
Schwingen sich auf
Zu Zukunftsoffenem
Trunken nüchtern
Die Besoffenen
Bierdosen rolln vorbei

Weh geschwind
Viel Wind hinein
Vergiss
Die Fügung in ein Eines
An jeder Tür
Soll eine Fuge sein
So kommt der Wind herein

Wir fragten nach Zeichen
Sie wurden gesandt
Aus Geburt wurden Leichen
Hochzeiten verbrannt
Doch das Bild der Vergangenheit
Hat keinen Bestand
Es huscht vorbei

Ungefügige Türen
Im Wind im Wind
Singen windige Lieder
Das himmlische Kind
Die Zeit steht ein
Wenn wir unruhig sind
Und aus der Reih

    Weh geschwind
    Viel Wind hinein
    Vergiss
    Die Fügung in ein Eines
    An jeder Tür
    Solln viele Fugen sein
    So kommt der Wind herein

Füg die Teile zusammen
Und es macht sie nicht ganz
Blas ihnen den Marsch
Bleibst doch nur Ordonnanz
Alle liebenden Herzen Erscheinen zum Tanz
Und sie ziehn vorbei.

    Weh geschwind
    Viel Wind hinein
    Vergiss
    Die Fügung in ein Eines
    An jeder Tür
    Soll eine Fuge sein
    Da kommt die Liebe rein

:]

Dissemblage of the free souls

> [...] *en deffroissant et debrisant soy mesmes, pour eslargir le lieu auquel Amour vouldra estre [...], pour descombrer soy mesmes, pour actaindre son estre.* "[...] and she crumples and shatters her self in order to expand the place where love may dwell, [...] to become free of herself, to attain her way of being." (118,61-63)

With a long song in Chapter 122, the *Mirouer* comes to an end for the first time. After the *explicit,* however, follow *aucuns regars,* some reflections that grow into seventeen additional chapters for those who want to know more concretely about the way to the land of liberation. These further reflections do not really get much more concrete, but they are followed, before the final *explicit* in Chapter 139, by a call to increase and multiply. This call can be understood as an appeal to Marguerite's unruly surround and descendants:

> *Il advient bien aucunes foiz que on ne trouverait mie en ung royaulme deux creatures qui fussent d'ung esperit, mais quant il advient d'aventure que ces deux creatures trouvent l'une l'aultre, ilz se ouvrent l'une a l'aultre, et ne se pevent celer, et se ilz le voulaient ores faire si ne pourraient ilz, pour la condicion des esperiz et des complexions, et pour l'usage de vie, la ou ilz sont appellez, vueillent ou non. Telles gens ont grant besoing qu'ilz soient sur leur garde, se ilz n'ont actaint le coron ou la parfection de franchise.*

> *Et pource vous dis je, pour conclusion, se Dieu vous a donnee haulte creacion et excellente lumiere et singuliere amour, comprolissez et multipliez sans deffaillance ceste creacion [...]* (139,15-26)

"It can happen that two creatures of one spirit cannot be found in one kingdom. However, if it happens unexpectedly that two

such creatures find each other, then they open to each other." Creatures that are of one spirit (*d'ung esperit*) – and this is not talk about the relationship of soul and farnear, creature and creator, but about the reciprocal opening of creatures – cannot close themselves off from each other "because of the condition of their spirits and their complexions, and because of their way of life." To this way of life, this *usage de vie*, which creatures "do not want to hide from each other," "they are called, whether they want it or not." Wherever the call comes from, the appeal, the vocation to this particular way of life common to the creatures, it is key to this concluding passage, and it points not least to non-sanctioned ways of living given emphasis by the *Mirouer*. These alternative *usages de vie* go on in secret, only those who live this way do not conceal them from each other, and there is also a risk, a danger, a constant unpredictability: "These people must be very wary as long as they have not reached the crown, the perfection of freedom." They must strive to perfect freedom, but, to suggest a possible interpretation of their risk, they must beware, above all, the forces of the small church and its preemptive fight against dissemblages. As an implicit response to these dangers, the *Mirouer* arrives in the end at a concrete mandate to those who have been granted "high creation, extra-ordinary enlightenment and singular love": they are to "prolife-rate and multiply without indulgence this creation," which in view of the preceding sentences can be understood to consist above all in the invention of new ways of life: *comprolissez et mul-tipliez sans deffaillance ceste creacion*. The *Mirouer* concludes with a call for new ways of living, which, in the face of all danger, should open up to each other and multiply and proliferate.[109]

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109 For McGinn (3, 249), the *Mirouer* is nothing but "a vanishing gospel written for secret free souls who really do not need it." Indeed, the souls becoming-nothing need the *Mirouer* not as gospel, however ephemeral, but as nomadic text of the abstract machine, written with it, from it, and for it.

The nascent composition of the molecular mutation invoked in the final lines of the *Mirouer* can only be vaguely deduced from the *Mirouer* itself and other contemporary sources. It is not easy to be touched by the wind of mutation, to activate that secret index that the sources may carry. One possibility is to sift through the history of the victors for this index. Not reading between the lines, but line by line, word by word, conjecture by conjecture, in the historical-philological micro-work on ephemeral texts, often in vernacular languages. Academic historians have gathered a number of things from the lists of errors and decrees against the new heresies. The apparatuses of the Inquisition were heavily involved in the construction of the new heretical movement, both politically (rarely distinguishing between indications and free invention) and in terms of its effects on historiography into the twenty-first century. In the late thirteenth century, suspicion, institutional persecution, and inquisitorial investigation emerge from the decontextualization and reduction of dissenting texts. This practice of excising and condemning a few theses from large textual volumes, however, is not simply a blind distortion of their meaning. It is also an inventive recomposition of the opaque text with its surround, from the inquisitor's point of view a heretical surround.[110] The nascent socio-religious dissemblages may have gotten off the ground in a similar or quite different way; for us, in any case, their first contours appear in the inquisitorial records.[111] And

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[110] Alain de Libera points this out in *Penser au Moyen Age* (*Denken im Mittelalter,* translated from the French by Andreas Knopp, Munich: Fink 2003 [1991]): "A text 'continues' the thought that animates it, and the censor has the power to 'cut off' this text from the web whose threads he secretly spins. The suspect text both reveals and conceals its truth; *the verdict of error* – the sentence – unearths its latent logic by linking it to other heresies." (148, my translation)

[111] Cf. Leicht, 311-428; de Libera, 145-160; McGinn 3, 244-248; Bernard McGinn, *The Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism, vol. 4: The Harvest of*

in the same documents names for these dissemblages and their mutations appear, too: Before the turn of the century, there is incipient talk of a "new spirit" under which the heresies were subsumed. Around this same time, the Beguine way of life is identified as the central flock of such new teachings. Then, to list the more or less official stages, there is the description of a sect in the Swabian Ries around 1270, the Council of Lyon in 1274, the designation of a heresy of the Beghards in 1277, the provincial synods in Cologne in 1307 and in Mainz and Trier in 1310, and finally the general ban of the Beguine way of life by the Council of Vienne in 1311-12.[112]

Around 1311, the year after Marguerite's death by fire, rumors of a veritable "sect of the free spirit" substantiate. Pope Clement V writes in a letter to the bishop of Cremona about a heresy spreading in Italy in the valley of Spoleto and beyond: "Some ecclesiastics and laypeople, religious and seculars of both sexes, accursed folk alienated from the bosom of Mother Church [...] have taken up a new sect and a new rite completely untrue to the way of salvation, hateful even to pagans and to those living like animals, and far removed from the teaching of the apostoles and prophets and the truth of the Gospel. They call it the spirit of liberty, that is, it allows them to do whatever they want [...]".[113] In two decrees of the Council of Vienne in 1311-12, a connection is explicitly made between these Brothers and Sisters of the Free Spirit and the Beguine way of life. With the decree *Cum de quibusdam mulieribus,* the Beguines are definitively condemned:

Mysticism in Medieval Germany (1300-1500), New York: Crossroad 2005 (hereafter McGinn 4), 48-79; Alison More, *Fictive Orders and Feminine Religious Identities, 1200-1600,* Oxford University 2018, 55-58.

112   Cf. Leicht, 404-419.

113   Cited in McGinn 4, 60.

"It has been reported to us that certain women, commonly cal-led beguines, […] as if possessed by madness, dispute and preach about the highest Trinity and the divine essence and in respect to the articles of faith and the sacraments of the Church spread opinions that are contrary to the Catholic faith, by which they deceive many simple people. Since these women do not swear obedience to anyone, do not renounce their goods, and do not take religious vows, they are certainly not 'nuns,' even if they wear a habit and are loosely associated with religious orders that agree with them. Therefore, with the approval of the Council, we have decided and decreed that their way of life is to be de-finitively forbidden and excluded from the Church of God."[114] An excerpt of the decree *ad nostrum* states, "Those who are in the state mentioned above [i.e., impeccability, as condemned in article 1] and in the spirit of liberty are not subject to human obedience nor obliged to any percepts of the church, because, as they say, 'Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.'"[115]

It should not be left entirely to the organs of inquisition and censorship to discover or invent the disjointures and dissem-blages that share with the *Mirouer* an abstract machine.[116] Text

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114   Cited in de Libera, 229 (my translation).

115   Cited in McGinn 4, 57f. For a discussion of the eight articles of the decree, see ibid, 62f.

116   Robert E. Lerner (*The Heresy of the Free Spirit*, 83) refers to the decrees of the Coun-cil of Vienne in 1311-12 as a birth certificate without clarity as to whether a child existed at all. In so doing, he places himself in a longer tradition that questions the existence of the movement outside the polemics of the Inquisition (cf. Cohn, 149). Alain de Libera (153) writes in this sense about the work of Stephan Tempier: "It is the task and the privilege of the censor to discover the specter of freedom."

machines[117] and social machines[118] oscillate in time and space, giving the mutation a genealogical rhythm and an actual intensity. We do not know exactly how far this oscillation went – only from later times and around names like Jan Hus, Joan of Arc or Thomas Müntzer do denser narratives of molecular movements reach us.

The two who are of similar spirit are a first trace. The final part of the *Mirouer* is no longer about the becoming one of the human soul with the holy spirit or about the question of the extent of the soul's similarity to divinity. Here creatures who open themselves to one another precisely because of their deviant ways of life become similar, brace, and resonate. Here begins the emanation, the proliferation, the multiplication of the disjointures. They can then also become a whole court of mysteries (63,13), a "secret court in a lovely land where decency is law, and love the measure, and goodness the food" (68,17-19). This court

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117   De Libera (20f.) interprets the emergence of new ways of life at the transition from the thirteenth to the fourteenth century from the perspective of the history of philosophy as a "renewed change of ownership" in the genealogy of the "philosophical ideal of life from the Arabs." "The philosophical life is no longer the sole heritage of professional teachers of philosophy, but is claimed by amateurs – by Beguines, nuns, heretics, and poets – who continue this life under other names and in other places, but in so doing link directly to its most distant source." If this genealogical line also addresses an interesting aspect of the development of "intellectual" ways of life, it suffers at the same time from the separation of textual machines from social machines. It would be interesting to explore the same lineage from the oscillation of dissemblages.

118   Cf. the various heretical machines first collected by Norman Cohn around the middle of the twentieth century in *The Pursuit of the Millennium*. Even if his choice of words runs somewhat astray in places – he refers to the "disciples of the free spirit" as an "elite of amoral supermen," among other things – Cohn's intuition of "mystical anarchism" (176-186) is a step in the right direction: Cohn's social history of the various heretical movements of the High Middle Ages poses their diversity and uncontrollability against attempts at discipline on the part of ever newer small churches (including those that are secular). For a more recent continuation of this line, see Critchley, "Mystical Anarchism."

is in a lovely land, a land of no will (57,32f.), a land of freedom (123,3 and 132,3).

It is a necessarily secret society that meets there, but this secrecy does not have its roots in sexual libertinage.[119] It is a sophisticated social machine that is not equally understandable and accessible to all, but that does not necessarily make it elitist.[120] Invisible it is, not because it wants to be a clandestine committee in a remote rural commune, but mainly because of its dispersal to different places and social contexts. Neither sect nor homogeneous organization, the vapors of Beghards, Beguines, and unspecified lifestyles are by no means uniform in their beliefs and organization.[121] Not to be pinned down, neither to ideology nor territory, nomadic ways of life mingle with fixed bases that can also serve as resting and hiding places for those who have spent their time wandering between begging and preaching. It is not an "invisible kingdom,"[122] there is no king, no dominion and no empire, rather it is an abstract machine that co-emerges with text machines like the *Mirouer* machine and social machines like the Beguines, concatenating text machines and social machines.

The *Mirouer* is the nomadic text of the abstract machine. An immanent reading of its mysticism leads to a conception of molecular mutation that braces the plane of immanence of love, in the experimentation of new ways of living beyond patriarchal/ divine domination, in the rejection of property, in the invention of disobedient modes of subjectivation, in the development of dividual thinking, in the becoming of an unruly composition,

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119   Cf. McGinn 4, 53f.

120   Cf. the discussion of social elitism in Hollywood, *The Soul as Virgin Wife*, 103.

121   Cf. Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit*, 229.

122   Cf. Cohn, 179.

in excess and insurrection of the dissemblage. Disjoining, care, love, intellect, dissemblage, excess.

The assembly of mutants is a virtual assemblage. Their disordered index rests in the lines of the *Mirouer*. As fictional as "sect of the free spirit" or "disciples" or "brothers and sisters of the free spirit," but closer to the text of the *Mirouer*,[123] its name for the next paragraphs shall be: "dissemblage of the free souls."

Soul assemblages, soul clans, soul kinships, soul mates rather than brothers and sisters of the free spirit, but what exactly do they have to do with freedom, *franchise*? Liberation takes various forms in the *Mirouer.* They can be formulated as six *usages* rather than *estres* or *estats,* for they are not universal modes of being or objectifying stages of the soul, completed one after the other in ascending or descending steps, but techniques, ways of conduct, ways of living, simultaneous or overlapping or intermingling.

First Usage.

Franchise means first of all liberation from the rules of small churches. *Raison* seems to think there are two laws, that of reason on the one hand and that of love on the other: *vous avez deux loys, c'est assavoir la vostre et la nostre* (69,31f.). But this symmetry does not exist: the law of reason and the small church does not apply on the plane of immanence of the free souls. Their becoming-nothing is a movement away from extremely restricted, canonized ways of life in obedience, submission and fear, away from patriarchal-pastoral domination towards a way of life that does not conform to the prescriptions and models of the small

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123 The life of the spirit is of little importance in the *Mirouer*: *Par le contraire de l'Ame Enfranchie, la vie dont nous avons parlé, que nous appellons vie d'esperit, ne peut avoir paix [...]* "In contrast to the liberated soul, the life of which we spoke, which we called life of the spirit, cannot have peace [...]" (90,2426). Contemplation plays in the *Mirouer* the subordinate role of a way of being that still serves the will.

church. *Telle Ame, dit Amour, est en la plus grant parfection de l'estre, et plus pres du Loingprés, quant Saincte Eglise ne prent point d'exemple en sa vie.* "Such a soul, says Love, is in the greatest perfection of being and closer to the farnear, if the Holy Church does not take an example in her way of life." (134,3-5)

Second Usage.

Liberation also from an economy characterized by property and possession. *Or y a il une autre vie, que nous appelions paix de charité en vie adnientie.* "Now there is another way of life, which we call the peace of care in a life becoming nothing." (5,3f.) The economy of care consists in the caring use of things, not in their appropriation and full and permanent disposability, it consists in wealthy poverty and poor wealth, common sharing in multiplicity. Bracing of the souls, trade without property, communesm of mutual care.

Third Usage.

Liberation then from the chains of virtues, from the good deeds of the Christian *vita activa*, liberation from machinic subservience and self-government. The souls leave all exercises, all obedience, all fear. *Maintenant je vous diray qui c'est, qui se siet en la montaigne dessus les vens et les pluies. Ce sont ceulx qui n'ont en terre ne honte ne honnour ne crainte pour chose qui adviengne. Telles gens, dit Amour, sont segurs, et si sont leurs portes ouvertes, et si ne les peut nul grever [...]* "Now I want to say who it is who dwell on the mountain above the winds and above the rain. They are those who know neither shame nor honor nor fear on earth, whatever happens to them. Such people, says love, are safe, and their doors are open, and no one can trouble them [...]" (65:5-11).

Fourth Usage.

Liberation also from all contemplative exercises of reason, all patriarchal-clerical forms of thinking, teaching and writing. *En*

tel estat a appercevances et meditacions, car c'est l'estre de contemplacion, qui retient avec elle Pensee en son ayde. "In this state she exercises apperceptions and meditations; for this is the mode of being of contemplation, which retains thought with itself and for its support." (110,22-24) Away with all the greed of letters in individual authorship that closes the intellect in the proper name, "retaining thought with itself." Liberation implies the experimentation of dividual thinking that roams, traverses, and multiplies the souls for the invention of the transversal intellect of love.

Fifth Usage.

The *franchise* of the *Mirouer* is not freedom of the will, but radical liberation *from* the will. An assimilation, a mutation, a transformation into dissemblage. In selfdisjoining, the soul frees herself from the will. Individual, sovereign will becomes dividual desire, *vouloir et désir d'amour* as in the title of *Mirouer*. Dividual multiplicity arises through the line of kinship without blood, without will, without choice, as soul kinship, disjointed and unjointed multiplicity of disjointures. It spreads out, without necessarily becoming institutionally manifest, as a dissemblage, dispersed, dividual, molecular shape of the souls becoming nothing.

Sixth Usage.

Et le siziesme est glorieux, […] *l'ouverture du doulx mouvement de gloire, que le gentil Loingprés donne* […]. "And the sixth stage is glorious, […] the opening of the sweet movement of glory that the farnear grants […]." (61,11f.) Temporal disjointure of the dissemblage. Similarity flits past, and the possibility of assembly flashes. Now gently and sweetly and rapturously excess and insurrection occur, now the dispersed multitude of disjointures condenses, now *Saincte Eglise la Grant*, dividual multiplicity, becomes *ekklesia*, the radically inclusive assembly of free souls. Who calls them, who summons them, who convenes them? A herald, a spirit, a god? It is farnearness itself, the becoming similar of the disjointures.

III. SUBJUNCTURE

Subsistence, subsistential economy, ecology of care.

From the perspective of self-containing indivisibility, subsistence remains an economy of self-sufficiency, of being-for-itself. Self-supplying leads to closure, disconnection, all kinds of localisms, nationalisms. If the individual is presupposed – and with it its eternal verso, the community – autarky, and economic autonomy remain in the foreground, and in all authenticism a movement into the abstract occurs, abstracting the territory from its sur-round, until the bracing component of subsistence only yet appe-ars reduced to the reconnection of man to Mother Earth.

A queer-feminist perspective on subsistence avoids such an-thropocentric-subject-fixated figures and develops subsistence economy as an economy and ecology of care.[124] Taking up and continuing her earlier militant research with the queer-feminist collective Precarias a la Deriva and other activist contexts, Mar-ta Malo proposes seven theses on a radical practice of care in the plural.[125] *Cuidados*, care in the plural, mutual care. No care about oneself and others, no self-care, no subject/object relationship. Instead of constructing an other side of care, others that we care for, and "directing all our senses to perceive and anticipate their needs, to be ready and disposable to interpret them, grasp

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124   On the concept and practices of the "ecology of care" cf. the contributions in: Tobias Bärtsch, Daniel Drognitz, Sarah Eschenmoser, Michael Grieder, Adrian Hanselmann, Alexander Kamber, Anna-Pia Rauch, Gerald Raunig, Pascale Sch-reibmüller, Nadine Schrick, Marilyn Umurungi, Jana Vanecek (eds.), *Ecologies of Care,* Vienna et al.: transversal texts 2017; and Francesco Salvini, "Caring Ecolo-gies," in: *transversal* 03/18: Technecologies, https://transversal.at/transversal/0318/salvini/en.

125   Marta Malo, *Estamos para nosotras. Siete tesis por una práctica radical de los cuidados*, Terrasa: Synusia 2021. The quotes in this and the following paragraph are taken from this pamphlet. My translation.

their variations and be able to respond to them quickly," care in the plural implies placing the multiplicity of care relations at the center of economic considerations and adding to them an adequate social organization. The *cuidados* are capacities, *potencia*: "Their practice allows us to uncover ourselves as fragile and interdependent beings." The identification and isolation as individuals proves to be a machista, colonial, predatory fiction, followed by the identification of "needs of others," which dries out dividual desire. Subsistential care in the plural, on the other hand, prefers to envisage "what surrounds us," caring environments, "starting from the intertwined bonds of interdependence on which we rely."

Care, from this perspective, is much more social production than reproductive or even non-productive labor. As a central, highly feminized component of extraction in machinic capitalism, however, it is also pervaded by various forms of violence from the directly patriarchal to the legislative, but especially by "violence against unruly women who do not comply and do not care, against lesbians, tomboys, queers, softies who do not control their households, trans-persons who resist the original mandate, against all those incarnations of the fact that things could be different, that there is nothing essential or natural in the state of things." It is the unruly, that which is not to be made completely disposable, not disposable in this way; it is the disjointure, before and before the violence that is pursued by this violence. And at the same time, in machinic capitalism, with its rampant forms of self-government and machinic subservience, "care becomes more and more neurotic: vulnerability, both one's own and that of others, is frightening. We lack the rituals, the ways of knowing, the stories; more and more we lapse into obsessive control." Against self-entrepreneurial narcissism and the suffocation of care in capitalist extraction, Marta Malo writes that "we rely on its capacity to invent other worlds," on "other social forms of organization of care," on a "radical revolt

that comes from care." Interruption, suspension, escape from feminized care, from the care that is assumed to be given "out of love," which at the same time forces care for what denies, abuses, kills. Care, rather, as a "rigorous practice of cultivating the bonds we desire, for which we want to take risks," queer care and dividual desire, care for what is in-between and around, as subsistence that surrounds, cares for, subjoins the subsisting.

With a concept of subsistence according to Gilbert de Poitiers, the perspective shifts from the caring, feminized subject and its identification of the individual's needs to dividual desire. When it does not begin with individual needs and self-sufficient communities, subsistence means to be traversed by the doubly dividual lines that move through things, bodies, ghosts, through space and time. Subsistence is not a divine substance, not the one ground of everything, nor does it underlie its accidences. A subsisting (*id quod est*) is "through" subsistence (*id quo est*), but it does not unfold from subsistence, it is coemergent with it. Neither ground nor joining, subsistence is around the subsisting, as ground around, as subjuncture.

Subsistence as the data double, for example, that accompanies the Amazon shipment, from the logistics center and its peculiar mechanosphere of robots and subserviently enjoined humans, moving and subsisting on trucks, planes, and bicycles, on the way to a reader who goes less and less to her favorite bookstore. "Track delivery": she can track the subsistence online until it indicates that the subsisting has reached her neighborhood, and from then on she even tracks the enjoined Amazon bicycle and its sub-entrepeneur, belated descendants of the bicycle machine from Flann O'Brien's *Third Policeman,* as the book approaches her. Machinic concatenation of subsistence and subsisting. The reader pursues subsistence, controls subsistence, produces data without ceasing, and is not supposed to think that Amazon has long since built a data double of herself, which can be traversed

dividually with an infinite number of other data doubles. And the drone still doesn't get to work, but only because it thinks too fast for the human components around it.

Or subsistence of the chi, as he accompanies his subsisting host Chinonso in Chigozie Obioma's *Orchestra of Minorities* in his subsistential territory, a chicken farm on the edge of southern Nigeria's Umuahia whose ritornello he shares with forty brown and a dozen white chickens, with the earthworms in the musty soil of the rainy season, with the red ants that occupy the earth below, with the hawk that flies threateningly in patient circles above, with the lizards that escape through a hole in the ceiling of the house.

The chi remains in the body of his host even if he moves out of the territory, always remains at his side, for all his deterritorializations into other socialities, other architectures, other geographies. Where something stands, something else must stand at its side. Where something is, something is around it. Where something subsists, its subsistence is at its side, in it, under it, and around it. The subsistential chi cannot control the subsisting; he can only be with and in it and, sometimes affirming, sometimes counteracting, try to make the best of his host's actions. A subsistential head voice evoking memories, retrieving experiences, making pasts flash. Not a ventriloquist who masters mouth and will of another body. The chi lives in the belly as well as in the head of the subsisting, dwells in him, inhabits him, stands by him, as a strangely impotent guardian ghost, a spirit-double, who can never really become active, can never actively guard, cannot really protect the subsisting from bale.

And at the same time, in Igbo cosmology, the chi also draws his dividual lines, first to the other chis that populate the ghost space. When he steps out from the still and quiet body of his subsisting, all the noise, all the racket, all the din of the ghost world overwhelms him. For the chi, the body is not all their

dichotomous counter-image, but a porous shell which, despite its permeability, keeps the sound of the ghosts outside. As long as the chi remains in the subsisting body, he does not hear the slightest sound, but when he crosses the gossamer boundary between the world of humans and the world of ghosts, a swarm of voices crackles on him – hissing, screaming, whispering, howling, roaring, drumming of the sublunary world, especially at night. He soon gets used to it, and still he never leaves the subsisting host for long, lest he does something stupid in the loneliness of his imagined individuality.

And the chi can trace a dividual lineage back to the time span of almost 700 years, far beyond the time the Atlantic slave trade began, when one of his hosts was shipped across the great ocean in the hold. He dwells in the cycle of reincarnations in ever new bodies. He travels through a time that is not divine, but one element among others, like the air through which one roams and which one can use. A chi can take with him the body knowledge of each host, assembling the affective and intellectual experience of past subsistence that remains disposable to the subsisting itself only in a limited way, as wisps of affect and stones thrown from the past. The chi cannot see into the future, for the future is a blank wall, but the past enriches the present, and with it the chi sociality of multiple generations, the bonds between subsistence chis that extend beyond the life of a subsisting host.

Or subsistential territory of the subsisting mold and the subsisting cockroach. The territory of the cockroach seems to be a room. The room is not completely regular in its angles, does not quite fit into the rest of the house, is at the same time a deforming territory deterritorialized by the heat of the sun and the fine, more or less living things in and around it. To the human gaze of Clarice Lispector's G.H., it is a laboratory of hell, a web of emptinesses, desert, nothingness. For the cockroach, on the other hand, the room is subsistential territory.

The subsisting cockroach is archaic and present at the same time, it lives in an empty wardrobe. It does not need much, it can live in its narrow closet for a month without food, without water, and if necessary it can feed on the pinewood of the closet. In the wood, constantly dried out by the sun, cracks and crevices open up. Sometimes it emerges through these openings from the dark depths of the closet, stretches its brittle feelers into the bright air, sensitive antennae, and moves its whiskers around its brown mouth. Then it runs over the smoothest surfaces, in all directions, over walls, windowpanes and water pipes, even vertically upwards. It looks with bright black faceted eyes into the vastness of its subsistential territory and sees it mutating, forming and deforming as it runs its lines. The territory makes the cockroach, but it emerges with it at the same time. As the cockroach runs in all directions, the room changes, too. Next to it, in another nothingness, sits the mold; it is not dry here at all. And yet the mold lives in cohabitation with the cockroach, and sometimes with larger animals. His great time is over, back when the great downpour flooded the territory and the rooms, but in his little realm of dampness he spreads, grows through the territory, and the subsistential territory mutates with him too. It is in him and around him, subsistence of the subsisting mold, in all the pipes and joints and moistened interstices, sometimes even through the walls of the room and out from them, subsistence that permeates and surrounds the subsisting.

Ritornello 17, 1975 a.o.
Before and before the law

[: Do not stand before the law. Do not wait for permission to enter. Do not sit down on the stool at the side of the gate to the law. Do not ask for admittance.

I surround the law. I envelop the law. I stroke, streak, caress the law. I traverse the law. I play with the fleas in fur collars and long gatekeeper beards, not to win their intercession, but for our sake, and they surround the law with me, hop over its thresholds, bypass its gates, its overseers, its gatekeepers

> Preveniently it gets in the way. From the basement, glances aim to catch us, "the hunchbacked manikin" peers into daylight and into our dreams. Wherever it appears, it anticipates me, and little Walter too. We see it out, but we do not see it. Only its glances see us, from hatches, from underground. Otherwise, the hunchbacked manikin does nothing to us, looking up at us invisibly, farnear soul mate as with the fleas, the beards and the people from the country.

Don't wait before the law. Do not allow yourself to be put off. Do not comply with its providence, do not comply with its straight time, with the long years of continuous contact with it.

My becoming spreads before the law. Becoming flea, before there is a gatekeeper, becoming blind before the light of law, becoming deaf before the gatekeeper begins to roar, becoming unwilling before he closes that gate destined for a single one, which will always have been illusion anyway.

> A Yugoslavian restaurant in the late 1970s. Frukta Sok and Pivo. Far in the back stand the waiters. They don't do much, they don't act busy, they don't even chat with

each other. "They're just not willing!" father says, and he may also be saying "That's communism!" What he means as an accusation is in fact true: they're just not willing, and that is communism at best, or dissemblage, always already problem of capitalist en/joining. The child does not understand this exactly, but feels that he wants to be not willing, too.

Remain before and before the law, in time and space before the law, remain in the joints and remain out of joint. Stay subjuncture and stay disjointure.

Before and before the law, before and before en/joining, we become childish, loud, insatiable, and we hum. Disjointures, unruly fleas, we urban people from the country, from the surround, we find and invent escapes, open many kinds of entrances at a distance from strictly guarded gates.

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Capitalism and cipher

Dividual-machinic capitalism and its flip side, an economy of dividual-machinic subsistence, are not entirely new. Yet, the machinic changes in different economies, regimes, and ways of life. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, capitalism once again is deforming through such changes – into an algorithmic, logistic, extremely extractive, im/mobilizing-authoritarian form. In the business of Big Data or the derivatives of financial capitalism, machinic dividuality becomes manifest, passing through all kinds of bodies, things, socialities, and affairs without being very interested in their individuality. A process of division and accumulation that enables, smoothes, and fluidifies the capitalist flows. In dividual-machinic capitalism, subsistence is supposed to get rid of its subsisting, the abstract machine is supposed to detach itself from the social, everything that can be joined is supposed to become disposable anywhere, at any time.

In its increasingly authoritarian variety that is occurring in the most diverse geographies, dividual machinic capitalism demands general mobilizability as a kind of voluntary mobility, and at the same time constant identification and fixability. In evernew threat scenarios of the nomadic (migration, pandemics, cyberattacks), separation and borders are forced, and distancing and controlled proximities are introduced on all possible levels. In technological terms, this is achieved through the differentiated use of location and proximity data: through tracking and accumulating location data, individuals are not only identified and traced in their movements, they also join and comply in self-government. The self is to be governed and valorized, and so are relationships. Bluetooth-assisted spying on proximity data facilitates a decentralized and reciprocal examination of proximity relations; in social distancing, social machines mutate into paranoid machines. Here, disposability implies

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a combination of immobility and mobilization, forced reterritorialization and subservient deterritorialization, of selves and things as well as of bureaucratic and military units. New forms of obedience, subservient attitudes, gradients of machinic disposability are formed in these joinings of machinic capitalism. Joining no longer just means adaptation to given structures, but the continuous fit of conjoining, complying assemblages. Subjugation is paired with self-government, old and new forms of appropriation of labor (power) and life with voluntary self-submission. Continuous habituation to states of exception, emergency plans, shutdowns. You learn to be compliant as you practice it – in exchange and relationship with things, bodies, machines, and ghosts with which you join, but in different ways in different situations. There is no compliant character based on a stably individual and morally acting subject, nor is its uncompliant flip side and mirror image the resistant disposition of an individual. Machinic self-jointing and dividual en/joining shape the conjoining attitudes, the compliant modes of conduct, the jointed relations. Dividual-machinic capitalism is a regime of disposability.

In this regime joining entirely differs from the visible injunction of the text of law and the audible injunction of judgement. A thoroughly ghostly turn of injunction, now no longer fatherly ghost in the singular, but en/joining under a great many of secret hands, soundless voices, unknown laws. "The character of the laws demands that their existence be a matter of secrecy," writes Kafka in "The Problem of Our Laws."[126] We are governed by en/joinings that we do not know, that do not reveal themselves to us, that we can at best guess. And in the meantime we love to expose ourselves to the ghosts, to show them all

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126 Franz Kafka, *"The Problem of Our Laws"* ["Zur Frage der Gesetze"], translated by Michael Hofmann, in: *London Review of Books* 37:14, https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v37/n14/franz-kafka/short-cuts.

of ourselves. Kafka has seen it: along their paths our data are drunk by the ghosts, and with this abundant nourishment they improve and multiply all the better. This is how the ghosts of machinic capitalism operate, like ubiquitous dictating machines, dictating us as we dictate to them. All this happens not in a transcendent kingdom of God or from the pulpit of judgment, but in the intermediate realms, in the transitional zones, in the joints of the machinic assemblages. Even if en/joining can never be now, never be here, it is nevertheless never far away: mystery laws and data clouds are not in heaven or in the sky, but always next door, in between, behind the door perhaps, behind the wall, behind the opaque glass walls, in the corridors, the decoration, the next room, in the air around us, but always right next door.

The time that corresponds to this burrow is one of deferral. For the people of Kafka's "The Problem of Our Laws" "it remains a vexing thing to be governed by laws one does not know," and at the same time they submit to the view that the materials of tradition, "however vast they appear to us, are still far too small, and that centuries will have to pass before it is sufficient. This view, so pessimistic where the present is concerned, only brightens up with the belief that one day a time will come when tradition and its study will reach full term, everything will have been made clear, the law will have become the property of the people, and the nobility will have disappeared."[127] Lure of deferred clarification, suppression of the gloomy present in favor of a future time of clarity. Here we see the concise meaning of a time that is by no means out of joint, but rather firmly joined in its respective joinings. There may once come a time when we no longer have to wait "before the law," can enter it past the gatekeeper, experience its full

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127 Ibid.

light in cloudless transparency – "but not now."[128] The en/joining will not show itself, not in the now, not in the here. The before in "before the law" means both, the spatial inscrutability and the temporal deferral of the law. Straight line of time, pure order of invisible laws and inaudible voices, taming of the here and now in which disjointedness and disobedience do not yet or no longer arise.

The en/joining of the machinic burrow and its timeline[129] require

128 Franz Kafka, "Before the Law" ["Vor dem Gesetz"], translated by Michael Hofmann, in: *Metamorphosis and Other Stories*, London: Penguin 2007, 197-198.

129 "The time is out of joint." Gilles Deleuze and Jacques Derrida each dealt with Shakespeare's line in two quite specific texts, both published in 1993. Derrida wrote an entire book about it, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International* (translated by Peggy Kamuf, New York and London: Routledge 1994). Deleuze devoted in his last book, *Essays Critical and Clinical* (translated by Michael A. Greco and Daniel W. Smith, London and New York: Verso 1998, 27-35), a short essay to "four poetic formulas," the first of which is Hamlet's "the time is out of joint." Deleuze refers here to the common subordination of time to the joint, the hinge, *cardo*. Time is subordinated to extensive movement. If, on the other hand, it is out of joint, unhooked, an opposite subordination arises, that of movement to time. "Time ceases to be curved by a God who makes it depend on movement. It ceases to be cardinal and becomes ordinal, the order of an empty time." (28) Beyond Shakespeare and turning to Kafka, time out of joint is in constant exchange, constant connection with law. "This path, which exceeds the limits of our life and requires the soul's immortality, follows the straight line of time, inexorable and incessant, on which we remain in constant contact with the law. But this indefinite prolongation, rather than leading us to a paradise above, already installs us in a hell here below. Rather than announcing immortality, it distills a 'slow death,' and continuously *defers the judgement of the law*. When time is out of joint, we have to renounce the ancient cycle of faults and expiations in order to follow the infinite route of the slow death, the deferred judgment, or the infinite debt." (33) Amidst booms of forecasting, from the freakiest prepper culture to the algorithmic prediction of stock prices and everyday pandemic forecasts, it seems as timely as dizzying that the indefinite extension of the timeline is already putting us in hell down here. Randy Martin, in his groundbreaking last book *Knowledge LTD* (Philadelphia/Rome/Tokyo: Temple University 2015) on the social power of derivatives and financial capitalism, sheds some light on this thesis by Deleuze: "While mathematical models are attributed with powers of seeing the future, in practice they operate in the moment of their available data streams.

continuous disposability, uninterrupted joining, and constantly adjusted contact with laws that are as invisible as they are unknowable. In such a setting, as Gilles Deleuze wrote in 1990 in his "Postscript on the Societies of Control," "the different control mechanisms are inseparable variations, forming a system of varying geometry the language of which is *numerical*."[130] In the mode of modulation, all molds deform to the point where they are no longer proper molds, they become gaseous. *All that is*

More, what they see in the present is what they take to be most likely to happen." (31) Mathematical models do not operate in the future, but they do create conjunctures and ties between present and future: "The core operation of derivatives is to bind the future to the present through a range of contractual opportunities and to make all manner of capital across disparate spheres of place, sector, and characteristic commensurate with one another." (60) With today's knowledge, more than two-and-a-half decades after Deleuze's far-sighted formulation, it can be said more precisely: the indefinitely extended timeline not only enjoins the future, but over and through the future it enjoins above all the present, the here and now, which can thus become hell here below. Through this calculation of the future, the future is first determined in order to then adapt our present to this determined future. The future en/joins the present.

But there is also another line of interpretation of now-time in "the time is out of joint," one that is completely contrary but just as coherent "for our time" as the straight line into hell down here. This is Derrida's Benjaminian interpretation in *The Specters of Marx*: "Maintaining now the specters of Marx. (But *maintaining now* [maintenant] without conjuncture. A disjointed or disadjusted now, 'out of joint,' a disjointed now that always risks maintaining nothing together in the assured conjunction of some context whose border would still be determinable" (1). Now-time, then, breaks the linearity of time as well as its conjuncture with law. Such now "is never docilely given a date in the chain of presents" (3); rather, it is "a moment that no longer belongs to time, if one understands by this word the linking of modalized presents (past present, actual present: 'now,' future present). We are questioning in this instant, we are asking ourselves about this instant that is not docile to time, at least to what we call time" (XIX). Unjoinable now-time that cannot be pressed into line. "Once again, untimeliness, and disadjustment of the contemporary" (123), this is rather the time of rupture, interruption, revolt, and it has as much right to our attention as the linear time that makes our present disposable by pretending to herald our future.

130   Gilles Deleuze, "Postscript on the Societies of Control," in *October*, Vol. 59 (Winter, 1992), 3-7, here: 4.

solid melts into air, the pithy description of the bourgeois revolution and its combination of mobility and insecurity in the Communist Manifesto, takes on new meaning as constantly deforming material, "a spirit, a gas,"[131] that entrepreneurially traverses other materials, undulating, reassembling its parts on dividual lines. There is no more form, no more burrow that we still think we see with Kafka. Dividual-machinic capitalism emanates as an undulating entrepreneur-gas, corporate soul, vaporously traversing whatever it encounters, whatever is disposable or disposed by the gas.

In this setting of control and disposability, the power insignia of discipline no longer suffice. In control societies, as Deleuze writes in the passage of the "Postscript" that is central for us, "what is important is no longer either a signature or a number, but a code: the code is a *password,* while on the other hand the disciplinary societies are regulated by *watchwords* (as much from the point of view of integration as from that of resistance). The numerical language of control is made of codes that mark access to information, or reject it. Individuals have become '*dividuals,*' and masses samples, data, markets, or '*banks.*'"[132] It is not so much the apparent neologism "dividual" and its misuse as substantive that leaves this passage opaque: the individuals of control become dividual, and the masses become databases. But what does "code" mean here, and what is the difference between disciplinary "precepts" and the "passwords" of control societes? The key lies, as so often, in questions of translation.

Disciplining proceeds in a double way, via signature and number: the signature identifies individuals, and the number registers their position in a mass. For disciplinary regimes, there is no incompatibility between individuation and identification on

131   Ibid.

132   Ibid, 5.

the one hand, and massification and comprehensive policing on the other. *Omnes et singulatim* is the Christian pastoral battle cry Michel Foucault has drawn on for this. Disciplinary government operates through individualization as the ordering formation of individuals, who at the same time are also invoked and arranged as a totality.[133] Disciplinary societies are governed by *mots d'ordre*, order-words, rather than "precepts." In the fourth of *A Thousand Plateaus* on the "Postulates of Linguistics," Deleuze and Guattari describe, on the basis of Austin's theory of the speech act, how speech operates as a sudden injunction, as command that achieves the desired effect only on the basis of an arrangement connected with it and configured around it, an assemblage of enunciation: "The elementary unit of language – the statement – is the order-word" – *le mot d'ordre,* ordering word, injunction, instruction, call to obedience. "Language is [...] to be obeyed [...] and to compel obedience."[134] Thus the *mot d'ordre* should by no means be understood simply in everyday language terms as a slogan, as a mere "watchword," spoken or shouted. "Language is not life, it gives life orders"[135]. Transmission of the word as an order-word, an injunction, a call to order. Just like a teacher at school does not primarily teach the students, but gives them injunctions, calls them to order, and puts them in their place, arrangement in the disciplinary regime is not simply communication or information. It is a command-like injunction, and then, behind or beyond that, it is the arrangement that brings the command-like injunctions into a certain, initially deeply hierarchical order.

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133   Michel Foucault, "Omnes et Singulatim: Towards a Criticism of Political Reason." *foucault.info*.   https://foucault.info/documents/foucault.omnesEtSingulatim.en/. See also ibid., "The Subject and Power," *foucault.info*. https://foucault.info/documents/foucault.power/, where Foucault speaks of the simultaneity of individualization and totalization in modern power structures.

134   Gilles Deleuze / Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota 1987, 76.

135   Ibid.

The second section of the "Postscript" is not entitled "logic" for nothing. The differentiation of several functions of numbers and numerals points back to their genealogies in (late) antique Aristotelian and Neoplatonic logic and medieval scholasticism. The two components of discipline, identifying individuals and registering their position within masses, correspond to the classical distinction between cardinal and ordinal number. While the cardinal number counts the quantity, the ordinal number indicates a certain position in the regular assemblage of relations of this quantity.

Independent of the distinction between these questions of "how much" and "what number" (first, second, third), a further Aristotelian distinction is that between the number that is counted and the number by which we count. Through Boethius, this difference between numbered and numbering number continued to have effects in the Middle Ages and extend into the neighboring zones of metaphysics and logic. In the nomadological plateau of a *A Thousand Plateaus,* Deleuze and Guattari refer to this very distinction when they distinguish state-territorial organization from the numerical-nomadic organization of societies. "Numerical organization," at first sounds like the everyday wisdom of humans reduced to numbers. But this figure of the numbered human being as a statistical element actually belongs to numbering and measuring on the part of the state and disciplinary regimes and not to what Deleuze and Guattari now introduce as numerical-nomadic organization. Number already plays a crucial role in the state apparatus of discipline, but as a *numbered number*, a number that is numbered and measured, for example, in "the imperial bureaucracy, with the three conjoined operations of the census, taxation, and election."[136] Number here is connected with measurable quantities, with the counting of units identified as such, with the segmentation and striation of territory as a given.

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136   Ibid, 389.

Things are different in the nomadic nomos, where the *numbering number* corresponds to an arithmetic organization of algorithms. One genealogy of the numbering number is the Indo-Arabic genealogy of decimal numbers, as developed by al-Chwarizmi in Baghdad in the ninth century and translated from Arabic into Latin by Robert of Chester and Gerhard of Cremona in Toledo in the mid-twelfth century. Deleuze and Guattari take up a different genealogy in consideration of the numerical organizing principle of nomadic war machines such as the Hyksos and other milieus with a strong nomadic component. In the latter, the number "is no longer a means of counting or measuring, but of moving: it is the number itself that moves through smooth space."[137] No measurement of given territories, the numbering number draws dividual lines, shifting space and moving itself within it. When the number itself numbers, it subjectivates itself, no longer subject to a given, striated, stratified territory, but in a constant movement of deterritorialization and reterritorialization. The arithmetic of the numbering number is tactless, disharmonious, rhythmic, and directional, mobile occupant, wandering fire. It produces rhythms, routes, ritornellos.

And *A Thousand Plateaus* takes yet another turn with the number in the nomos of numerical-nomadic organization: "In [...] nomadic existence, the number is no longer numbered, but becomes a Cipher."[138] Ten years later in his "Postscript," Deleuze again takes up this transition from the difference between the numbered and the numbering number to the cipher, to the *nombre chiffré*. From the perspective of the control regime, the distinction between signatures and numbers is irrelevant. It tends to have no need to identify individuals, to register their position in a mass by a number. In the place of signature and number, a

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137   Ibid.

138   Ibid, 390.

different operation becomes essential – the cipher. And on this point, two interesting deviations occur in the translation of the French original. The German translation takes for the French *chiffre* – one could say, too closely – the German loanword *Chiffre*. The English translation goes the opposite way and translates too loosely: here *chiffre* becomes *code*.

The cipher is not a number in the sense of numbering, counting, adding up countable units.[139] It stands for dividually traversing an innumerable multiplicity. Its components are heterogeneous parts, not parts of a whole, but divisible and conjoinable parts that never add up to a whole, parts of a non-uniform joining. They are inseparable, but only in the sense that they can be traversed by and concatenated through dividual lines. Instead of numbering and measuring properties, the cipher condenses, assembles, and composes the traversed, skimmed, dividual components. It has no location, no assigned place, no position to be specified. Through the components moves the dividual cipher, and it jumps, leaps, joins over breaks and joints.

In the context of machinic-dividual capitalism and the control regime of the "Postscript" text, the cipher is a *mot de passe*. As a password, the cipher is not a "watchword" in the sense of a given and communally used military code, but a singularly-dispersed

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139   In *What is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guattari define philosophy as *creatio continua* of concepts. In their attempt to outline what a concept is, the cipher again functions as a central figure. The concept has an irregular outline, it cannot be subjected to the logic of counting and determining positions, nor can it be all-encompassing, include all components. Above all, according to the first sentence of the first chapter of *What is Philosophy?*: "There are no simple concepts." A concept is a multiplicity, it has several components. "It therefore has a cipher." (15, translation slightly modified – here, *chiffre* was translated as combination, cf. also the translators' introduction, IX). Also cf. 144: "The concept [...] has no number, either whole or fractional, for counting things that display its properties, but a cipher that condenses and accumulates the components it traverses and surveys." (translation again slightly modified)

relay, concatenation, and incision of technological and social machines. And yet only ever one password for one application at a time, because no matter how often and urgently we are called upon to continuously modulate our passwords, it is clear there can only ever be one password that lets us pass in each specific case. The cipher of the control regime, as the central sentence of the "Postscript" suggests, is a password that joins and makes disposable, while the disciplinary societies are regulated by order-words, calls to order, invocations, and injunctions.

Machinic-dividual control means general disposability and infinite mobilization of all bodies, and at the same time their fixability and injunction. Without any particular interest in their individual characteristics, techno-capitalist machines manipulate parts of individuals as well as immense masses – "which in no way attests to individuation–as they say–but substitutes for the individual [...] body the cipher of a 'dividual' material to be controlled."[140] Whereas the relation of possessive individualism and deindividuation is sold as a necessary opposition in the classical doctrines of capitalism, the operation of totalizing disposability insists precisely on the confluence of the two elements. Possessive individualism and deindividuation form a violent whole, which in the setting of dividual-machinic capitalism is supposed to lead to the en/joining of all joints.

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140 Deleuze, "Postscript," 7.

The smooth city

The cipher is the more-than-human gatekeeper who can let in the man from the country or not, it is Félix Guattari's dividual map and its corresponding city, where barriers open, or don't. It is in this city of the cipher that a new form of control emerges, of governing the condensed many. Under the rule of the cipher, the territory of the city mutates into a battlefield of smartification, securitization, and machinic disposability. Across the city, ravaged by urban development and competition, dividual algorithmic networks, new infrastructures, doppelgangers of the city stretch out. Artificial intelligence, cloud computing, and big data envelop the city and intensify the trend towards dividual control in a "Safe City." Touristification and museumification, gentrification and speculation, expulsion and destruction of sociality join with the mechanisms of smoothing and disposing the city.

The smooth city smoothes itself until its joints are no longer perceptible. All ruptures and touches, all insecurity, all vulnerability must be covered up, all trouble, all poor wealth must dissolve. Dwelling, proximity, and assembly are to be prevented, surfaces to be smoothed until there is no more hold, only a slipping and sliding along. Whatever is not flattened and reconstructed as territory of beautiful-and-safe-living must conjoin. But the dissemblages are still somewhere, the not-so-smart, the poor, the joints, before and before security, around the smooth city.

The safe city must protect, guard, and secure its inmates against these dangerous classes, contagious hordes, and epidemics. The transformation of the city, however, no longer occurs only through exclusion and repression, but also through a government of machinic disposability and subservience, through dispersion and voluntary self-control, through modulation of productivity and appropriation. The dividual cipher moves through

the city assembling all that is disposable, joining what is not yet joined. All that is undeciphered is to be deciphered and numbered, and even if it is undecipherable, it will be accumulated by the cipher. In a mixture of brutal appropriation, destruction, and skillfully smooth reinterpretation of what it finds, the cipher rules urban space. The city functions not simply as a built space, but as a territory of disposable data and affection. Data is extracted, collected, stored, and dividually permeated in huge quantities from the most diverse sources, seemingly without motive. At the same time, the territories of affective and social condensation, apartments, districts, neighborhoods are appropriated, valorized, conjoined. Submissive exploitation of even the last resource, not least of privacy and housing, leads to the conversion of already cramped apartments into home offices, or to withdrawal from them in Airbnb's ultra-flexible business model. Using a term from a slightly different discourse, this movement between sharing economy, smart city and safe city could also be called a "war on subsistence." Not only the territories of the so-called Third World, imagined as outside, form the terrains of this war, but the very city centers of the dominant states, enveloped by an infrastructural shell of plastic[141] and algorithmic data slime attacking the subsistence that is more than economic self-sufficiency.

In his "Postscript," Deleuze describes his friend's imagination of the future city[142] and interprets it as an example of dividual-

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141   Cf. Gil Scott-Heron's still valid line from "Lady Day and John Coltrane": "Plastic people with plastic minds are on their way to plastic homes / No beginning there ain't no ending just on and on and on and on and on."

142   It is impossible to say whether Deleuze is referring to a text, a lecture, or a conversation with Guattari when he references Guattari's imagination in the "Postscript." One trace can be found in Guattari's *Cartographies Schizoanalytiques* (Paris: Galilée 1989, 208): the cipher – here Guattari calls it a "diagrammatic function" – inscribed in Guattari's parking ticket sets in motion the mechanism of the barrier that allows him to get from the outside to the inside. The scene of the crime here is

machinic modulation: "Félix Guattari has imagined a city where one would be able to leave one's apartment, one's street, one's neighborhood, thanks to own's (dividual) electronic card that raises a given barrier; but the card could just as easily be rejected on a given day or between certain hours; what counts is not the barrier but the computer that tracks each person's position – licit or illicit – and effects a universal modulation."[143] Access or rejection, whether concerning information or movement through a district, are not within individual power, and this dividual map and the technologies that succeed it are not simply controlled by an individual. Even if every individual thing carries

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still the parking garage with its visible barriers and limited spatial dimensions; in the imagination referenced in "Postscript," the whole city controls itself through dividuality and cipher: different from totalizing discipline, this is an open milieu of self/control of not only what is, but also of tendencies toward all possibilities, a plane of immance of urban spaces, algorithmically open circuits of banks and databases, modulating the present through the fictional control of the future. In his final book, *Chaosmosis,* Guattari used the example of the credit card, whose cipher "triggers the operation of a bank auto-teller." (49). By means of this now aging yet still astonishingly ubiquitous apparatus and its extended function as a substitute for the bank clerk or the entire architecture and bureaucracy of a bank, one can see above all the development of uncertainty and unpredictability in control. Here, compliant subjectivations begin when (or even before) the asignifying semiotic machines issue their marching and halting orders, when (or before) the machine suddenly demands unrecognized input or even rejects the input: rampant insecurity, not only about doubting one's recollection of the cipher, but also about the possibility that the deviation or rejection is based on one's own misconduct or even secret access to the data by invisible actors, whether hackers, tax authorities, or intelligence agencies. Control regimes operate less through determinations, provisions, limitations, and shutdowns than through uncertainty and the blurring of the thresholds between different moving things, apparatuses, people, and their body parts. Cf. also Guattari, *Cartographies Schizoanalytiques* , 88f. Here, too, he writes about the signaletic matter of the credit card that elicits money from the ATM, provided only that the PIN of the card corresponds with the sequence of numbers typed in, provided only that the card is in good condition and the machine is not defective, and provided one is not in the wrong country. I would like to thank Anne Querrien for information on the referenced passages.

143   Deleuze, "Postscript," 7.

its electronic collar in the form of an implanted chip, a barcode, or a ubiquitous app, what needs to be tracked, valorized, and controlled is the mobility and relationships of the multitude, large amounts of dividual, traversable data. It is an unbounded form of modulation, perhaps not necessarily "universal," but nonetheless a modulation that dividually traverses individuals, joining their subjectivations. Modulating and tracking not only "each person's position" but distances and relations of proximity. Safe city no longer implies only class-specific self-enclosure in the gated community or class-specific ghettoization, but rather a modulating gradation of unpredictable openings and closings. Abandoned of all subsistence, the territory becomes a deterritorialized reserve.

Discipline and control accumulate and modulate, intertwining each other beyond linear developments, subjugating injunction and machinic disposability. The grid digs striae into the city, urban development smoothes its streaks. The city, formerly city of inclusion/exclusion through citizenship, becomes compliant city, smooth city of attractions. Pseudo-green propaganda pairs with machinic-capitalist techno-wording. Wooden skyscrapers, vertical forests, heated sidewalks meet ubiquitous wifi, camera, microphone, and sensor systems. The sidewalks are not only heated, they are also equipped with pressure sensors to measure movement. The vertical gardens measure not only the humidity of the air, but also the temperature of its inmates. The wooden walls ensure the unhindered flow of radio signals. Wireless networks for all, a threatening scenario of the disposable city. Hi-tech neighborhoods, briefly interrupted by digital detoxes to increase productivity.[144] Point clouds, tracking at every turn, dividual data collection on a totalizing level, micromanagement down to the smallest joints. The services we provide are not for

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144   Cf. Raimund Minichbauer, *Facebook entkommen*, Vienna et al.: transversal texts 2018, 7f.

gods or ghosts, but for the capitalist machines fabricating data. Even more: we ourselves are the production machines of affect and data, we produce in the service of data and affect factories, produce without ceasing and without payment. All-subservient, all-disposable, all-compliant city of the cipher.

Ritornello 18, 2018.
Dovesgullsdoves

[: Dove cooing sounds through the patios. The dovecote emanates calm, the cooing recalls other times and places. They don't seem to sense that today it's again time for one of them. Every now and then a loud fluttering, as larger vertical differences have to be overcome. Above them rises an entirely different sound, a swelling giggle, a shriek or scream. At first loud and monophonic, then louder and louder, polyphonic. They no longer move sailing along the street canyons, reterritorializing and trailing the built environment. They begin to circle flat over the rooftops and land near the dovecote. Then they flush out the doves, pick one, and pursue it. Not always successful at once, they repeat their maneuvers several times: flushing it out, then chasing it in wild flights, ducking under the dove, then grabbing it with a flick of the beak or slapping it down onto one of the rooftops. The chase itself takes place in silence and at top speed, the dove flying for its life, the gull for its food. Only when the gull is successful, the dove fixed, sometimes eaten alive, is there a cry of triumph, an invitation for the family to the feast. The doves act as if nothing happened.

We pick the grain, we fly into our loft, there comes the big thing again. Wants to play, all right then, we'll fly a little ways around the corner. It's still there, all right, then a little higher up, uuh, that was a mistake, quickly down, faster, faster, even faster, a hook and down to a patio, and at the last second let myself fall before the wall, ouch, crashed into the wall. But ok, the thing just made it over the wall, now it's gone.

Poly Bloom crumples the leaflet, "Elias is coming," and throws down the crumpled paper ball, but the critters aren't stupid, they don't care whether Elias comes, they just assemble for eating. Unheeded the ball bounces down the alley. The poor

birds, she says, and lets the gulls circle. She buys some cake at the *panificadora* and throws down the crumbs. The gulls swoop down silently, first one, then all of them, manna, they didn't expect such a thing now.

The beach runner detours around a gull. She lies on her side, head turned toward the sea, a lonely retreat from family and flock. Beside her, pitiful fellows seem to have erected a barricade of flotsam against the wind and the windblown sand. She lies there waiting, for the next wave, for the tide, for the end of a life. A few feet away, doves peck the remains of a snack on the beach. Will they approach her? :]

Territory and Care. Economy of Subsistence

There is still no reason for fear or hope, there is still urgency to draw new lines of flight, to find new weapons. And to do so on the same terrain of cipher and dividuality, turning disposability from machinic subservience to unruly forms of joining. The number that has ceased to be number is not just an instrument of the regime of control. In what Deleuze and Guattari call "nomadic organization," the cipher "invents the secret and its outgrowths (strategy, espionage, war ruses, ambush, diplomacy, etc.)."[145] Sweet, soft, cunning song of diplomacy.[146] Its dividual lines may be erratic, and yet they are capable of translating and negotiating. Molecular revolution is based on the formation of particular subgroups, minorities, specific numerical bodies, and even "strangers" and "infidels" can become soft components of a diplomatic machine in the middle of the smooth city.

Beneath the subservient en/joining of private housing in Airbnb and home offices, beneath the mechanisms of speculation and its specific version of the "war on subsistence," a diplomatic socio-real estate enterprise is sprouting, an accumulation of knowledge about small-scale tenure, squatting, and urban planning processes, delicately luring singularities into the territory and prompting them to stay – an enterprise for the co-composition of dissemblages and social machines. A dividual cipher, a mobile, manifold, subsistential cipher disposing of the minor ruses and pure means of negotiation.

For in the same compliant city, or under it and around it, there

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145   Deleuze/Guattari, A *Thousand Plateaus,* 390.

146   On the "delicate task" of diplomacy as a "means of nonviolent agreement," "case by case," "without contracts," and "beyond all legal systems," see Walter Benjamin, "Critique of Violence," in ibid, *Reflections*, translated by Edmund Jephcott, New York: Schocken 1986, 277-300, here: 293.

are also subsistential territories – territories where things, machines, ghosts, animals, humans actually live side by side, with each other and next to each other. Under and above the enjoined-compliant city will have already been the subsisting. Something that subsists and is resistant at the same time, renitent, insistent, persistent. Subsistential territories at all scales, from the casually altered collective use of a park bench, to the few plastic chairs in front of the door, from the conversation between the balconies of two houses across the street to the rhythm of the sociality of entire neighborhoods. Fred Moten describes this machine in an excursus on urbanism in *Black and Blur* as that which the city of attractions initially identifies as unattractive, which at the same time, precisely in the absence of any attraction, appears to its inhabitants to be worth living and loving. More than a basic necessity, before and before the attraction: "before that, in the double sense of before, that thing that underlies and surrounds enclosure."[147] Before and before the attraction is a dissemblage that escapes the city of attractions and surrounds its enclosure, appropriation, valorization. This is, as Moten writes, "the city's under-conceptual, under-communal underground and outskirts."[148] Before and before, a sub-urb that was and is there before the smooth city, under and around it.

In such a suburb, in the subsistential territory, poor wealth is not valorized, not appropriated, not made compliant in this way. Poverty, which creates wealth, blurs the traces left by possession

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147 Fred Moten, *Black and Blur*, Durham/London: Duke 2017, 187. From Moten's texts comes the double, temporal and spatial conceptualization of "before" as "before and before," as temporal anticipation and spatial subjuncture. Together with Kike España we have begun in various texts to short-circuit Moten's theory with Lagunillas' social machines. See "The City of Attractions," https://transversal.at/blog/The-City-of-Attractions.

148 Moten, *Black and Blur*, 187.

and owners. It does not erase them completely, and yet they are muddled enough to occupy the territory differently, without numbering it. Poor wealth, that is the shared laughter and heated discussions in the local bar, listening to, looking at, feeling for something, in Lagunillas for example, poor wealth, that's the first tomatoes from the squatted and collectively managed Huertito – transplantocracy, *tomatocracia!* Poor wealth, that's the music that arises in *Sin Futuro*, the smallest and most exquisite social center in the world, in five square meters, in the middle of an assembly of thousands of things and in the middle of conversation, because the guitar is right at hand: the smoky and strong, deep female voice and the never quite right and yet virtuoso, high and soft male voice try to sing a song together, and they sing everything a bit flamencoized, even Bob Marley's *Redemption Song*. Subsistence of possession out of joint, subsistence of poor possession, subsistence of occupation, disjoining and rejoining subsistence.

Rather than possessing it, one is obsessed with it, and obsessed with its ghosts, its rhythms, its cruel stagnations, its rampant flow: the subsistential territory is milieu as it co-creates an ecology of the environment and its things, an ecology of the social machines and an ecology of the mentalities that inhabit it. The subsistential territory of Lagunillas moves with the people who move through its streets every day, malageñ*s on their way in and out of the city, tourists in search of motives for street art photographs, more or less bulging carts for daily shopping, gas tank transporters, dog-keepers, roaming flaneurs, with the seagulls, drawing their lines in the air above the same streets, with the wild cats and those who never left the house, those who, as wild cats, decide to run to someone, and the tomcat who, in all freedom of an open relationship, decides sometimes to live dangerously in the open outdoors, with the architectures, some lovingly preserved, others abandoned and threatened with demolition, with the urban wastelands waiting to be occupied and/or upgraded, with

the inconspicuous places where people meet without having to consume, the Plaza Esperanza and its cohabitation by dogs and basketball and the children of Fantasía en Lagunillas, the self-managed wasteland Victoria de Quién and its shrubs and the papaya tree slowly overgrowing the most superfluous of Lagunillas' murals, with the mixture of different social machines in Enrique's Cafe and Bar Pedroso, in Camborias and Polivalente, with the spontaneous performances that could start right now at any corner. And it moves with the ghosts of the lagoons on which it is built, the ghosts of the Arab cemetery on which it stands, the ghosts of the Reconquista, whose victory christened the nearby Calle Victoria, the ghosts of the Inquisition and colonialism, the ghosts of Francoism, more alive than dead, the ghosts of those displaced by development, of those who opted to leave the neighborhoods in the time of the drug trade.

If we – Benjamin's second thesis[149] – have really been expected upon this earth, what is it that has claim on our scattered, weak powers from the past, messianic or mystical or machinic? Molecular winds from the past are touching and streaking us, drifted offside by molar memory and historiography. Not just a collective unconscious, but all that is left out, waiting for the forces that let it out, let it go, release it. To be able to uncover something of these forces, now-time has to prick up its ears. Only now does the molecular wind sing, only down here does the bracing of presents and pasts occur, and only one thing remains irrelevant: the future. No future. *Sin futuro.* Or in the ambiguous image of a socio-poetic machine in Lagunillas: *El futuro está muy grease* – a gray future (*futuro gris*), a future in the mist, or yet a future, colorful and shining like the musical Grease.

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149   Benjamin, "On the Concept of History," Thesis II. Cf. also Deleuze, *Logic of Sense,* 148: "To the extent that events are actualized in us, they wait for us and invite us in. They signal us […]."

Linear time, computation of the future, the present as a point, all this does not mean much. If we want to meet, we can meet "por la tarde," almost as in Chigozie Obioma's tale of the gathering that is supposed to take place "at sunset." "It could be the beginning of sunset, or its middle, or its end. But even this does not matter. What matters is that they know the number of those coming to the meeting. Those who arrive ahead of others will wait, talk, laugh until everyone is there, and that's when the meeting begins."[150] There is no Elias who calls the meeting, starts it, conducts it. There is no beginning of the meeting, there is no end. To unlearn compulsive punctuality, to unlearn understanding the present as just one point, and not being as disposable as the subservient en/joining of machinic capitalism wants, just in time, always open for access, always ready, always available. And yet, if possible, indeed always have time, be disposable for others and be it in a different way, accessible, dispersed. And things are disposable, too, they are put on the street next to the garbage containers on about Wednesday evening, and until Thursday, whenever the garbage collector comes, they are freely available, just like the recycling of what falls to metal collectors and dumpster divers. Whoever wants another form of access and disposability meets *por la tarde, a la fresca,* gathers slowly, gets an old chair from the garbage, and then another, sits together, curious to see who is coming down the curved *calle*, chats with the others, laughs and cries, sees who joins, talks more intensely in all distraction, becoming more and more and more.

Dividual lines through time and through space. There is a dividual line that gathers around the rumor of an imminent closure of Enrique's bar, then around its relocation across the barrio's borders, then around the reopening, a new line of flight that shifts the barrio's plane of immanence. Another line moves

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150   Chigozie Obioma, *Orchestra of Minorities,* London: Abacus 2019, 51.

across the barrio when the avocado season begins at Frutería Celia, and Celia and her friends laugh as they work, perhaps daring a little dance. And yet another line falls into the hands of the Vecin*s, as a leaflet announces a meeting of the neighborhood association at Elias: Lagunillas por venir! We are coming, Elias! We are coming to Elias! And in the Peluquería Mounir, the dividual line would perhaps be drawn far into the past, if only one could understand and speak Arabic. The Arabic cemetery ceased to exist more than five centuries ago, and yet here too the dividual line is an agreement between times. Voices that have long since been silenced, among them the voices of victims of the Inquisition or of the Desbandá, the Francoist massacre along the road from Málaga to Almería in the Spanish Civil War. But also the voices fallen silent that animated Lagunillas when it was still a lively zone of urban commerce in the 1960s, or the voices of the 1980s that whispered and pleaded and shouted in the heyday of the drug trade. To seize these echoes, to hear these voices in the conversations and sounds of today, not to close oneself off from the wind around the earlier ones, this is the agreement on the dividual line. Dividual affection, meetings with soul mates who share a line, a line to related ghosts and to more or less animate things that belong to no one.

And there are always some who join the subsistential territory, very few officially, many under the radar of legality, some come across the sea to stay, some come and go in their own rhythms, some subsist in several subsistential territories at the same time. Guiris, strangers, semi-welcome, they may stay forever, but with time the tensions and frictions become part of the subsistential territory. They bring with them many languages, the shades of Arabic, the sounds of different European languages, and with time they speak all kinds of a minor Spanish that rubs against Latin American sounds as much as Andalusian dialects, living with many slight and serious misunderstandings.

The subsistential territory means eternal negotiation of possession and occupation. The doves retreat to human dwellings because it gets too hot for them outside, or they shit their excrements on the burrow that used to be their dwelling. The gulls occupy the terraces, and when they have young, no one should dare to drive them away or even approach them. Construction machines and cranes sometimes occupy three construction sites at once in the little barrio, and they saturate the soundscapes with their roar, the air with their dust, the skies with their metallic arms. Rats, moths, roaches do not always want to stay in their holes, but there are no monkeys left in the Plaza de los Monos. And the technecologies are occupied, too, sometimes their machines are so jammed that the information channels collapse.[151] Just as the "Lagunillas por venir" Messenger overflows and machinically occupies the affects when a neighbor excitedly comments live on the squatting in progress of a house across the street, and opinions and interpretations diverge widely between subsistential care and neighborhood surveillance, class struggle and informer attitude. After early summer weeks of observation and planning, the siesta had been used to attempt to enter into the small house around the corner. Until six months ago, an old woman and her son occupied it, then were evicted by a new owner who kindly but firmly asked them to leave. But rumor has it he doesn't really own it at all, that there are legal ambiguities around the house, and that's why a mixed group of adults and children from the social housing two streets away decided to try a new occupation after a few months. They scouted well. They made arrangements. They assured themselves of assistance from professionals. But this time the tools were not good enough, and the people from across the street

started to look funny. They try again the next day, but now it's the strange guiris from around the corner who won't let them carry out their business in peace – strange because they bought an ugly house and renovated it half-heartedly instead of tearing down the old one and building a new and taller one as usual, strange because they didn't remove Elias' old signboard even though there are no more building materials for sale, strange because they don't shut themselves off as usual, forming their own bubble. Another siesta passes without being able to begin. And then in the evening, the owner suddenly reappears and looks for them in the street and informs them about the dilapidation, saying he would start reconstruction work tomorrow. Another group tries again that night, less professional, already a bit drunk, but quickly gives up when they notice that the owner seems to be sleeping inside, in the construction site, and that the police are already coming around the corner. A missed chance, but the next one will open up soon, maybe just around the corner.

The subsistential territory carries earth with it, the *terra* of the territory and the material earth, but it is also a fleeting ritornello of flows, of departure, of deterritorialization, below, the waters of the old lagoon that gave Lagunillas its name, above, the periodical downpours of the *tromba* rains. And because the flood from above opened its gates unexpectedly when the roof was open, a fungus made its way into the old house of Paco Elias, on whose façade Marina painted her mushrooms – spores with machinic connections and transitions into the materiality of the walls and the interior of the house. Deterritorializations of all kinds that streak the territory, ritornellos of the nomadic disjointure without a fixed abode. Screaming against the siesta silence, stubborn, disturbing, distraught, the Raúl-and-Rosita machine, in a different location every two weeks, emanates an unruly music, its lines through the barrio never the same but always making similar rounds, Rosita's reterritorializing Raúúl

calls or her croaking rants that don't really have a goal, object, aim of indignation. Asignificance and affection more than aggression against something or someone in particular. What is attractive is no longer in the eye of the beholder, the attraction of the unattractive is not a matter of perception. It is a bracing form of attracting, a completely different economy. It does not conform to the prescribed paths and zonings, but paves its own way for its unruly sociality. Dissemblage is both: disobedience to the compliant and smooth city of attractions, and the dividual lines that attract the unattractive.

Where is the *sub* in subsistential territory? Somehow below, in an adventurous nothingness, a flat fullness, here and there below, but not in the depth, at the ground, deep down in the abyss.[152] Overturning, inverting, digging up the grounds,

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152 "But where does such a descent throw us?" asks Deleuze in the *Logic of Sense,* and he answers himself: "It hurls us into the ground of bodies and the groundlessness of their mixtures," and into the "nonsense of the surface" (135f.). A movement into nonsense, not down into meaningful depth or up into height, but into the nonsensical sensuousness of surfaces. Surfaces in which both height and depth are disempowered precisely because of their lack of flatness. Height of fall and depth of flotation no longer mean anything, and even the decomposition of individuality into the dividual need not be frightening. "[...] a final response yet remains, one which challenges the undifferentiated primitive ground and the forms of the individual and the person, and which rejects their contradiction as well as their complementarity. No, singularities are not imprisoned within individuals and persons; and one does not fall into an undifferentiated ground, into groundless depth, when one undoes the individual and the person. The impersonal and pre-individual are the free nomadic singularities. Deeper than any other ground is the surface and the skin." (177). It is not essential to engage in Simondon's detours of the preindividual and the transindividual and their temporal and spatial limitations. According to Gilbert de Poitiers, we are simply dealing with two forms of singularity, individuality and dividuality. Here, the dividual concerns both aspects, the multiplicity of immanent-causing-surrounding subsistences as well as the multiplicity of concrete subsistings. In contrast to substance and accidences, the relation of subsistence and subsisting is not a hierarchical one, but a mutual relation of exchange. The subsisting does not arise as multiplication from a one. It is singular, and "its" subsistence is singular, too.

digging in the grounds and from the earth throwing the earth with the mouth, not digging in the depth, but at the surface, at both sides of the surface. Scratching, scraping, streaking the surface from both sides, from where our feet stand and from beneath the surface. Beneath, yes, but suspending the relation between above and below. From this perspective, from below, from a subsisting-subsistential viewpoint, there is no above, and even the image of the two sides of the surface is sim-plistic, simple-minded, because it misses the many *plies*, the many folds of the below. No underground beneath a ground, but flat extension of the plane of immanence, drawing and continuing to draw dividual lines that make and constitute the territory, preserve it and care for it. Instead of a groundless ground, instead of an abyss, instead of an unground and underground, that which is in the making is imminent, intrudes, converges here below, there below, and around it. *Sub-,* as vague and diffuse as the Latin prefix, not only in the sense of "under," but also "close to something," affine, proximate, joined, subjoined, an apposition is adjoined to the opposition, always close, streaking, touching, rubbing. Also hidden sometimes, behind something, immediately around something.

The ground around does not found something around which it is. The surround does not surround something, be it its identitary-marketable core or its adverse fort. The subjuncture does not join the joints, it subjoins and traverses at the same time. It subjoins a territory of care in which creatures of all kinds, animals, ghosts, machines, things, and perhaps humans, insofar as they do not deny the situatedness of their perspective, do not exist by blood and soil and being born or by property and law and individuality, but subsist by their singular subsistence. The subsistential territory is caring subjuncture. Those who populate it look at each other, care for each other, look around themselves, in all the ambivalence between neighborly control and subsistential care, sometimes both at the same time, often a

matter of perspective, they look and flow through the territory and into other milieus as well.

Subsistence here does not mean the reduction to a forced economy of self-sufficiency, coming from lack, determined by necessity, economy of self-supply. The economy of subsistence is a queer feminist economy of mutual care, its driving force is the incomplete multiplicity of relations of care. In its militant research, the feminist collective Precarias a la Deriva has proposed a series of conceptual movements "to make care visible, valorize it, above all politicize it and transform it into a lever of change."[153] For this, the minimal shift of the concept of *ciudadanía* (citizenship, belonging to a city, *ciudad*) to *cuidadanía* (from *cuidado*, care) is particularly relevant. While *ciudadanía* "is maintained in the gender contract as a heteronormative dispositif," *cuidadanía* "subverts this dispositif through the multiplication of bodies, practices, and desires in order to produce other forms of life."[154] The poor wealth of *cuidadanía* goes beyond maintenance, necessity, need, and self-sufficiency. "To set in motion a logic of care, to escape the 'save yourself who can' and the new opportunisms, it is necessary to create social bonds, to produce connections, spaces and projects that favor the collective. It's about experimenting with care activities [...] – with care that is not undervalued and poorly paid, that is not made invisible, that is not possessive, nor is it a duty."[155] Multiplicity of care

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153   Precarias a la Deriva, *Was ist dein Streik?*, Wien et al.: transversal texts 2014, 56. The Spanish original was published as "La bolsa contra la vida. De la precarización de la existencia a la huelga de cuidados," in M. Jesús Vara (Ed*.), Estudios sobre género y economía*, Madrid: Akal 2006. For English translations of texts by Precarias a la Deriva, see https://caringlabor.files.wordpress.com/2010/12/11deriva.pdf and https://transversal.at/transversal/0704/precarias-a-la-deriva/en.

154   Precarias a la Deriva, 107. Cf. also Isabell Lorey, *Democracy in the Political Present. A Queer-feminist Theory*, London: Verso 2022.

155   Precarias a la Deriva, 121.

relations, care in the plural. Care is a "wise merchant," Marguerite says, and its trade is negotiating, translating, conjoining. Trade without property, transversal emanation of care. For the subsistential territory the economy of care means more than affirming social reproduction: it is the production of sociality and desire, and that caring sociality is produced and preserved in it, that dividual desire replaces the fatal alliance of will and need and hope. To preserve the subsistential territory does not mean to keep it the same forever, to conserve it, it means to care for and care with the social machines, the mental machines, the thing machines, to insist on their care, to make multiple care persistent and to become persistent with it. Subsistential care also means caring usage, a use that does not consume and does not abuse, enjoyment in the double sense. Enjoyment in the sense of usufruct, dispossessing and caring use of things, machines, surrounds, but also, beyond any notion of satisfying needs, manifold enjoyment in the sense of dividual production of desire. And no, the class-related asymmetries, the multi-layered racisms, the everyday sexisms are by no means eliminated with this. And cats are run over by cars, people move away, trees are uprooted, relationships of care break down. The under-commonism of subsistential care does not promise an ideal world, a classless society, a zone cleansed of racism and anti-Semitism, sexism and homophobia. It is nothing other than a wild mix of non-disposability, unwillingness and disjointure, and at the same time of other forms of disposability, new forms of conjoining in commones, orgic cooperatives, anti-eviction platforms, tenant and tenement syndicates, the councils of subjuncture.

Economy of care, economy of dividual-machinic subsistence. Rumbling subjuncture, seething surround, raging ground around. A noise in the alley. A beer can rolls in the wind, with it the voices of the drunks rise to a bawling, the delirium of a junkie. Unhinged doors play an unruly music. A crumpled leaflet drifts along, to the meeting at Elias': *Materiales de construcción de*

mundos. Materials for the construction of worlds. Elias is not the prophet who is coming, whom one gathers to hear, to await the end of the world. Elias is the place of assembly itself, a place for the machinic construction of worlds, subsubstantiality[156] in the midst of a subjuncture and its machines. Construction machines, mixing machines, guitars and washing machines and the mixtures of their sounds, siesta rests, the feeding woman calling for her "chicos!," cats and doves, the carts of garbage collectors, the harmonica man flitting past, flashing a virtuoso blues riff as he passes, ghostly traces, voiceless voices, untuned voices, singular encounters, streams of gestures, intense conversations in the midst of the hustle and bustle, above all the mutually intensifying sound of the united air conditioners. All too often doomed to failure in the tension between occupation and possession, sweet, streaking diplomacy seeks the lines of flight, tries to brace the subsistential territory so that all possession may assume an aspect of occupation, a hue of poor possession, mutation of property, occupation even of self-appropriation, subsistential occupation of the subjuncture.

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156 "Subsubstantiality" is the term James Joyce introduces as an alternative to trans- and consubstantiality in *Ulysses* (London: Penguin 2000, 511).

Ritornello 19, 2020.
In Praise of Technecology

The smart city lets the machines work for you, the safe city secures space machinically. One cog meshes into the other, routines run like clockwork, and algorithms dance ever swifter. As long as the cipher moves through the things and smoothes them, one thing fits into the other. As long as your data feed the databases, the machinic city with its provident planning conjoins your lives, and everything always goes smoothly.

Or rather: Machinic capitalism and its dividual cipher are about totalizing access to your last resources, access to machinic sociality, affects, and data, which are extracted and en/joined in ever more detail. The image of the compliant-smooth city continuously conjoins until the last dividual chip is implanted, the last barcode applied, the last omnipresent app envelops its wearer, and they open the entrance and exit or not, allow access or not, make the city disposable or not. In this logic, the city becomes a fluid reserve, brought under dividual control by machinic access, by the community of microfascist control coercion, by a massive turn towards compliant subjectivations.

But that which presents itself as new and future, whether as a siren call or in the dystopian sound of doom, remains an attempt to make the present governable and disposable via the future. As before, in Toni Negri's formulation, "the question of collaboration with the machines or their destruction must be posed and articulated in the middle of the program of re-appropriation." Technofantasies of the invasive penetration of technology into the human body or the non-organic sensing of machines are not sufficient for this. It is the machinic bracings, stickings, joinings of social and technical machines from which capacities for construction and destruction emerge, and the materials for the construction of worlds. Unruly joining of disjointures does

not oppose the machinic, it arises in the middle of machinic ecology, mechanosphere, technecology.

In the inventiveness of social machines, struggles and movements, subsistential territories are drawn by abstract lines, and they draw lines beyond themselves, towards a translocal technecology. Techno-machines are as much a part of this ecology as mental, social, and environmental machines. It is not a question of whether there is a connection between technopolitics and ecology, it is only a question of how this technecology evolves. The poles between which lie a great many possibilities: brutal self-submission, making disposable even the last affective and material resources on the one hand, dividual desire production on the other, in which technology and desire become disposable for the molecular revolution.

The first option drives you to self-amplification with Facebook and Instagram, to variations of the same old thing, to alignment with yourself, to image and speech bubbles that are sealed off to sound and sight. If the second option is to prevail, you need the multiplicity of data and affect producers … Free the self from the socio-narcissistic joinings of "social media"! Free the data doubles from disposability and techno-tracking, free data as a whole from disposal in the property of monopolizing platforms, the codes from private-oligopolistic appropriation! Watch out for ownership in the development of new data economies, stick to occupation, poor possession, enjoyment as caring usage! Liberate all forms of knowledge, digital and analog, from copyright regimes, mess around with the transversal intellect! Free the modes of subjectivation from machinic subservience! Instead of hate, malice, envy, socio-narcissism, individualistic demarcation, and isolation, unfold technecologies that enfold the subtle things, the small gestures, the softness of affection in the situation of affect-envelopment. Build temporary zones of tactical retreat in local networks, and beyond any localism build

new techno-milieus, "media," "platforms," fundamentally open and radically inclusive assemblages and apparatuses! And in the midst of dividual multiplicity and technecological dissemblage, reach for the clouds, occupy the abstract machines, socialize the data space!

For your secret meetings, you need social time machines, more than those of Hamlet with his father's ghost, more even than the unjointed time leaps through consanguinity of Octavia Butler's Dana in *Kindred* or the dystopian human-replicant relationships in the various versions of *Blade Runner:* sticky time of the ghost writers, dissembled disposability, queer time leaps of the Ofelia machine, love and care of machinic ghosts corresponding across time. And if it is the nature of ghosts not to become visible, then perhaps you need to prick up your ears, listen to voices together, listen with machinic ears, listen around corners. Perhaps you can hear technecology, as an archive of sounds that you traverse machinically, as a thing-world and ghost-world with all its noise and racket. Déjà vu then belongs, as Walter Benjamin suggests in the *Berlin Chronicle*, to the realm of the acoustic rather than the visual. A reverberation from past lives, barely audible voices from a shifted time-darkness, a sudden sound that sounds like a word, a flash that short-circuits past and present, an echo rather than an image, an impact, a knock, a noise, a roar, a rumbling that is not forgotten forever. Not only "already seen," but also already heard blazes its dividual line through time in the reverberation. *Déjà entendu.*

You who inhabit technecology, ghosts and souls of subsistential economy, you who become nothing, citizens of nowhere, become similar! Your similarity is not a precursor to alignment and adaptation, the likes of users like you who like items like this, but eternal becoming similar as farnearness. Your subsistence is not the slimy envelope of the smooth-compliant city, but

streaking softness, subjoining shawl of the subjuncture. Your dividuality is not accumulation and transit through giant data-bases, but revolutionary becoming minor in the dispersion and bracing of a molecular revolution.

IV. DISSEMBLAGE

Minor voice, molecular revolution

Transverse to ordinance and molarity, the minor voice resonates in molecular registers. Nothing and no one conducts it, no one speaks it, no one tunes it. Only a swarm of voices is already there, its organless orchestra around it, when it braces distances. Brittle in persistent voice break, fragile and yet unbroken. Voice change, modulation, mutation.

The voice can remain minor, underage, immature, amidst all the resonance and subsistence of the subjuncture. It doesn't have to become major, it doesn't have to look for a block, it doesn't have to be perfectly tuned, and it can well bear never being alone. Dependent, one among many, it resonates with other voices or not. Many minor, dividual voices that can become more, become several, become plus, sound molecularly next to each other, dispersed, around each other, in search of voice kinship, intimacy, and assembly of minor voices.

Its molecular music plays in many pitches. It draws fine lines, into the smallest details, into the farthest joints. Impatient with revolutionary patience, it rests in place, wildly persisting, awaiting the nu, ready to dash forward, staying with the trouble. Scattered-gathered voices sing an unruly song, subterranean, otherworldly, extraterrestrial. Without a great plan, and yet not without planning, they emanate, without proper order, in fleeting elegance. Braced and bracing, eager for what was, compost without composition, undirected, unprofessional, with driving rhythm and erratic intensity.

Then, when they come and say take it easy and one thing at a time, step by step, then that is precisely the problem, the trouble, the recurring pattern that brings harm. Grief and tragedy nevertheless come along in the key of jubilation, with the force and (critique of) violence of the minor voice …

My country is full of lies
We're all gonna die and die like flies
I don't trust nobody any more
They keep on saying "Go slow!" "Go slow!"
But that's just the trouble
"do it slow"
Desegregation
"do it slow"
Mass participation
"do it slow"
Reunification
"do it slow"
Do things gradually
"do it slow"
Will bring more tragedy
"do it slow"

In 1963, everything happens far too slowly and far too quickly at the same time. On June 12th in Mississippi, civil rights activist Medgar Evers is shot in the back by a member of the White Citizens' Council. On September 15th at the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, a central rallying point for the campaign against extreme segregation in the city, a Ku Klux Klan bomb attack kills Addie Mae Collins, Cynthia Wesley, Carole Robertson and Carol Denise McNair, four girls eleven to fourteen years of age. More and more tragedy, *Mississippi Goddam*. Nina Simone's mournfully angry uptempo song sweeps over everything: a deceptive impression of classic Broadway show tune, "for which the show has yet to be written," as Simone notes en passant. The song overtakes itself, racing against the slogan "Go Slow" and almost rolling over, beside itself in the face of the exuberant violence of white supremacism and the subliminal violence of democratic reformism. *Mississippi Goddam* is a powerful critique of violence, and at the same time its furious singer rests within herself. Simone jams her way through

the racist atrocities in Alabama, Tennessee, and Mississippi, through the racist discourses and genealogies that accompany them, but also through the false rules of the counterpowers. "Go slow," "do it slow" is not only the problem of the Democratic reformist forces, the slow path of the Kennedys through the reform bills and legislative changes, lined daily by racist incidents and then John F. Kennedy's assassination on November 22nd. "Go slow" also sometimes becomes the wrong prescription in the midst of the Civil Rights Movement, at moments when calming prudence too far outweighs necessary unrest.

The problem is not so much a contradiction of violence and non-violence, construction and destruction. For a situated critique of violence, it matters to distinguish and differentiate the heterogeneous practices of violence and non-violence, to transform the opposition of destruction and construction into an apposition,[157] to subjoin the materials for construction to those for destruction.

The problem lies first of all in the linear conception of revolution as a foreseeable process. Gradation, linearity, and molarity are the gravediggers of revolution. "Do things gradually / Will bring more tragedy." Working down a list one by one, according to the strategy of the leaders and their programs, will escalate tragedy. The planned and graduated handling of steps to revolution shaped the hegemonic ideas of revolution in the twentieth century, most fatally with the reinterpretation of revolutionary patience as discipline of the party soldier. The party leader in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* voices the necessity of obedience and patience on the part of those repeatedly affected by racism: "You'll learn it and you'll surrender yourself to it even under such conditions. Especially under such conditions; that's its value.

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157   I borrow the philosophical concept of apposition from Stefano Harney / Fred Moten, *The Undercommons. Fugitive Planning & Black Study, Wivenhoe*: Minor Compositions 2013, passim, e.g. 14.

That makes it patience."[158] And the party teacher: "In fact, we now have to slow them down for their own good. It's a scientific necessity. [...] They can't be allowed to upset the tempo of the master plan."[159] Patience coupled with cadaver obedience leads to disaster. The "go slow" principle first creates a harsh hierarchy between the organization and its objects, between "leaders" and "people," but it also creates an outside of the organization, the unorganizable, the impatient, the unconformable, those below the master plan.

Molecular revolution needs the manifold simultaneity of speeds, slow movement, standstill, and acceleration not one after the other, but simultaneously, alternating, jumbled. Insurrective rupture and duration of resistance and constituent power do not emerge one after the other, but as an appositional and overlapping quality of revolutionary machines. Revolutionary patience needs revolutionary impatience, the simultaneous untimeliness, the Goddam-rapture of revolution. Goddam!!! Radio stations officially censor *Mississippi Goddam* because of the curse, but much more serious are its explicit tones on everyday racism, the denormalization of everyday racist life, and the call to just stop taking it one step at a time, not slowly or neatly.

Just as "do it slow" didn't improve anything in enslaved everyday life, it brings "more tragedy" in the racially segregated everyday life of the 1960s. And as Nina Simone points out in the last verse of the live versions of *Go to Hell*, another of her songs from the era, the hell that is said to be down there is actually right next door, "right by my side": "I see evil in the morning, evil in the evening, all the time, You know damn well, we must all be in hell." No one has to "go to hell," hell is already here. An immanent hell makes it necessary not to wait, not for the order of

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158   Ellison, 249.

159   Ibid, 271f.

action, not for the Last Judgment. It requires unruliness in the here and now. And just when Nina Simone sings "we all must be in hell," the key changes to a lively major. There is a not so hidden flipside of this hell next door, a black sociality that is also already here and now. That "black social life," in Harney and Moten's term, undercommons, is always near, sensuous feel*,* logisticality and hapticality, even and especially in the hold. *Mississippi Goddam*'s racy gallop is not a sarcastic commentary on the dead and those wounded by racism; it shows and demonstrates the tremendous power and capacity of the critique of violence.

A few weeks after *Mississippi Goddam* comes *Keep on pushing*. The minor voice of Curtis Mayfield resounds and immediately begins in the highest heights, at the highest edge, just as far as it reaches. Surrounded by the harmonies of the Impressions, which unfold from falsetto unison into a sweet triad, it can't stop now, got "to move up a little higher, some way somehow, cause I've got my strength, and it don't makes sense not to Keep on pushing." Keep on pushing what? Hallelujah, the minor voice, the song, the (church) congregation, or, after all, the sports car that the Impressions are pushing on the single's cover? All that, and most of all, the molecular revolution of the Civil Rights Movement. "Maybe someday I will reach that higher goal, I know I can make it, with just a little bit of soul. 'Cause I've got my strength, and it don't makes sense not to keep on pushing." With just a little bit of soul, soul music, like a few months earlier, in 1963, in the bridge of *It's All Right*: "When you wake up early in the morning, feeling sad, like so many of us do, ..." then, "Hum a little soul ...." No longer transcendent subject, just humming a little tune, which rather sings you than it is sung by you, a hook-line to get me into the day, the irregular rhythmic sound of a beer can rolling, a song a kid sings to herself to steady herself, a little reterritorialization, then manage to find a way and look across, across to the other side, *look-a yonder* ...

Now look-a look, look-a-look, a-look-a yonder
What's that I see
A great big stone wall
Stands there ahead of me
But I've got my pride
And I'll move the wall aside
And keep on pushing'

The minor voice sings the third verse of *Keep on pushing* and wonders what it sees there in front of it. There is a high stone wall standing before it. But the voice has its pride, and it moves on. Not straight forward, toward the wall or over the wall or through the wall. It prefers to change the ground around, to shift the wall, to defect, to flee. This is also a form of not surrendering to the alternative violence / non-violence. "It may be that I am fleeing, but while fleeing, I am looking for a weapon," a Black Panther will say. To flee, yes, but in fleeing to hum a song, to draw a line, to find a gang. And the wall is not a wall between the world and the extra-world; *yonder* is excess and immanent transgression. Deleuze's immanent *extra-être*, Marguerite's *outre*. Abundance, excess, disjoining. Never transcendent beyond, but plane of immanence *look-a-yonder*, look around, flee sideways and bend, shift, expand immanence by drawing lines of flight and deforming the joints with them.

Curtis Mayfield adopts the clairaudience and clairvoyance of his grandmother Annie Belle,[160] who migrated to Chicago from Louisiana in the late 1920s, and he lets her black preaching mutate into his songs, "painless preaching." And just as Reverend Annie Belle Mayfield's rhythmic incantations have always been about more than one God, about the voices and the souls and the ghosts that populate and permeate nothingness, Curtis May-

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160 As a source for this paragraph and for further biographical and discographical details, see Todd Mayfield / Travis Atria, *Traveling Soul. The Life of Curtis Mayfield*, Chicago: Chicago Review Press 2017.

field's songs are about the immanent ghosts/souls/voices of a molecular revolution. All he has to do is transform the God from the gospels and rhythms of Annie Belle's ministry into a dividual singular I: instead of "God gave me strength, and it don't make sense not to keep on pushing," simply "I've got my strength, and it don't make sense ..." Starting with the first family band, the house band of his grandmother's Traveling Souls Spiritualist Church, very specific soul journeys and tours of church communities were underway. Tuning his guitar to the black keys of a piano at the age of ten, young Curtis, with his open tuning in F-sharp major (F-sharp/A-sharp/C-sharp/A-sharp/F-sharp) and a technique of delicately plucking, stroking, streaking the strings, develops entirely new riffs and sounds, with fingers that even Jimi Hendrix, of the same age, will closely examine in 1963. And Curtis' strikingly bright and thin voice, light and transparent, tends to the highest heights even after his voice breaks, "gentle genius."

Over here, on the detour, the deviation, the way out, it makes sense to keep on pushing. To look for the other minor voices that will never make up a proper chorus, but they will make up a bunch, an unruly, minor swarm, an assembly of jumbled, minor voices. Then the minor voices will drive the Civil Rights Movement, moving off to the side, dodging off and on, into the sociality of the hell machine "right by my side," pushing the movement ever onward, and a little later, when the time is ripe, *People Get Ready,* they will even sing its minor, unofficial anthem.

"Les clapotements, les vagissements, les stridences moléculaires sont là dès le début," write Deleuze and Guattari under the title "Memories of a Molecule" in *A Thousand Plateaus.*[161] The ripples, screams, shrillness of molecular sounds are always there before the first song begins, before the club and before the stage and

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161   Gilles Deleuze / Félix Guattari, *Mille Plateaux,* Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit 1980, 333.

before the first beat. Molecular neighborhood subjoins the soul mates. That the soul has its kin around it, that the soul of the minor voice is never alone, that the assembly of minor voices is already there, becomes explicitly audible in Curtis Mayfield and the Impressions in 1967. At the beginning of the uplifting hit *We're a Winner*, you can hear the sociality, the socio-poetic machine, the molecular assembly that is already there before the song begins, is happening and insisting. Party atmosphere, buzz of voices, clapping, a woman's voice asking for Diane, informal confusion before the first blow of the horns. As Fred Moten will say, informality is not absence of form, and neither does form erase informality, it rather emerges out of it: "goddamn it, something's going on! This song emerges out of the fact that something was already going on."[162]

"Movin' on up!" The falsetto voices of the Impressions rise from the territory of voices, they rise up, like *Mississippi Goddam*, far and beyond and up, to the highest immanent heights. "Movin' on up!" At the same moment, the hands of the Impressions go up. And as it's without much pathos when they go up, the minor voices and the hands, without much pathos, too, is *We're a Winner,* which comes along in a seemingly casual and light way, in the singular plural and without opinionated gesture. Leaning back, funky, stretching its timing, Curtis Mayfield's voice still remains minor when it jubilates, still when it soars, never forgetting that one thing remains necessary: "Keep on pushing!"

And this is still true in 1972, in very changed circumstances, after so many deaths, by racist violence, by drugs, by war, it is also true for Superfly, the *Pusherman* and his machine, minor, this time in the sense of "super mean":

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162   Harney/Moten, *The Undercommons*, 128f. In the interview, Stefano Harney references Curtis Mayfield. Fred Moten primarily discusses the classic example of Marvin Gaye's *What's goin' on*, which similarly begins in the polyphony and jumbling of black sociality.

I'm your mama, I'm your daddy,
I'm that nigga in the alley.
I'm your doctor when in need.
Want some coke? Have some weed.
You know me, I'm your friend,
Your main boy, thick and thin.
I'm your pusherman. I'm your pusherman.

The Pusherman is the protagonist of the blaxploitation film *Super Fly,* which Gordon Parks Jr. shot in 1972 with his father as co-producer, who – known primarily for his socio-political photo reportages – had directed the genre-defining film *Shaft* the year before. Not only the director and protagonists, but also more than half of the film crew of *Super Fly* is non-white, and the soundtrack is by Curtis Mayfield. The sweet art of the pusher on the corner, chases through the ghetto, corrupt police, gambling dens, slow-motion brawls, a cheerful photo story of the details of cocaine dealing, martial arts, bathtub sex, Cadillac Eldorado, a bad machine, not clean at all, and even if it is bad and sometimes breaks down, the social machine jams, it sparks and stomps and grooves. It seems as if it took the invention of funk to embed Curtis Mayfield's lyrics and his minor voice in the optimal form, once again quite different from the classic soul songs of the 1960s, rhythmic flows with few harmonic changes that make the thin little voice seem even more haunting. The hands on the congas and bongos solo almost continuously, the foot on the wah-wah pedal whips the rhythm, and between all this the minor voice tells the story of the Pusherman. A story of the cocaine dealer who wants to get out with one last deal, a story of dealers and pimps, of despair, depression and destruction, a story between blaxploitation style and problematization of the loss of so many activists in the use of drugs, as in the 1970s in general, but here very concretely in the milieus of Black Power and everyday life in Harlem. But the social machine has a plus, it is

more than stylization and death drive. Clubs, bars, streetscapes, and hoods are the subsistential territories of this machine, and they also need to be pushed, propped up, and driven. The Pusherman of 1972 may no longer drive a social movement, nor be recruited by the organizers of the Black Nation, but he is a cog that keeps a social machine alive and moving, precisely on the downs and detours as a bad machine.

Bad machine? How much machine is left in the Pusherman and Super Fly? Parallel to the success of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s, there was also an upswing in black music as a business. This meant the possibility for quite a few to be able to make a living from music, and it also meant affirmation for the social life that surrounded this music. However, a decade of building a black music industry left its mark on the social machines of barrios and hoods. There seemed to be no other way than to break the white monopoly by establishing their own businesses in publishing, booking, and record labels, but at the same time, the economic logic of the industry increasingly corroded black sociality. The move into the film industry exacerbated this toxic effect. Economies of care displaced by paternalism, entrepeneurship, and profit maximization. With this decomposition movement, sexism, stereotypical gender relations, and heteronormativity intensified both within business structures and in the stories and narratives of song lyrics and films. Harsh hierarchies and striated sociality exacerbated the appropriation and valorization of the transversal intellect in the scarcity of credits and assertion of "intellectual property" as the property of a single mind (even including, for example, Mayfield's), with all the state apparatuses of dividual lines of invention turned into contracts. And yet this hell of exploitation, violence, and reproduction of heteronormative stereotypes could never fully appropriate the social machines – speaking with Curtis Mayfield:

> It's not that the ghetto is thriving with pimps and pusher-
> men, it's just they are a very visible part of the ghetto.[163]

Just as the Pusherman, his cars, and his style are only the visible tip of life in the ghetto, while the unrepresentable social machines remain in the murk and between the lines, the soundtrack and song lyrics also become to some extent the counterpart of *Super Fly*'s film narrative:

> I did the music and lyrics to be a commentary, as though someone was speaking as the movie was going [...]. It was important for me to counter the visuals – to go in and explain it in a way that the kids would not read it as an infomercial for drugs.[164]

And this also applies to a certain extent to the images, for example when Gordon Parks Jr. switches to his father's pre-ferred medium in the middle of the film and illustrates the social machines of drug dealing and consumption not with running images but with stills. The machinic flows of street life are paradoxically and convincingly better rendered as a flow of fragmented photographs than as moving images. And in the halting flow of stills, a heterogeneous and many-lim-bed sociality emerges that does not stop at the pusher-star on the corner, molecular composition, sociopoetic machine still right by your side.

The period from 1963 to 1972 was a decade of molecular revo-lution. When I first began to suspect it around the mid-1970s, it already seemed to me a bygone, a lost decade. The Beatles had broken up several years before; 1968 seemed to have little impact where I was. Symptomatic dissimilarity: a past decade of molecular revolution, which at the same time had not yet ar-rived in the Carinthian province. But in the time joint, the first

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163   Mayfield / Atria, *Traveling Soul*, 212.

164   Ibid.

fractures, the first tensions appeared. Even in this white music, in this decade also of the Beatles, through and around the sounds and compositions of Lennon and McCartney, I could hear a rumble that came from somewhere else. It sounded a bit like Slovenian, which the monolingual German-speaking family tried carefully to keep out, especially around the time of the fascist-antislovene assaults on bilingual place-name signs, but which pushed its way in through all kinds of joints – through the resonance of a Slovenian surname, through the Slovenian grammar school, which used the same classrooms in the afternoon, only a small window of time separated us, through the most interesting events and places, socialities and struggles, which almost always had something desirably Slovenian about them. And in between, rumble turned into row, especially when listening to the passages between the Yugoslav outside of capitalism on the other side of the Ljubelj Pass and the minoritarian struggles inside.

The polished Grundig music cabinet stood in the living room of my family's apartment; in the small-town, petit-bourgeois order, it could be used in peace only on certain days and at certain times of the late afternoon. I was fascinated by the radio bandwidth of long, medium, short and ultra-short waves and the backlit lettering of their scales with European radio stations, and even more by the functional elegance of the buttons, wheels and knobs with which frequency, stereo balance, volume and tone color could be continuously adjusted. With them I could "listen down" the songs, especially with a special function of the record player, which could not only be set to 45 and 33 revolutions per minute, but slowed down to 16, making even the fastest chord sequences and riffs comprehensible. I purchased my first LP from saved pocket money at the youth record club. It was the peculiar sampler *Rock'n'Roll Music,* recycling the remnants of the quarreling and business-splintered Beatles. Far from the best-of concept of *The Beatles 1962-1965* and *1966-1970*

albums, it gathered a bizarre mix of songs that brought together very different things under the umbrella of rock'n'roll, which was not exactly obvious to the Beatles. But – and this was probably my calculation – it was a double LP, thus the cheapest way to get 28 Beatles songs right away. I would have preferred to hear the melodic songs of the early psychedelic phase, but in the fall of 1976 I got to hear how Lennon and McCartney learned from the songs of Little Richard, Chuck Berry, Larry Williams, Janie Bradford and Berry Gordy and adopted their rolling groove, their energy and the explosiveness of their voices, more or less successfully. As in John Lennon's version of Williams' *Bad Boy*. Right after that, on the second side of the first record, came Ringo Starr's minor voice in the range of just a fifth and always a little out of tune, in *Matchbox*, the old blues theme Carl Perkins had put into rockabilly garb. They say the fourth Beatle can't sing. He does anyway. "Let me be your little dog / till your big dog comes ...." Little dog, minor voice, just not too much ambition. It's recorded doubled, but that makes it even smaller with Ringo's cheerful, lethargic style. Don't want too much, especially when standing in the bright white light of the spotlights anyway. And while Perkins still uses the closing line of the blues for a proper boast – "When the big dog gets here / Show him what this little puppy done" – Ringo's version is more about escape, the young dog's agility: "And when your big dog gets here / Watch how your puppy dog runs."

Still on the same sampler, at the end of the third side (that's what they called the first side of the second record of the double LP) and a few years later, from precisely May 1968, the pressed falsetto of *Revolution* in this specific line of lyrics: "Don't you know its gonna be ... alright." The Beatles had just returned from India, and in Paris the beach was growing under the pavement. But the song's lyrics don't necessarily epitomize the radicalism of the time, expressing rather a distance from what was happening that May ("You say you want a revolution

...”). It's some "you" out there driving on and driven by dividual desire and molecular revolution, but the Beatles would rather have loved "to see the plan" and are otherwise more interested in freeing their minds than changing constitutions or institutions. And where the voices go minor, a takeover from soul and blues occurs again, in shuffling rhythm and harmonic scheme and in the vocal line of the falsetto voices: "Don't you know its gonna be ... alright," a quotation, so to speak, echoing, approximating early blues formulas, the songs and slogans of the Civil Rights Movement.

On the politically ambiguous single *Revolution,* which was heard on *Rock'n'Roll Music*, only John Lennon's position on violence and destruction appears completely unambiguous: "But when you talk about destruction, don't you know that you can count me out." Thus the more complex and radical positions of the movements of May 68 are categorically negated. The matter seems clear, were it not for other versions of the song. *Revolution 1*, the much slower and earlier LP version of the *White Album*, a psychedelic shuffle with lots of shooby doo wop, in absorption of the style of the black doo-wop groups of the early 1950s, adds an "in" to "count me out:" "But when you talk about destruction, don't you know that you can count me out – in." In so doing, the "out" is not deleted, overdubbed, an "in" is simply added to it. Apposition of the in to the out. Apposition of violence and non-violence, destruction and construction. Less indecisiveness or relativism characterize this punch line than enduring the complexity that the molecular revolution knows many variants not only between the poles, but also overlaps and synchronous occurrence of violence and non-violence – depending on asymmetry, situation and perspective. Even on the promotional film for the single, one can clearly hear the "in" that is not heard in the single itself: John Lennon sings the appositional version, "count me out – in." This is also a critique of violence that uses the overdub, the ad-

dition to differentiate non/violence, and to differentiate non/participation. To express multiplicity within molecular revolution through the apposition of both possibilities leads back to the subtleties in the interstice of violence and non-violence, to the situating of where, when, and whereby one wants to be counted in or out. Resistance to having to participate and consent to acting together. The more than ten-minute bootleg version *Revolution 1 (take 18)* doesn't dwell on dualisms, dividualising itself more and more, an endless rephrasing of "alright" on all possible levels vertical and energetic, ending with radio snippets from Farid al-Atrash's "Awal Hamsa" to Yoko Ono's "If you become naked." *Revolution 9* finally, almost at the end of the *White Album* and of the Beatles as a band, brings the complete molecularization of the song, with no discernible song structure, an assemblage with tapes, with changing playback direction and loops, fades in and out, speed fluctuations, sudden accelerations, voices becoming nothing, a pressed "-right" as a remnant of memory that it will be "alright," at the same time so garbled that nothing ever really promises to be alright, and as insistence on the social struggles a lonely "alright" even in the turbulent soundscape of a demonstration, battle din, "imbalance," "the watusi, the twist," "eldorado," "take this brother, may it serve you well," and again and again "Number Nine."

And then finally comes a response, an answer song. Nina Simone writes the answer with Weldon Irvine in the same shuffle style of *Revolution*, and the answer is not a mere reaction, insisting by implication that the genre itself is a black genre, the genre of the antiphonal answer song, that "everything gonna be alright" is that old insistence of the blues on love, Big Mama Thornton, Muddy Waters, and again Curtis Mayfield and the Impressions 1963 ... *It's All Right*. Nina Simone, rather, when she responds to John Lennon, starts by situating herself in the milieu, in the middle of a revolution:

Hey we're in the middle of a revolution
Cause i see the face of things to come
Yeah, your Constitution
Well, my friend, it's gonna have to bend
I'm here to tell you about destruction
Of all the evil that will have to end.
Don't you know it's gonna be alright
It's gonna end. The evil's gonna end

Some folks are gonna get that notion
I know they'll say I'm preachin hate
but if i have to swim the ocean
well I will, just to communicate
its not as simple as talkin jive
the daily struggle just to stay alive
Don't you know its gonna be alright
Everything's gonna be alright

Singin' about a revolution
because we're talkin' 'bout a change
it's more than just evolution
well you know you got to clean your brain
the only way that we can stand in fact
is when you get your foot off our back
Dont you know it's gonna be alright
Everything's gonna be alright

In the midst of molecular revolution, it is "your constitution" that must bow. And if this is about destruction, it does not mean preaching hatred. It means, above all, "the destruction of all the evil that will have to end," of that hell where struggle for survival is commonplace, where black sociality is always under attack. Then, only when white destruction has an end, everything will be alright. And then it is not evolution, either, but real change, abolition, molecular revolution. "The only way that we can stand in fact / is when you get your foot off our back." A

direct announcement to all the white voices, not only the racist ones, but also those who see themselves as components of the revolution, at the same time a direct answer to John Lennon: only when you take your foot off my back, only when you take your feet off our backs, will it be alright. And Simone is referring to her friend Lorraine Hansberry, then already deceased, who is said to have told Kennedy at the Baldwin-Kennedy meeting, tellingly not named after her, in New York on May 24, 1963: "I am very worried about the state of the civilization which produced that photograph of the white cop standing on that Negro woman's neck in Birmingham." The white knee on the black woman's neck is still there. Nothing alright at all. Reason for immoderate impatience. Catastrophically, taking the foot off the neck, this completely unmetaphorical demand persists.

Mu, Nu, Countervoice.
Preliminary Remarks on a Musical History of Dividual Multiplicity

Sometime around the eleventh century, a poetic-musical form called muwashshah emerges in Al-Andalus.[165] The name comes from the Arabic word for a string of pearls strung horizontally, which, when further horizontal rows are added, creates vertical rows of color. Similarly, the poetic-musical form, which as Ibn Rushd suggests in the middle commentary on Aristotle's Poetics is sung rather than recited, repeats rhymes, thereby forming certain sound patterns. Strictly formed, the muwashshah consists of five to seven strophes, again divided into stanza (*bayt*) and refrain (*qufl*), and at the end a separate final refrain, the kharja, Arabic for "exit." The last lines of the verse before the kharja indicate that there will be a change of voice at the end, from the male singer of the verses to the female voice of the kharja. Phrases like "she said," "she sang," announce the female voice that will perform the ending.

The kharja may have already been there, as a popular tune sung by women, before it was placed at the end of a new muwashshah – with a recurring rhyme preceding it in the first line and in each refrain, in preparation for the climax at the end. Return

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165   I draw my knowledge primarily from a text by Karla Mallette, who, starting with a song first interpreted by Nina Simone in 1964, "(Don't Let Me Be) Misunderstood," and its more successful covers by the Animals (1965), Joe Cocker (1969), Santa Esmeralda (1977), and Alabina (1998), traces the epistemological and political history of the interpretation of the kharjas: Karla Mallette, "Misunderstood," *New Literature History*, 2004, 34: 677-697. Further: Roger Boase, "Arab Influences on European Love-Poetry," in Salma Khadra Jayyusi (ed.), *The Legacy of Muslim Spain*, Leiden/New York/Cologne: Brill 1992, 457-482; María Rosa Mendocal, "Al-Andalus and 1492: The Ways of Remembering," in: ibid, 483-504; Jerrilynn D. Dodds, María Rosa Mendocal, Abigail Krasner Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*, New Haven/London: Yale University 2008, 144-159.

of the rhyme in a new function in the final refrain, return of the (old) kharja in a different place, in the more complex form of the muwashshah, return of the same kharja in different muwashshahat, these are the ritornellos of the string of pearls, of the circling song, of the alinear return, of the ring song as a round dance "around linearity itself."[166] Yet, not only poetic registers and singing voices change with the kharja at the end of the muwashshah; the language also jumps from standard Arabic or Hebrew to a gibberish that uses a few or many words from the vernacular language that would one day become Spanish, or even from popular Andalusian Arabic. Manuscripts display verses, verse fragments, and sometimes simply interspersed words that are written in Arabic but come from vernacular languages.

The standard Arabic or Hebrew stanzas of the muwashshah are full of metaphors ranging from commonplaces to virtuoso invention, recited by a male voice, and usually their author is known. The kharja, on the other hand, quotes a pre-existing song, usually as popular as it is anonymous; the female voice that sings it mainly uses vernacular language. Even if it ends the song as an "exit," the kharja was already there before, alternative "opening," starting point of the stanzas performed before it. The classical stanzas and the classical authority of the male voice must align with the rhythm and rhyme of the kharja, with its preceding, female counter-singing.

The muwashshah is in most cases a love song. In various combinations of love of men and women and men and men it deals with distance and proximity, with the difficulties of approaching the beloved, with weeping over the absence and imagining the presence of love, with the traces of this fugitive and unattainable presence. It is thus not only an early culmination of a mutating form of voices, genders and languages, it is also part

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166   Dodds, Mendocal, Krasner Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy*, 153.

of the spread of a musical-literary and social phenomenon in Europe and beyond: the praise of *fine amour*, a love that, beyond possession, one can only be obsessed with, courtly love, the art of the trobadors, which continues to grow and spread into the mixed genres of mysticism. And it doesn't take much more than this great theme and otherwise asignificant lines of a melody, ritornellos that become aesthetically more probable with each return, even if the singers don't understand the content of their words. With the deterritorialization of these ritornellos, a second, little-explored translation movement occurs alongside the great undertakings of the complex translation of Arabic knowledge: the wandering of the sociopoetic machines through the Andalusian-Arabic space, through the Romance languages and their intertwining socialities emerging and differentiating in Castile, Aquitaine, and Provence, and later in northern France. Not progressing in unilateral movement, bracings of, for example, Andalusian and Provençal linguistic and poetic spaces arise with a multiplicity of minor lines that go back and forth, recurring here a rhythm, there a melody, here a topos, there an instrumental riff. Musicians and singers, aristocrats and poets, fugitives, more or less diplomatic envoys and ambassadors, prisoners and enslaved people translate these components of the socio-poetic machine, literally carry them over mountains and waters, translate them across geographic, linguistic, religious, sovereign boundaries.

In Christian territories, the names of Aquitanian dukes in particular, from the "first trobador," William IX of Aquitaine, to the twelfth century patroness of trobador poetry, Eleanor of Aquitaine, are associated with these practices. A century later, Marguerite Porete draws connections not only with the courtly themes of farnearness and the Alexander novels. Her nomadic text, the *Mirouer*, assembles the free souls, abstract machine of the secret meetings of a viral dissemblage emerging at the turn of the thirteenth to fourteenth century. And Marguerite also

varies the figure of the two voices of the muwashshah: her pro-
tagonist, the soul, assuming both functions at once. Chapter
80 of the *Mirouer* begins with a disclosure of this technique of
singing and counter-singing:

> Je chante,
> dit ceste Ame,
> l'une heure a chant,
> l'aultre a deschant,
> et tout pour ceulx qui ne sont mie encore frans,
> affin qu'ilz oyent aucuns poins de franchise,
> et quelle chose il convient,
> ains que on parviengne a elle.

This soul says she sings, but she sings in two different ways:
once *a chant*, in the Latin version *cum cantu,* then again *a deschant,
cum discantu*. She does this "for all those who are not yet free, so
that they may get to learn some aspects of freedom, and how to
get to it." Singing and counter-singing, voice and counter-voice.
Quickly read, just a description of a dialectical procedure, whe-
re different positions embody in dialogue the pros and cons of
the argument in order to discuss components of freedom and
the path to it, it turns out to be a very specific thought move-
ment guided by music theory. The soul sings, and it changes
from *cantus (firmus)* to *discantus*, from singing to counter-singing,
from the lower to the upper voice. The soul not only can sing,
it masters both vocal registers, and it also switches freely bet-
ween them. Just as *ceste Ame* and *Amour* generally deal with the
asymmetries of their relationship in playful ways, this change
of position indicates the refusal of any static standpoint in the
Mirouer. Based on the music-theoretical knowledge of the doc-
trine of counterpoint, the soul switches at its own discretion
between the registers of the cantus and the descant, gliding in
the middle of social asymmetries, between voices, registers, dif-
ferent ways of singing.

In the musical practice and the music-theoretical treatises of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, descant means different things[167]: first, in distinction to the cantus, it means the second voice, which joins the first voice under stricter or freer rules. This strictly two-voice phase of development, which in the fifteenth century leads to several versions of polyphony, implies a clearly linear-hierarchical disposition of the descant by the cantus. The lower voice, primary and first voice, cantus, enjoins the upper voice in the tonal range higher than the cantus. The descant is the adjoining second, secondary voice, compliant entourage of the first. Yet, in the High Middle Ages, descant does not only mean the second individual voice, but also, as distinguished from organum or counterpoint, a whole way of organizing and conjoining the voices. The use of a second voice involves the question how the voices sound together. The joining of the voices in descant is a technique that follows certain rules fixed and prescribed in the theoretical treatises, but which also allows a certain space for improvisation. This space continuously expanded from the first attempts at parallel and counter movements, such that the way of adding the descant to the cantus could be designed more freely. The descant voice remains subjoined voice, but it can be improvised in an increasingly unbound and virtuosic manner and ultimately perceived as a melody in its own right.

The concept of the descant is retained even with the development of polyphony, as the tenor replaces the voice of the cantus and the contratenor altus (later called alto) and contratenor bassus (later called bass) are placed above and below the tenor. In this new system, descant still means the highest voice. This voice, which is actually in the range of the female and child voices (later called soprano), is nevertheless often sung

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167   Cf. Ernst Apfel, *Diskant und Kontrapunkt in der Musiktheorie des 12. bis 15. Jahrhunderts,* Wilhelmshaven: Heinrichshofen 1982.

by men. The dis- in descant here does not mean an opposition or split, but the deterritorialization of singing in the high male voice. In Arabic-Andalusian, the practice of falsetto had been practiced since Ziryab and the ninth century, spreading across Europe with the trobadors. As music professionalized, the deterritorialized male voice prevailed, and consequentially the falsetto became differentiated in Baroque music. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, two concrete variants of this deterritorialization emerge: the Italian-Spanish variant of the castrato and the English variant of the counter-tenor. For the counter-tenor, deterritorialization means, as Deleuze and Guattari write, to sing above one's own voice, to sing beyond it.[168] Head voice, voice in the head, voice that goes not through the lungs but through the sinuses without ever relying on the diaphragm: *Look-a yonder*, singing higher and higher, going to the excess of the head voice. In contrast, the Latin practice of the castrato draws its voice from the base of the lungs and the abdomen (making it stronger and more voluminous). Referring to the everyday perception of castrato as a practice of mutilation, Deleuze comments, "the castrato lacks nothing." He conjoins a machinic assemblage that lacks nothing.[169] Two different expressions of becoming child, which, however, does not mean to sing as a child sings, to imitate the authentic voice of the child. On the contrary, the child reaches its complete artificiality in the disjoining of the voice of the castrati and counter-tenors. Deterritorialized voice, deterritorialized sound-child. Full affirmation of the term falsetto: *falsetto*, firstly "false" in the sense of the artificiality of becoming child, secondly "small" in the sense of the minor voice.

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168 Deleuze/Guattari, A *Thousand Plateaus*, 414. The primary source here is Dominique Fernandez's book *La Rose des Tudors* (Paris: Julliard 1976).

169 Cf. Deleuze' lecture from March 8, 1977, "Cours Vincennes: sur la musique, Cours du 08/03/1977," https://www.webdeleuze. com/textes/183: "le castrat c'est un agencement machinique qui ne manque de rien."

With the countertenors and castrati, the voice conjoins an assemblage, and the instruments accompany the voice. In contrast, in the symphonic music of the nineteenth century, a "democratization" occurs. Here, the voice no longer possesses the secret key to the musical assemblage, it becomes part, piece, one element among many. Equality of all voices, including those of the instruments, sym-phony. Instead of antiphony, counter-singing, and deterritorialization of the minor voices: community of all voices. Order and arrangement, fluid joining and fitting, calls to order by conductors and inner policemen. To become part of the symphonic whole, the joint must be jointed, the voice must sacrifice machinic multiplicity to a state apparatus that follows increasingly rigid rules in composition, training, and execution, and whose socius in the nineteenth century must give way to an anti-sociality of colonial and class-specific demarcation.[170]

But music plays, and it plays always already before it is played. There is no dichotomy of non-music and music, non-form and form, but rather a persistent molecular machine from which a song forms every now and then. "It didn't come from nowhere. If it came from nowhere, if it came from nothing, it is basically trying to let you know that you need a new theory of nothing and a new theory of nowhere."[171] Such a new theory of nothingness can be drawn from Marguerite Porete's becoming nothing in disjoining the self, from Simone Weil's concept of *dé-*

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170 Here, in a profoundly antisocial regime of discipline, the nation-state also gives rise to the impossible "desire for a larger collectivity that could celebrate an anthem." Nathaniel Mackey, *Splay Anthem*, New York: New Directions 2002, XI. But production of desire and of sociality only happen together and simultaneously, dividual desire and social machine. An anthem can only follow that desire, it can only come into being to celebrate it, only as an afterthought or revelation, and that is always already wrong. This is also why, for Nathaniel Mackey, the anthem can only be splay anthem, lag anthem (cf. the chapter so named in Mackey, *Splay Anthem,* 17-19).

171 Fred Moten in: Harney/Moten, *The Undercommons*, 129.

création, from Clarice Lispector's *Passion after G.H.*, from Karen Barad's ecologies of nothingness, or Nathaniel Mackey's poetry and the music to which he refers. Mackey's poetry of nothingness begins with mu, the Chinese and Japanese sign for not and nothingness. In the introduction to *Splay Anthem,* Mackey gives some indication of his concept of mu: "Proffered from time immemorial, poetry's perennial boon, it thrives on quixotic persistence, the increment or enablement language affords, promise and impossibility, rolled into one (Anuncia/Nunca)."[172] Power of enhancement, enhancement of power, announcement and never, announcement of nothingness, mu is radically not turned to the future, but rather motif of the always already "lost ground and elegiac allure recalling the Atlantis-like continent Mu, thought by some during the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century to have existed long ago in the Pacific." Turning his ear to the sunken and the past, Mackey listens to the voices of the submerged. Sunken islands and continents, lost memories of minoritarian resistance, work of longing, work of mourning. "Any longingly imagined, mourned, or remembered place, time, state, or condition can be called 'Mu'." Never, nowhere, nothing as becoming multiplicity, as announcement not insisting on a distant future. Rising and falling, somewhere on and under the surface, bracing the now-time with a submerged geological and historical layer, and if something is to be announced, it is announcement only of the never, nothing, nowhere, nobody.

In Latin, mu was the answer of one who does not want to be named. Mu says the one who cannot be found when she is named. Whoever calls her hears only mu. Marguerite Porete and the untraceable soul *sans nom* of the *Mirouer*, a many-turned *outis* from the Homeric Odyssey to *Ulysses,* the nameless savage of Heinrich Seuse's *Book of Truth,* it comes from nowhere, is nothing, wants nothing, as does Clarice Lispector's G.H.: "And I too have no

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172   Mackey, *Splay Anthem,* X.

name, and that is my name. And because I depersonalize myself to the point of not having my name, I reply whenever someone says: I."[173] N.N., "I," disappearing, becoming imperceptible, precisely not in the sense of violent erasure from representation and history, nor of the racist default settings of algorithms and predictions, nor of the material illegibility of non-normalized bodies. In "Pack Your Things," one of the columns in *An Apartment on Uranus*,[174] Paul B. Preciado not only writes, "Change your gender" and "Change your name," but also, "Change your ancestors." Change and expand your kinship, because "what walks on four paws or has wings is a friend." And the Brechtian instruction "Cover your tracks!" reads here, "Digitize nothing. Leave no traces." Nameless of all genders between mysticism and molecularity, messianism and materialism, mutate into nothingness.

But this becoming nothing in the loss of self and name is neither nihilistic in the classical sense, nor absorption in God, in the One. As mu in early Sinitic also means "many people in the forest," nothing is nothing else than dividual multiplicity, innumerable, indeterminable, indecipherable multiplicity. Multiplicity is dividual, and it cannot be numbered, cannot be determined, cannot be deciphered. By no means is it therefore undivided, formless, or arbitrary. It comes into being when dividual lines attract and are being drawn. Disjoined disposability. Becoming nothing means preserving the trace of the joint and the unruly subsistence of the subsisting in manifold disposability. Disjoining the self, unfolding dividual multiplicity. Becoming nothing is the transmutation of singularity and dividual dissemblage.

When Nathaniel Mackey brings mu into play, he also refers to Don Cherry and Ed Blackwell's *"Mu" First Part* (1969) and

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173　Lispector, *The Passion according to G.H.*, 97.

174　Paul B. Preciado, *An Apartment on Uranus*, Frankfurt/ Main: Suhrkamp 2020, here: 259-261.

"Mu" Second Part (1970), or to "Mu" that opens the Sun Ra album *Atlantis.* In *The Universal Machine,* Fred Moten adds that in "Mutron," the opener of the LP *El Corazon* (1982), another duet by Blackwell and Cherry, something happens between the time coordinates 2'29" and 2'30" that is taken for silence, namely, nothing.[175] Mackey describes in his introduction to *Splay Anthem* how in both *Mu* albums Don Cherry uses not only his trumpet but also various other instruments, including his voice, which makes a sort of dove-coo as baby talk and percussion sounds.[176] This too is a becoming-child of the voice, and later asignificance of the voice in sounds of becoming-animal.

In 1960 Don Cherry was part of Ornette Coleman's double quartet on the genre-founding album *Free Jazz: A Collective Improvisation,* and he further developed collective improvisation into *Complete Communion* in 1965. On *Symphony for the Improvisers,* "Nu" is indicative of the fact that improvisation also subverts the symphonic. Recorded in 1966 and featuring Ed Blackwell, Gato Barbieri, and Pharoah Sanders, among others, "Nu Creative Love" and "Om Nu" are two hints at the newness of nu. In the mid-1980s, Cherry forms a group with Ed Blackwell and others that he calls Nu. Even in the duet of drums and trumpet in the 1982 "Mutron," there is a moment to be thought of, as Fred Moten writes, in terms of the relation between fantasy and nothingness: "what is mistaken for silence is, all of a sudden, transubstantial."[177] For lack of a better word we call it silence, but also: "a suboceanic sense of the preterition-borne by a common particle in the double expanse-that makes vessels run over or overturn. The temporal coordinates 2'29" and 2'30" mark the non-inbetweenness and mobile location of the span,

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175   Fred Moten, *The Universal Machine*, Durham: Duke 2018, 200.

176   Mackey, *Splay Anthem*, IX.

177   Moten, *The Universal Machine,* 199.

so we can consider that what is mistaken for silence can also be given in and as nothingness in its full transubstantiality, but also the compression and dispersion, the condensation and displacement, of caged duration, the marking more emphatically of its beginning and end, and, especially, the concentrated air of its propulsion that shows up as waiting, *Erwartung**, embarrassment in our expectation, Blackwell's antic anticipatory pulse."[178] Ed Blackwell swirls a bit, the snare drum rolls, and then – just in time – leaves a bit of space before Don Cherry's trumpet begins the catchiest riff of the freely improvised "Mutron." Free improvisation means that the drummer cannot know what is coming, and yet he leaves that second of cymbal decay, air, emptiness, "silence," so that the blues theme and the blast of the trumpet can set a beginning right on the one, without syncopation, which makes the free flow swing in its middle. Expectation that comes from the past. Not expectation as *anuncia*, as future-oriented announcement, anticipation of what is to come, but that mutual expectation from past collaboration that has its claim on the return of weak messianic tones, runs, and grooves. Being eager for what was. Tense and relaxed, lurking, waiting for a soft bracing to flit past, "condensation and displacement of caged duration," the nu.

Hypophonic apposition to the violence of confinement, insofar as this apposition, addition, subjoining is primary, always prior to the violence that responds to these subsonic, subsubstantial sounds. "Unasking takes the form of a caesura, an arrhythmia of the iron system that Blackwell presses into the interruptive, already interrupted New Orleans continuum of his roll whose distended rearticulation stretches out so you can go down in it enough to think about what it means to be somewhere you're only supposed to be going through, to be contained in the atopic atemporality that propels you, as the immanence of

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178   Ibid, 200.

the transcendental hallway of our endless preparation, our experimental trial, given as our ongoing study of how to speak, the terrible beauty of our imprisonment in the passage, our life in the folds. Blackwell asks a question that Cherry anticipates, but by which Cherry is driven and to which Cherry responds in the bent, appositional reflection that unasks it."[179] Dilatation of the present, silence, nu. "Silence is a rhythm, too," as the Slits claim before that, in 1980, with Cherry's daughter Neneh Cherry, "In the Beginning there was Rhythm."

Rhythm of multiplicity, music before and before music, music around music, mu-sic that, as Harney and Moten bracing with Mackey affirm, braces black sociality and thingliness and becoming-nothing: "music which is not only music, is mobilized in the service of an eccentricity, a centrifugal force whose intimation Mackey also approaches, marking sociality's ecstatic existence beyond beginning and end, ends and means, out where one becomes interested in things, in a certain relationship between thingliness and nothingness and blackness that plays itself out in unmapped, unmappable undercommon consent and consensuality."[180] Voices already singing, the vocal swarm of the sociopoetic machine, its voices are already singing, territorialized voices and their vocal territory, music already playing, in the foyers and dressing rooms and other sociopoetic territories, their voices are already singing, out there, for a cigarette, before the show starts, at the bar, before the box offices, or staying outside at all, staying in the streets, a noise in the alleys, murmuring and nattering of anti- and hypophonal voice assemblages. Music in the narrower sense begins only with the deterritorialization of the voice. Out of the subjuncture a disjoiture disjoins, a minor voice, which breaks loose from its ground around, and it "assembles itself an

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179   Ibid, 211.

180   Harney/Moten, *The Undercommons*, 116.

assemblage, it assembles in itself an assemblage."[181] This music begins when the minor voice begins, when the voice begins to sing – if it is forward, in the upbeat or the syncopation; it begins when the voice begins to lose itself in singing. And when the minor voice lets itself remain minor, lets itself go, it also lets go the binary logic of gender. The falsetto voice loses itself, and it queers the binary apparatus, leaves the difference of gender. It flouts the order of male/female gendered voices, defects from professional binarisms, unprofessional, minoritarian.

Mu finally, as in Muni, the bird language, the speaking, the singing of the red-beaked birds that Nathaniel Mackey teaches us in "Sound and Semblance,"[182] the runs of Charlie Parker's alto, also such a bird, so fast that they can't catch him, with runs running away in such a queer way that they can't capture them, with turns so indigestible that they can't eat them. Once they've caught him, he is already somewhere else.

The mu and its nu. Mu is the duration of dividual multiplicity, and nu is the time joint that emerges from this duration. Nu is the small gate in which all future becomes disenchanted and plunges into the past; is the present, and yet more than a point, the widening of the joint, dilatation of the instant. "Love halted. [...] And the available present."[183]

Molecular mu-tation, *mouer,* mystical mu, "move on up!" Muance, nuance, nuh, nub, noon. The nu, the now is also high noon of insurrection. In an instant, even the anthem remembers its antiphonic potential, the counter-singing, the rejoinder that comes from dividual multiplicity and inundates it, hypophonic

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181   Deleuze, "Cours Vincennes: sur la musique, Cours du 08/03/1977": "it forms itself an arrangement, it forms in itself an arrangement."

182   Mackey, *Splay Anthem*, XV and 56.

183   Lispector, *The Passion according to G.H.*, 86.

dissemblage instead of symphony, orgic collaboration of desiring and sociopoetic machines instead of "hymn to …." And from the singular minor voices a dividual un-orchestra of minorities emerges, from the disjointure and its assemblage comes a non/conformist dissemblage. In Chigozie Obioma's *Orchestra of Minorities,* it is the hawk that has fetched a chick which causes the chickens to rejoin, to sing a common lament in their fragility and vulnerability. Song of the chickens, shorn groove of an organless orchestra, crying together, humming together, singing together.[184] They raise their minor voices, insects, mutes, poors, mice, chickens, Ringos, all those who are said not to be able to sing.

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184   Obioma, *Orchestra of Minorities*, 97-98.

Ritornello 20, 1602-1197.
Unruly glosses. Hamlet and no end

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185   "Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of / me! You would play
upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of
my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass:
and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet you cannot make
it speak. 'Sblood, do you think I am / easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me
what / instrument you will, though you can fret me, yet you / cannot play upon me."
It is the end of the second scene of the third act, and Hamlet is to be questioned
for his mother, the queen, about the purpose of the courtly reenactment of his
father's murder by a theatrical troupe that he has commissioned. Hamlet objects
to this all-too-obvious tactic, to being made an "unworthy thing," to being played
upon as if he were an instrument. "You want to play on me, you want to pretend
that you know my fingerings. You want to pluck out the heart of my mystery, you
want to make me sound from my lowest note to the highest note of my vocal
range." Playing Hamlet, playing on Hamlet, so that his deepest secrets are turned
into tones. Tracing, sounding, tapping, listening to the whole body, interrogating
the soul. "And there is a lot of music, excellent voice in this small organ." The
organ is small, the body organless, and yet there is a surplus of music in it. "And
yet you cannot make it speak!" Disjointure, far too much of music to pin down,
to assign, to appropriate. Dissemblage, far too indeterminable, unforeseeable, un-
predictable. "Do you think I am easier to play than a flute? Call me whatever
instrument, you may detune me, but you cannot play me." You can tease Hamlet,
but if you want to play him like a musical instrument, to touch his frets and detune
him, a machine will come to light that is not to be played or trifled with. No tool
in whosoever service, it cannot be played, it cannot be served, it cannot be enjoined.

186   The canonical theorization of the enjoined-compliant joint is found in Martin
Heidegger's essay "Anaximander's Saying," published in *Holzwege*, in English *On
the Beaten Track* (translated by Julian Young and Kenneth Haynes Cambridge: Cam-
bridge University 2002 [1950], 242-281), which is based on an undated manuscript
for a 1942 lecture that was not given (vol. 78 of the Gesamtausgabe, Frankfurt/
Main: Klostermann 2010). In his interpretation of Anaximander's saying, Heide-
gger concedes that the joint belongs to presencing, *Anwesen*, "together with the

possibility of being out of joint" (267). The joint, the connotation here being primarily temporal, is the while between two absences, between coming hither and going away, coming into being and passing. The space of the present, however, "is not something that lies, like a severed slice, sandwiched between two absences" (263); it is, "in both directions, enjoined toward absence" (267). The joint "enjoins presence toward a twofold absence" (ibid). It is transition from arrival to departure. "It does not fall victim to dis-jointure. It overcomes dis-order." (269) The dis-jointure is indeed part, even a "fundamental trait of what is present" (266), but at the same time it is mere insistence, hardening on a present without jointing. For Heidegger, the dis-jointure is insurrection against the origin from the concealed and against the return into it. But this insurrection must necessarily learn to obey the jointing of order. Heidegger interprets its insistence as "boundless fixation" on dispersion (272), its consequence as release "into the reckless dis-order" (273). Here, it becomes clear that Heidegger's theorization allows for dis-jointure exclusively as a transition, while "the present presences by surmounting the dis- of disorder" (274). Just as the possibility of being out of joint is only added to the joint, the dis-jointure must be jointed and disposed in time and space.

In *Specters of Marx,* Jacques Derrida asks with, and yet against, Heidegger about that "spectral moment" that "is not docile to time" (XIX), about "a radically dis-jointed time, without certain conjunction," "beside itself" (20). Against the compulsion of joining, deconstruction "remains, and must remain (that is the injunction) in the disjointure of the *Un-Fug*" (33). It is this "inevitable totalizing horizon," that is the all-too-high risk Heidegger takes when he gives priority "to the same (*Versammlung, Fuge, legein,* and so forth) over the disjunction [...], over the interruption [...], over a difference whose uniqueness, disseminated in the innumerable charred fragments of the absolute mixed in with the cinders, will never be assured in the One." (34) The dissemblage cannot and will not calm down, join itself into the joint, it remains in and out of joint. And "Hamlet could never know the peace of a 'good ending'." (Ibid)

187   In the 1000 pages of *Ulysses,* James Joyce made Hamlet the manifold object of investigation and reference of not only Stephen Dedalus, as a woman, as the twin of William Shakespeare's son Hamnet, as a gimlet, cheap cocktail, as an Irishman, as the substance of the spirit, consubstantiality. "He is a ghost, a shadow now, the wind by Elsinore's rock or what you will, the sea's voice, a voice heard only in the heart of him who is the substance of his shadow, the son consubstantial with the father" (252). In the process time also gets out of joint, for example like this: "It's quite simple. He [Stephen Dedalus] proves by algebra that Hamlet's grandson is Shakespeare's grandfather and that he himself is the ghost of his own father" (21). And they see Her, Poly Bloom Elias, *amid clouds of angels ascend to the glory of the brightness at an angle of fortyfive degrees over* Enrique's in Calle Lagunillas *like a shot*

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Missing fonts

Junicode Nothing

Replaced by default font.

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off a shovel.

188 The renewed engagement with *Ulysses* and *Hamlet* stems from an invitation by Dimitrina Sevova to write a lecture as part of her project for the Cultural Capital Plovdiv 2019: http://digital-ecologies.arttoday.org/. The framework of the introduction also emerged in the discussion of Alan Roth's translation work for this lecture. Max Heinrich's annotations contributed to further queering.

189 The second act of Marcelo Expósito's video work *No reconciliados (nadie sabe lo que un cuerpo puede)* is titled "Hamlet in Argentina. Theatre as a Laboratory of Social Fantasy." It builds on the documentation of a performance of Heiner Müller's *Hamletmachine* in Buenos Aires in 1995. The experimental theater group "el periférico de objetos" shocks the audience with a machinic puppet/human theater that deconstructs President Menem's neoliberal Argentina as built on the disappeared and murdered of the military dictatorship and on the silence that surrounded these crimes. The violent and cruelly torturous work on the puppets, objects, and materials actualizes the "Sun of Torture" in every detail. Hamlet stands at the shore and talks with the surf BLABLA, this time with the ruins of Argentina behind him. But in spaces around the performance of the puppet theater a movement emerges that in the early 2000s leads not only to a reappraisal of the crimes of the military dictatorship, but also to revolt against the corrupt governments.

190 In 1197 Ibn Rushd is still waiting in exile for the assembly whose return he has lurked around waiting for all his life. Not for a single Chi or Djinn to appear, as imagined by Salman Rushdie, but for the return of many ghosts of a forbidden assembly, a revolt of souls, wild translations, dividual thinking in the mode of commentary. And in the end, Ibn Rushd himself remains a ghost, because no one has ever described him, made an image of him, "no historian has described the forms of his face." (Jorge Luis Borges, "Averroes' Search," in ibid, *Collected Fictions,* translated by Andrew Hurley, London: Penguin 1999).

From: Koko Studio
Sent: Monday, 10 November 2014 11:46
To: Raunig Gerald
Subject: Re: DIVIDUUM

Dear Gerald, all files came through fine.
I prepared the core for printing.
Please check one last time if everything is correct.
The word "dissemblage" on the last page should be removed? :)
:]

From Unmunt to Dissemblage

In humanist and medievalist discourses, the twelfth and thir-
teenth centuries have long been described as the period of
an early Renaissance, but also as the age of a "first enlighten-
ment."[191] The philosophical developments of the Arab world
and their translations into Latin created a climate in Europe
that allowed the sciences to flourish, and with that the institu-
tional development of law schools, medical schools, cathedral
schools, and eventually universities. This "first enlightenment"
reached Europe not least through Al-Andalus, through transla-
tion assemblages in Toledo and elsewhere. But what if this "first
enlightenment," the movements of the twelfth and thirteenth
centuries, and not only them, were understood not as just a pre-
cursor to the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century, but as
an inverse enlightenment, a turbid and troubled enlightenment
beneath the Enlightenment, before and before the Enlighten-
ment, a subjoined, unruly, queer enlightenment? If, alongside
the great showdowns between the scholastic precursors of En-
lightenment and the propagandist precursors of Counter-En-
lightenment, of crusade and holy war, a very different line came
into view, the fragile-dividual line of translation in all directions,
of beguinic disjointure, of mystical excess, of the return of en-
lightenment out of joint? What if Kant's inferior vanguard did

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191   This concept of a "first Enlightenment" probably originates from Johann Gottfried
      Herder, who wrote in the *Letters for the Promotion of Humanity* in 1796, "The phe-
      nomenon itself, that *the first Enlightenment* began for *all of Europe* at the borders of
      Arab territory, both in Spain and in Sicily, is strange and also decisive for a large
      part of its consequences." (Letter 85) Cf. Emilio Gonzalez-Ferrin, "Al-Andalus.
      The First Enlightenment," in *Critical Muslim* 6 (April 2013). For a conceptualiza-
      tion of a "Renaissance in the *Twelfth* Century," see Charles Homer Haskins, *The
      Renaissance of the Twelfth Century,* Cambridge (Massachusetts): Harvard 1971, and
      Alexander Fidora and Andreas Niederberger, "Der Streit um die Renaissance im 12.
      Jahrhundert – Eine Gesellschaft im Spannungsfeld zwischen Humanismus, Wis-
      senschaft und Religiosität," in *Convenit Selecta* 3 (2000), 7-26.

not desire the "emergence from self-incurred immaturity" but an exit from the self as permanent self-appropriation and self-government, *unmunt* as temporally and socially overflowing minority, eternal becoming minor and mutual indebtedness?

Unmunt means to refuse patriarchal protection, government, control, and to do so from both sides of the *munt*, the *manus*, the sovereign paternal hand. It means to subjoin a dissemblage, a blurred multitude, a non/conformist swarm to this violence, which goes hand in hand with isolation and obedience. Such a swarm is impatiently patient, dispersed and intangible, only ever passing through. "Its *Unmündigkeit**," writes Fred Moten, "translated as 'minority' or 'immaturity,' is, more literally, unprotectedness, or, perhaps, what it is to be ungoverned, as what is out of hand or unhanded (as if Spillers' echo anticipates this) in having been handed; not in hand, not in good hands, ungrasped, unowned, passed around."[192] Escaping from the father's *munt*, from the slaveholder's hand, from his protection, which is dominion, and yet remaining underage, unwilling and unable to be of age, always remaining before and before the *Vor-mund*, the guardian, staying immature, unappropriated and unappropriatable, unfit for all property, satisfied with use, occupation, and inhabitation, fallen and still falling, unsettlable, unsettled, not possessing even one's self, but possessed by the many, by the improper ghosts, by the voice mates in *unmunt*. To become minor is to fall into this multiplicity, into the world of things, unprotected, without paternal protection, vulnerable, fragile, but not alone, into a world in which things do not show themselves to us, but mutual showing constitutes the world, mutual seeing, mutual knowing. "Everything looks at everything," writes Clari-

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192   Fred Moten, *The Universal Machine*, X. Most relevant in Fred Moten's writing is the perspective of the genealogy of the Atlantic slave trade, the connotations of *manus* as the hand of the slaveholder in phrases such as "out of hand," "unhanded," "having been handed," "not in hand," etc. See also Harney/Moten, *The Undercommons,* 27f.

ce Lispector in *The Passion according to G.H.*, "everything lives the other; in this desert things know things."[193] The other side of reification is becoming-thing, transmutation, which never arrives at the being-thing in reification, always continuing to transform as becoming minor, becoming similar, becoming nothing, minor in bracing with the things. And Fred Moten asks further: "What is the relation of fallenness and minority? What does it mean for no-thingness to have fallen into the world of things, to have fallen into a state of radical inauthenticity insofar as our talk is idle and our relation to things is one in which we do not grasp them, as if their showing is, in the first instance, not for us – as if, instead, world was always being reconstituted as a mutual showing?"[194] Moten formulates these questions to the ghost of Immanuel Kant, who simultaneously "sees and is determined not to see" the *Ausgang** in "What is Enlightenment?," "the general gift, the consent of the ones who are out of hand, unowned, ungrasped, fallen, falling."[195] Majority is based on self-seclusion and on renouncing mutual giving and the dissemblages' consent. The autonomous and sovereign subject who can emancipate from the *munt* by creating his own *munt* power is based on the devaluation and exclusion of everything that is minor, not human, not white, not male. Against this backdrop, Fred Moten turns Kant's self-incurred minority around and around, until indebtedness and immaturity can only be interpreted as mutual indebtedness, as queer, more-than-human bracing of dissemblages. "In order not to fly off the handle, not to have his hand or head fly off in some anti- and ante-analytic traversal and retraversal of every Königsberg bridge, Kant pulls back from the general impropriety, that he also gestures toward or opens onto the dark time or black time of the enlightenment's

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193   Lispector, *The Passion according to G.H.*, 36.

194   Moten, *The Universal Machine*, X.

195   Ibid.

commonunderground, the double edge of the fact that modern times have only ever been dark. This *longtemps* of darkness and its black light, its open and general obscurity, is seen by everybody but the overseer in his blindness."[196]

Nina Simone's and Gilles Deleuze's immanent hell down here, Stefan's and Stefano's and Stephen's noctambulism, Clarice Lispector's cockroach eclipse, all persistent turbidity of Donna Haraway's trouble. Those in the dark, one does not see. And if artificial illumination falls on things that have their place in the shadows, they step into a false light. The sharp eye of the Enlightenment wants to recognize, and it sees nothing(ness) when it looks into the darkness that subjoins it. The darkness of the modern age is the subjuncture of the Enlightenment, its joints and disjointures emerge in a queer middle age, and with them the dissemblage emerges: *Ungefüge*. In Old High German *ungifuogi*, in Middle High German *ungevuoge,* stands for something naughty, inopportune, akward, cloddish. Here dissemblage is already not only *Un*-gefüge, dis-assemblage and dis-obedience, not only negation of technical and moral fitting, joining and disposability, but something positively monstrous, outrageous, hulking, explosive force of the tremendously big and the infinitely small, in mu and in nu. Not formless and shapeless abyss, undivided one, but divisible, divided, folded multitude. The dissemblage is not negation of the assemblage, it is before and before assembling and joining, dividual division, multiplicity. It is always already divided and composed, fractures and bonds, gaps and seams. It is composed of different parts, parts of things, machines, ghosts, humans, animals, and these parts can never be put together completely, they join in unwillingness, are never well joined, never whole, never complete. If the joints expand, the dissemblage can widely disperse, still brace the most distant. The dissemblage is unruly, non/conforming outwardly and

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196   Ibid, XI.

inwardly. The things that constitute it need not conform, align, conjoin. Disjoined, in underworlds, unearthly, the dissemblage drifts in turbidity, there it lets itself drift, and it stays with dividual trouble.

How can the dissemblage evade unification, completion, totalization, becoming a *Volk*, a closed and self-contained community, a fascistoid machine, a mob of "Wutbürger"? There is no general antidote against the imminent capture of the dissemblage by state apparatuses, nor against its unification in the community form. And even when it comes today to forms of individual and collective disobedience turned into open hate speech and hate campaigns, there can be no universal rules or ready-made recipes once and for all. Yet again, the three components of Gilbert's concept *dividuum*, aligned against identity, substance, and individuality, can serve as conceptual machines: similarity, subsistence, dividuality.

These conceptual machines join with minor voices and falsetto shallows, indices of a queer masculinity that does not conjoin with the impositions of fathers and brothers, renegade from sovereignty and appropriation, unconformable to the standard measure, to the ignorant who do not know because they are disinterested, to the empathy-less who can afford their lack of compassion, to the one-eyed who see nothing because they are incapable of recognizing, let alone differentiating the non-normalized, to the secure who are secure because they are limited to themselves, and carefree because they know no care. "Man, who's this they you talking so much about?" somebody asks the veteran, the voice of wisdom in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* who is interned in an asylum for the semi-insane, and he replies, "They? Why, the same they we always mean, the white folks, authority, the gods, fate, circumstances — the force that pulls your strings until you refuse to be pulled any more. The

big man who's never there, where you think he is."[197] Never arriving at that standard measure, never becoming a real man, never becoming a great man, never becoming real big, never of age, never really white. Before and before the *Vormund,* the guardian, lies the *unmunt* of minor masculinity. A life in falsetto. In the socio-poetry of the falsetto, the minor voice withdraws from the majority that is inflicted upon it, into which it is enjoined and conjoined, into which it no longer wants to join. The minor voice is minor in the sense that it does not simply fit into the numbering logic of majority and minority, in that it defects from the paternal, divine, algorithmic en/joinings, disposable only to the innumerable multitude. The minor voice is not a diminished, inhibited, reduced voice. It lets itself drift, in the excess of the subjuncture of which it is a part, in the noise of the ground around and in the songs of the things in the surround. It lets itself fall, fall apart rather than fall down.

If *unmunt* means refusing patriarchal protection from both sides of *munt* power, then minor masculinity not only refuses to be major, but also transforms the aspect of patriarchal protection-giving, governing, controlling into something else. Queer, minor masculinity immaturely cares for dividual desire instead of satisfying interests and needs. Care, sweetness, softness are not character traits or gift packages, but mutual machines, multiplicity of care relations, care in the plural. Fragile, fugitive falsetto, leaning back in becoming minor, sinking into multiplicity. Its *unmunt* is the disjointure that lets its voice become minor, refusing government and self-government, disjoining the self, and that lets it become more in the composition of the dissemblages.

When the self disjoins into nothingness, it does not dissolve into God, the divine love, the holy spirit, but lets itself fall into the manifold multitude, all-disposable dissemblage. Selves out

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197 Ellison, *The Invisible Man*, 86.

of joint, machinic disjoining, ever new variants of windy songs, pet tunes, favorite voices. Their whispers sometimes make no sense, no matter how closely we listen. Kindred souls do not speak one language. Hypophonal choirs, asignifying music. All native language is pervaded by minor voices, many tongues, unruly winds. No blood and soil and mono- and homolinguality. Blown away descendants according to Donna Haraway when she thinks about oddkin and seed-dispersing generations;[198] drifty kin, braced kin, soul mates, *ames*, *animae* made kin by an unruly wind. Never wanting to be Slovenian, never arriving in the Slovenian. Becoming Slovenian, yes, but never wanting to have the Slovenian, never wanting to possess it, never wanting to appropriate it, to capture it. Even if one believes to possess something of it, to interpret this possession as an obsession, an occupation, a poor possession. Out of joint, in the joints, lurking for the joints. Then the wind comes in, and with it the windy, Wendy, Windish kin.

> Becoming Slovene without a word of Slovene? In a letter to Gershom Sholem, Walter Benjamin writes about the translation of his "Berlin Childhood around Nineteen Hundred" into French:
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>> The translator doesn't know a word of German. The technique with which we proceed is, as you can imagine, not of cardboard. What emerges, however, is almost consistently excellent.[199]
>
> Becoming Windish without a word of Windish, but not without wind, not without wending, not without transmutation. Unruly wind, which makes the dissemblage of Wends and Windish become intangible, void, as in the Greek *anemolios*,

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198   Donna Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble. Making Kin in the Chthulucene*, Durham and London: Duke University 2016, especially chapter 4, 99-103.

199   Walter Benjamin, Gershom Sholem, *Briefwechsel,* Frankfurt/ Main: Suhrkamp 1980, 92.

windy as that which cannot be captured. From the point of view of the linguistic standard measure, the "Wends" stood for the unknown, not exactly identifiable, vernaculars, Slavs. Analogously, until the nineteenth century, "Windish" was used as a German synonym for "Slavic," later for "Slovene," and increasingly as "subordinate," "small peasant," "rural," "backward" in contrast to the dominant German language of the bourgeois upper class. In the twentieth century, it narrowed ideologically to those willing to assimilate, the "German-friendly," "homeland-loyal Slovenes." This development can be described as a split of the Slovene minority into loyalty and betrayal, assimilated Windish and Yugoslavia-oriented Carinthian Slovenes. From both sides of this split, Windish can pejoratively signify agile and windy in the sense of opportunistic adaptation, but it can also refer to the limbo, the escape from the opposition of Slavic and Germanic, in which the Windish remains in the murk, in the joints. Not a simple hybridization, not a mixed language, but a line of flight, a "continuum of transformation."[200] This is what Benjamin called the practice of translation in an early essay, this is how the best musicians spoke Slovenian or Windish or Sinti with each other or switched without circumstance or transition between the minor languages and the dominant language, when their improvisations pushed the production of desire in the Uni-Club and the Comm-Center, combined with the softness and care of the hippie latecomers, when jazz was not the sound of dead jellyfish but a pulsating social machine, a desiring machine that braces music and social struggles. The sounds, the rumbles, the row were audible in the 1970s

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200 Walter Benjamin, "On language as such and on the language of man," in ibid, *Selected Writing*, Vol. 1, 1913-1926, Cambridge: Belknap 1996, 62-74, here: 70; cf. also Stefan Nowotny's translation-theoretical essay "Kontinua der Verwandlung," in Boris Buden / Stefan Nowotny, *Übersetzung. Das Versprechen eines Begriffs*, Vienna: Turia + Kant 2008, 95-130.

in different ways, as outside of capitalism on the other side of the Ljubelj Pass, as possibility of a communist workers' self-management, echoed in the minor voices on this side of the Ljubelj and their minoritarian struggles. With this, the old meaning of Windish as "twisted," "strange," "disorderly" always resonated. Windish like a leaflet in the wind. A subjectivation traversing all dichotomies, a freshening wind, a storm blowing through the joints.

Ritornello 21, 2018/2000/2017/2006/2009/2011/2002/
2012/2011/2019/2007/2000/ 2004/2011.

Return of the Nu, Return of Dissemblages

[: July 19, 2018. *At 10 pm, after two and a half hours marching through the city, the protest turns onto Calle Larios, the central boulevard in Málaga's city center. A wave goodbye to the vehicle carrying the band that had been leading the protest for so long, and the march against the threatening eviction of Casa Invisible moves on into the pedestrian zone. Suddenly, unannounced, the first seven rows of* superheroínas invisibles *begin to run, not quite so "invisible" superheroines, overtaking the six-man police line and running all the way to Plaza de la Constitución where the final rally is to take place. Unruly flight, breaking the patterns of consumption and movement in the expensive shopping mile, stares of disbelief from passersby, even most participants in the protest are astounded by what is possible on this day.*

"Yes, no, it's a vehicle, but not really, but they won't get far with it ..." (Vienna, February 5, 2000, *policeman speaking into his radio, desperately struggling for terms on the edge of the Rechtswalzer). The object trundles and stomps on the spot. It deforms, takes on other shapes, collapses, straightens up again. Shortly after rolling to one side, it falls back to the other, falls apart and impends to disintegrate. Then it rears up, four meters high, suddenly accelerates and is driven down the street towards the Hofburg, towards the wall of police, rolls over a few people on the way and accelerates, apparently to make a breakthrough. It hits the wall and, unlike usual, it doesn't bounce off, but nestles against it, transferring its own nature to that of the wall and pushing it back slightly, creeping along it, looking for a gap, a place where the opposition softens. To the left and to the right it moves, rubbing against the wall. Here and there, slight gaps open up, but not big enough to slip through and puff up again*

on the other side, through the narrowness of the Hofburg and into the hustle and bustle of the boring masses. Sliding along the wall, pressing forward, it penetrates the pores of the wall, flowing between the bodies, trying to spread open the spaces in between. But the wall hardens and repels it again. And just as suddenly as the rolling up comes the retreat, in its unpredictable, uneven and yet flowing movement. The fifteen activists of Performing Resistance keep losing their grip on the object they are processing. The bundle of huge, five-by-five tubular tires, makeshiftly held together by tape and a few ropes, almost four meters high, wide, long, almost falls apart again and again in the doing. It seems to cause the disjointedness of the individuals as much as it is conditioned by it. For some time it curls, some want to go back to the Hofburg to break through to Michaelerplatz, others in the opposite direction, through the Burgtor to the Ring, still others resist moving forward at all. Thus the thing paws at the spot, moves in a circle, trundles and produces more and more unrest, including among bystanders. And then it starts again. Against the police chain at the entrance to the Hofburg, with the tailwind of the rapidly swelling choruses of resistance. The links of the chain, consistently with the diffuse setting, react in different ways, in confusion. Involuntarily involved in the game, they drive the object in the other direction and push it away from them, some retreating, others offensively intervening in the movement. The police as part of the Rechtswalzer. Even if adrenaline and aggression run high, physicality plays out over the object, over the soft material, more play than fight, more bending than breaking, too uncertain terrain to feign safety, too fiddling to work up into a frenzy, but extremely suitable for dirtying the uniform.

Since 2017, a movement has been spreading from Latin America that builds on the March 8 Day of Women's Struggle as the pivot and boiling point of an intersectional and transversal struggle. What is enormous is not only the number of participants in the strike – in Spain there were over five million in 2018. The feminist strike is also an example of contemporary struggles beyond measure. The time of this transformation is now-time, its pure means the feminist-molecular strike: not a holiday strike that merely modifies the conditions of subjugation and subservience, nor a strike that

leads from one state to another, from one legal order to another, from one subjugation to another. It is a strike that pervades the molecules of machinic sociality and interrupts, overturns, reverses the measureless time of machinic capitalism. Molecularly, the strike affects the pores, the molecules of everyday life, and as everyday epiphany, breaking in and breaking with subservience in machinic capitalism. The molecular-feminist strike is not just a single moment, before which and towards which there is feverish anticipation and which is then merely documented and reflected upon; it is the chain of assemblies, actions, assemblages of affects, images, and texts that spills over into the everyday life of those involved and even those not directly involved. Starting from the concept of Women's Struggle Day, March 8, this present expands in all directions. Foldings and floodings of time: the molecular-feminist strike is a swirling and disruptive movement, in memory of Rosa Luxemburg's image of the mass strike as a manifold bubbling and re-seeping into the ground, as an ocean wave which "is divided into an enormous network of narrow streams. [...] all of this flows chaotically, it disperses, it intersects, it overflows ...."

From and within the theoretical surround of the Italian Autonomia and the fabbrica diffusa*, a new generation of activist researchers emerged in the last decade, taking up current interpretations of the knowledge factory and setting their field of action, far beyond Italy, as global. It is not without reason that the transnational network of activists in education gave itself the name edu-factory. The factory in question here is once again the factory of knowledge, but this time in its twofold form: the old figure of the university in its relation of exchange with the supposed social and territorial outside, society and the metropolises, and also more diffuse assemblages of institutions and cooperative networks of knowledge production. The edu-factory mailing list was launched in 2006, with topics around the neoliberal transformation of universities and forms of conflict in knowledge production. The first round of discussions focused on conflicts in universities, the second on the hierarchization of the education market and the constitution of autonomous institutions. And it is these two lines that determine the edu-factory's relationship to the university, its double exodus*

strategy. Exodus here does not simply mean exodus from the university, but rather struggle for autonomous free spaces in the university and at the same time self-organization and auto-formazione *beyond the existing institutions. Just in time for the* onda anomala*, the wave of protests, occupations and strikes at Italian universities at the end of 2008, the edu-factory collective published the book* L'università globale: il nuovo mercato del sapere. *The anthology summarized the most important texts of the online discussions and, with many presentations throughout Italy, became a fulcrum of the discourses that helped fuel and accompany the struggles of the* onda anomala.

In October 2009, four months after the end of the Zagreb occupation, first the auditorium of the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts is occupied, then two days later the largest lecture hall in Austria, the Audimax at Vienna University. This occupation will last two months, longer than ever before in Austria. Under the slogan #unibrennt there is self-organized education, eating, living, sleeping in the occupied university. Its territories expand to the surrounding rooms and lecture halls to build an infrastructure: people's kitchen, dormitories, queer-feminist spaces, spaces for working groups and additional events. After five days, the occupation movement spreads to other Austrian cities, and in early November there is a chain of Audimax occupations in Germany, Switzerland, and other European countries. From the beginning, the Audimax occupiers in Vienna act on the basis of radical inclusion, self-organization, and self-management, declare the plenum as the central place of decision-making, and set up a significant number of working groups. They do not appoint press spokespersons or other representatives. They do not allow themselves to be pinned down to a concrete demand or a fixed list of demands. While in Zagreb clarity and uniformity of speech, primacy of the collective, and anonymity of statements were the central achievements, the Audimax occupiers go one step further. The singularity of the many single ones out of many is not hidden behind unity, collective, and anonymity, but more or less clearly reveals the multitude of positions within the plenum and the differences about forms of organization or ways of dealing with sexist and racist assaults.

September 17, 2011: A demonstration march through lower Manhattan chooses as the destination of its dérive a small park near the enormous construction site of the World Trade Center. Zuccotti Park is a formerly public, now privatized square belonging to the real estate corporation Brookfield Properties and named after its chairman, John Zuccotti. On older maps of the financial district, however, this square has a different name: Liberty Plaza. The demonstrators have not chosen to occupy this territory because of a universalist invocation of freedom, but because they want to set in motion a further component of the abstract machine that has drawn lines of flight throughout 2011, especially through the Mediterranean region. And the most intensive line of this abstract machine was probably the Egyptian part of the Arab Spring, with its center in Tahrir Square, "Freedom Square." By purposely occupying another square of freedom at the edge of Wall Street, the precarious occupiers seek not only to interrupt the flows through the global financial center, they also take up the practices with which current activisms de- and re-territorialize their times, their sociality, their lives in new ways. In the case of Occupy Wall Street, the tendency of molecular organization was most evident in the invention and development of general assemblies. These were not just "general assemblies" in the conventional sense, but transversal assemblages of singularities, renewing the grassroots-democratic experiences of the anti-globalization and social forum movements and further developing them into a form for polyvocality – for instance in the invention, almost by chance and out of necessity, of a new procedure of "amplification." The human microphone (or people's mic) was probably the most discussed practice of the occupy movement, along with assembly and occupation forms. Given the public-private quality of Zuccotti Park, occupiers were prohibited by the police from using microphones, megaphones, or other technical means. Therefore, at larger gatherings, they began to repeat every sentence spoken by a speaker in chorus. The functionality of this repetition consisted, first of all, in making the speech intelligibe for hundreds of people in an open-air setting. Yet the potentiality of the human microphone can also be emphasized as an offensive form for multiplicity and polyphony, in which the cho-

rus as amplification is neither a purely neutral medium of conveyance nor a euphoric affirmation of the speakers. We can simultaneously hear, repeat, and relate to it. It can be the case that the chorus, whose voices speak the same, proves to be radically polyphonic and differentiated: one voice supports the speaker with hand signs, the next, while repeating the sentence, declares dissent with other hand signs, and the third has turned away from the speaker in order to better ensure the amplifying function for others listening. And in between there are also those who are distracted, those who are lost in thought, and here and there also those who drum anyway.

From July 19 to 28, 2002, some 3000 activists met for an international anti-racist border camp in Strasbourg. Even though the Rhine border between Germany and France implies a historical charge and is not a hotly contested Schengen border, Strasbourg was chosen by the noborder network as the location for the largest and broadest attempt at a border camp; not only because it was geographically well situated for a Europe-wide mobilization, but especially because the Schengen Information System (SIS) is located in this city, along with several large European Union institutions. The SIS databases collect data on migrants that play a central role in visa and asylum procedures. Thus, the SIS is a virtual instrument that embodies the rigidity of exclusions of the European legal system. The noborder camp was intended to make this function of the relatively unknown networked database public and to simultaneously test counter-strategies at real/physical as well as virtual levels with actions. The PublixTheaterCaravan came to Strasbourg particularly well equipped, both technically and aesthetically, with an English double-decker bus converted into a media center as its "flagship." As a stage for a press conference and as visual protection for the camp, the white double-decker bus was placed crosswise in the media barrio. At the end of the event, journalists were invited to document an action in which the SIS data was to be made available to the public. Experts from "Noborder Silicon Valley" went to the inconspicuous building where the SIS databases are managed in a petty bourgeois suburb of Strasbourg. Dressed in orange and white overalls and equipped with some portable technical bric-a-brac, they be-

gan digging at the building's fence, fiddling with laptops and a cable that suddenly seemed to come out of the ground. After ten minutes, the police ended the action. Nevertheless, several newspapers and online forums reported that they had succeeded in tapping the SIS.

After the protest march of refugees and transit migrants from the initial reception center in Traiskirchen to Vienna and over the course of the protest camp in front of and inside the Votivkirche in Vienna, the call for the deletion of the refugees' entries was first heard at the turn of the year 2012-13. If the authorities did not want to fulfill the demands of the protest camp for basic care, freedom of movement within Austria, work permits, access to education, and a stop to deportation, then, the refugees said in their final, radical turn, "at least delete our fingerprints from your databases and let us move on. We have a right to our future." A double resistance to the quasi-spatial registration of individual data in databases, but also to the quasi-temporal determination of the present via checks of the future. The demanded "right to our future" correlates directly with the disappearance from the databases, not only at the concrete level of escaping the rejection of an asylum application, but much more generally as resistance against the dividual en/joining of the present through the future. The demand for deletion of the name comes from the desire for a temporality that is not en/joined, a temporality in which the present is not closed by determining the future. Rather than protecting the personality of an identitary-authoritarian individual, it is about a present possibility of dividual movement beyond names, registers, and counts.

Social-machinic quality requires self-organized networks and their social, free software, which take alternative paths both technically and organizationally. Such a network existed for the Spanish-speaking spaces from 2007 to 2015 under the name n-1, a techno-political dispositif that sought to radically expand the possibilities of mediality and sociality, in a self-organized way, horizontally, for and from the bases. From the perspective of n-1, counter-information, activist research, and dissident knowledge production needed a different quality of privacy, but also dif-

ferent technical foundations of social exchange. This meant at the same time more privacy and tools for social exchange, more self-control over one's own data, and more technical reliability than the commercial services of Web 2.0 can offer. As a new social network, n-1 had remained an insider tip among activists for years. This changed abruptly in 2011 with 15M and the ¡Democracia Real YA! movement. Postmedia sociality emerged in non-linear, intermingled practice between squares, streets, gatherings, and media spaces. Making multiplicity, that is, concatenating these machines rather than harnessing them into the apparatuses of the One. Rejection of the molar block, rejection of the united front, rejection of the count and the unified subject. n-1.

Before dawn on September 7, 2019, 200 activists leave the Venice Climate Camp at Batteria Ca' Bianca on Venice's Lido to enter the well-guarded Venice Film Festival grounds. In two groups, they run past the surprised police posts and manage to occupy the red carpet. While the administration of the international film festival fails yet again to take a political stance, the activists use the international media presence to divert attention from the awards ceremony the same day to the catastrophes of climate change. Not as a prophecy of planetary apocalypse, but as a reference to what has happened and is happening now to the entire planet. In the climate camp, Ende Gelände, Fridays for Future, Extinction Rebellion, No Grandi Navi, and many other activist groups actualize the topics of the climate movement with intense discussions, they organize demonstrations on the Lido and direct actions against the big cruise ships, and during the nine hours they occupy the red carpet they have their glamorous appearance with all the signs of resistance.

In every thinking, in every experience of immanence, small advances of a not yet appropriated machinic difference arise. These protrusions are probably also the source of the magic that is sometimes supposed to emanate from bicycles, such as on May 19, 2007, when the ladyride moved across Vienna: as a queer appropriation of the mass cycling of Critical Mass and at the same time of the feminist genealogy of the bicycle in the first women's movement. Under the motto "Won't you bike my ladyride?"

a group of ladyfest activists of all genders rolled from station to station. These stations were about the political location of the city and its stolen, concealed, and robbed histories, from trans-les-bi-gay victims of Nazism to the history of sex work to migrant labor struggles. A swarm of thieves on bikes re-appropriated the street and the city in a queer-feminist city tour by bike. Along the route, there was not only sightseeing, but also collective traffic calming and spontaneous street blockades. "Honk if you love us!" they shouted, or "Who is the traffic? We are the traffic!"

February 1, 2000. At the right front entrance, in the aisle under the large driveway to the Parliament in Vienna, this somewhat cramped, but acoustically and visually ideal situation arises where even the two, three hundred people there seem like an impressive mass. But the extra-ordinary events happen mainly in the streets. Until late at night, street crossings are blocked again and again, alternately on the Ring and along Line 2. Drifting aimlessly but closely observing, exploring new spaces in shimmering chaos, discovering breaks in quick decisions, immedia-tely turning away again, without a fixed course, making the outside world accessible and occupying the streets instead of the inns: a leaky, fluctuating, a loose mass, a nimble mass that subverts the rules, as in the non-registration of the marches, the obscurity of the course, and the strong fluctuation, above all a nonconforming mass: nonconforming as an intangible whole in its stand against the government and state power, nonconforming in its rejection of unification, in its insistence on the dif-ference of the single ones.

On the evening of May 1, 2004, about ten thousand demonstrators mar-ched from the central square of the university through the city to the beach of Barceloneta: sans-papiers and migrants, autonomists, political activists from left-wing and radical left-wing unions and parties, artis-tic activists, precarious and cognitive workers of all kinds, who were practicing calling themselves precari@s. Like an accelerated version of the practice of Reclaim the Streets, the Euromayday parade rolled through downtown Barcelona as a stream of dancing, chanting, and painting. With breathtaking speed, the streets the demonstration passed

were transformed into painted zones. Under the cover of the march, the city was immersed in a sea of signs: stencil graffiti, political slogans, posters, stickers, references to websites, labels on crosswalks, contextualizing murals, commented here and there by performative actions. Just as the logos and displays of corporate capitalism, which differentially unify the inner cities, owed their existence to the creativity of a multitude of cognitive workers, so the creativity practiced in jobs now spread as a counterpart over these logos and displays of urban consumption: over the shop windows, city lights, rolling boards, and LED screens, over the walls of buildings and roadways.

On May 15, 2011, the Puerta del Sol in Madrid was occupied, and shortly thereafter the central squares of most major cities in Spain. Paradoxically, these are precisely the places that, with the increasing displacement of the private and public, had lost the last remnants of their charged function as "public spaces"; smooth spaces now, where any stubborn determination promised to slip away. But it is precisely these smooth spaces that are now being appropriated in the occupation. With perseverance and patience, the squatters are developing inclusive practices of assembly in plenums and comisiones. *While Twitter streams deterritorialize times and bring about turns of actions and demonstrations at cyberspeeed, direct communication in the* asambleas *is characterized by long, patient, horizontal discussions. And they install themselves in tents and other transitory dwellings, streaking the clean and smooth territory of the squares, striating it softly with makeshift gardens, info booths, improvised computer networks, people's kitchens, and all forms of other diffuse material. As if to affirm, to stimulate imagination and to produce images about life in general and in Spain in particular. Yes, our life, life in general is not clean, it does not go smoothly, it is precarious, dirty and fragile.* :]

Six usages towards dissemblage

> And how could we not feel that our freedom and strength
> reside, not in the divine universal nor in the human perso-
> nality, but in these singularities which are more us than we
> ourselves are, more divine than the gods, as they anima-
> te concretely poem and aphorism, permanent revolution
> and partial action?[201]

How to actualize the molecular revolution, revolutionary assem-
bly and dispersion of windy kin, minor voices, unruly things?
Certainly not as divination, reading of the future, forecast, line-
ar construction of utopia and extrapolation. And probably not
simply from the classical analysis of class composition. Perhaps
in resuming and condensing the dense descriptions from strug-
gles of an experienced past, in the return of the dissemblages
and their joining of social machines and text machines. Or even
as a new reading of what can be read from the minor histo-
ries of long-past struggles and of what can be rejoined as their
theoretical fragments. In either case, it helps to disperse a bit,
to draw, trace, re-hop the erratic lines of dividuality. To inter-
pret, with Paul B. Preciado, the formations of racist and hetero-
normative subjectivation and politics as the last twitches of an
ancient regime, to acknowledge, with Anna Tsing, that living in
climate change today is living and dying in ruins, to try out, with
Donna Haraway, other forms of becoming-with precisely in the
turbid trouble of those ruins. And perhaps the return of the
usages of a soul-dissemblage helps in this, laying its claim to the
struggles of today from an incomparably different time. Not as
time-transcending maxims, regulations or commandments, but
as queer messengers from the now.

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201   Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, 72.

First Usage. Disjoining

Detuning, disfiguring, disjoining. If time and world are en/joined and endlessly modulating in the joints, the task is to withdraw obedience to machinic order, to empty the state apparatuses and to toss the self out of joint. To become disjointure: In fleeing the church of disposability, a manifold disposition to join disjoining emerges, to stay out of joint in the joints, unruly disposability.

Second Usage. Subsistential care

Many soft hands, paws, grasping arms sweep over the surfaces, embrace them and softly streak them. Multiplicity of care relations, *cuidadanía*, subsistential economy. Sweet, minor masculinity, mystical, queer feminist care. Trade becomes negotiation below property, possession becomes poor wealth and occupation. Mu-tual care, economy of subsistence, subjuncture.

Third Usage. Molecular Love

"Your love, your love, supernatural thing," Ben E. King, another falsetto, 1975. Love grooves deeply relaxed, until the late change to the bridge: ".... interplanetary, extraordinary love!" *Amour*, molecular love is a supernatural thing, but not God, not divine love, always more or less than divine and God: multitude, sea, multiplicity. Molecular because it is dispersed on things, ghosts, machines, extends over them out of order, more than human, interplanetary, dividual. Dissonant-detuned soul kin, ultra-love, supernatural thing.

Fourth Usage. Transversal Intellect

Queer reason dwells in turbidity, trouble, turbulence, as long as it can. Away with the greed for letters of individual authorship that locks the intellect in the proper name, keeps thinking to itself. Becoming part of dividual thinking that sweeps through

the souls, streaks and multiplies them for the invention of transversal intellect: As practice of translation in Ibn Daud's translation machine, as Ibn Rushd's reinvention of the active intellect, Marguerite Porete's *entendement d'amour,* general intellect of the machine fragment and its operaist offshoots, Drew's and Tucker's writing in the time joint, all this and a thousand lines more, up to Lagunillas' reading circles that let us immerse in dividual traversals of thought.

Fifth Usage. Mu

The dissemblage lets itself fall and falls apart, into dispersed bracing, into joinings out of joint, into mu. Machinic-molecular mutation, music always already playing. Drifty kin lay claim to the return of their grooves, their crunches, their row. Together they form the subsubstantial sounds of an unruly hypophony. Expectation from pasts of sounding together, being eager for what was. Mu is duration and dividuality of multiplicity, mu-jo-inture.

Sixth Usage. Nu

In an instant, in nu: ecstasy, excess, event of the dissemblage. Out of mu comes molecular insurrection, and the dispersed multitude of disjointures condenses into non/conforming assembly. Time of insurrection, turbid now. The thread breaks, similarity flits by, lets itself be heard, and the present is dilated. Goddamn-rapture, rampant nu, disjoined-disjointed time. Out of joint and newly sticky, queerly braced, unjointed. Joint, disjo-inture, subjuncture, dissemblage. Now.

Ritornello 22, 2015-2020. Et al. – Thanks, 2

[: Altwien, Vienna
Calle Bruselas, Málaga
Camborias, Lagunillas
Casa Invisible, Málaga
Clash, Vienna
Enrique, Lagunillas
Eule, Berlin
Ferdinand, Bochum
El Gallo Rojo, La Malagueta
Korb, Vienna
Los Marineros, El Palo
Marsbar, Zurich
O Pazo de Lugo, Madrid
Polivalente, Lagunillas
University Library, Klagenfurt
Weidinger, Vienna
WUK, Vienna
Xenix, Zurich
Zähringer, Zurich
Zurich Central Library

Thanks to the first and the last reader and for all the continuous whispers, translations and comments, not least, recurring, those of the swarm of voices from ritornello 1. :]