

GILLES DELEUZE'S PHILOSOPHY OF ART:
THE CRUELTY OF AFFECT

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
GRAPHIC DESIGN
AND THE INSTITUTE OF FINE ARTS
OF BILKENT UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF FINE ARTS

By

Bülent Eken

June, 1999

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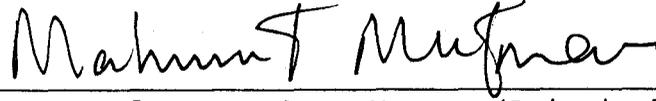
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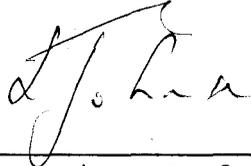
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ABSTRACT

GILLES DELEUZE' S PHILOSOPHY OF ART: THE CRUELTY OF
AFFECT

Bülent Eken

M.F.A. in Graphical Arts

Supervisor: Assit. Prof. Dr. Mahmut Mutman

June, 1999

In this work the influential contemporary French philosopher Gilles Deleuze' s aesthetic theory has been analysed with regard to its philosophical origins. Baruch Spinoza, whose influence is felt in the whole of Deleuze' s oeuvre, proves to be the basic figure of his approach to art as well. Gilles Deleuze sets out to formulate a vitalist theory of art, the scope of which requires that the categories of judgement and reception be displaced. This scope situates artistic activity in a generalised creativity, where reception and judgement find their places as points of break and tension which could still be examined within the system of creation.

Keywords: Affect, Spinoza, debt, judgement, regimes of sings, reception

ÖZET

GILLES DELEUZE' ÜN SANAT FELSEFESİ: HISSİN VAHŞETİ

Bülent Eken

Grafik Tasarım Bölümü

Yüksek Lisans

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Haziran, 1999

Bu çalışmada çağdaş Fransız filozofu Gilles Deleuze' ün estetik kuramı felsefi kökenleri açısından incelendi. Etkisi Deleuze' ün bütün yapıtında hissedilen Baruch Spinoza, filozofun sanata yaklaşımında da temel figür olarak belirir. Deleuze' ün formüle etmeye giriştiği dirimselci sanat kuramı yargı ve alımlama kategorilerinin yerinden oynatılmasını talep eder. Bu vizyonda sanatsal pratik, alımlama ve yargının kırılma ve gerilim noktalarını oluşturduğu genelleşmiş bir yaratım olarak belirir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: His, Spinoza, borç, yargı, gösterge rejimleri, alımlama

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1. INTRODUCTION

The problem of aesthetics concerns, as its Greek etymology testifies, "sensation" or "affection" with all its aspects. Even such a definition is enough for one to understand that it is not restricted to what is today called art. Sensation, when it is regarded through its manifestations in the human sphere, is specifically related with the finitude of human existence in the world and with the question of the relation of infinite structures, which are supposed to exist alongside this finitude, with this finite existence. It is true that philosophy, even if its singular instantiations testifies to the contrary, from the perspective of its historicity, tended to overcome aesthetics in favour of isolating stable structures of knowledge, politics and ethics and with the result of marking an ideal of art. What we may witness, today, in the sphere of the so-called human sciences and philosophy, is the critical attempt to pursue the traces of aesthetics operating in the construction of the structures that we mentioned. Although this might constitute interesting attempts with their highly aporetic conclusions, a positive undertaking, which would necessarily focus on singular instantiations of the problematic in order to make "present" a program that would effect the past and will

already send to the future forces of differentiation is more urgent. If a reason was asked for the necessity of such an activity, the reply would be that there is no such thing as pure critique. The efficacy and power of a critique stands and falls with its unforeseeable interrelationship with its object and the object that it finally becomes. And, this means at least two things: existence is objectless, and critique has its expression from the self-positing of the activity itself, it is the spontaneity of the position. That is why a mere discussion on the conditions can remain unaware of itself as conditioned by other conditions.

It is Gilles Deleuze, with a few other names, who carried furthest such a positive critique, giving it its liveliest configurations. And it was Baruch Spinoza who performed a similar task during the shattering periods of the Classical thought, a thinking activity that demanded the utmost care for the unthought in what is established as thinking as such. Deleuze never ceases to acknowledge his admiration to Spinoza, calling him the absolute philosopher because he fulfilled the nonphilosophical condition of philosophy which makes him, paradoxically, the least philosophical of all philosophers.

This thesis tries to pursue the Spinozian theory of sensation within Deleuze's work in general and his position on art in particular. Although Deleuze kept direct reference to Spinoza in all his work, Deleuzian critics have not considered this track with detail. Deleuze's reading of Spinoza cannot be seen as an

interpretation. That, on the contrary, both philosophers undermine interpretative activity is what I will try to show below. Therefore, rather than being an exegesis of Deleuze's theory of sensation and his thinking on art, my study tries to outline his Spinozian lineage through a close investigation of Spinoza's aesthetics as it is elaborated in his major work Ethics.

The first chapter investigates the components of this theory. Because it has a very complex organisation frequent reference to his book is maintained.

The second and third chapters are organised around the topics that seem to me to be the most powerful affects expressed by Deleuze's thinking on art. Namely, judgement and reception.

In the second chapter, I tried to make visible the existential and semiological conditions of judgement as regime that has its own plane of organization and its own presupposition of a disorganized state. And I tried to show its relationship with the Spinozian theory of affects.

In the third chapter there is an attempt to displace reception in art from a Deleuzian perspective. Or, more truly the question of "What might be the status of reception, and viewer, in such a theory of sensation?" is pursued. To open up the stakes about the topic I referred to Lyotard's influential position.

I must say that the choice of the topics of the second and third chapters has no ultimate necessity to a discussion of Deleuze's relation to art. As I said,

their choice derives from my affection of Deleuze' s work. That is why in the first chapter I mostly referred to Deleuze' s reading of Spinoza rather than any other reading. And this chapter anticipates, I believe, a lot that is in the subsequent chapters.

2 SPINOZA: AESTHETICS OF CREATION

We are hesitant to talk about an account of aesthetics or sensibility that would be elaborated by Spinoza. Not because he lacks one, but because what should be said of his Ethics, that it might as well be titled Politics, Ontology, Aesthetics, or Physics, yet one cannot talk about Spinoza's philosophy of politics, or aesthetics, or his ontology, should also be said for the particular subject matters in the Ethics. For, if we are concerning ourselves here with his account of aesthetics, in order to cast some light over Deleuze's various positions on art and his concerns in the artistic practice, we cannot but note that its place cannot be restricted; his work in its entirety appears as a general theory of aesthetics, in which the term aesthetics can be substituted by the term affection for the reasons of terminological consistency. It would be a gross error, for example, to take imagination, which Spinoza reserves for his first kind of knowledge, as the appropriate place to determine artistic activity, and discuss the scope of art works. For, not only does imagination represent, as its definition also suggests, an epistemological state (inadequate ideas), referring to a certain composition of power (the disposition of the body determined by the "indicated" presence of an external body, in relation

to agreement or disagreement of natures), and defining a certain political type (fool, or powerless as the one who is a prey to his passions); but it also is in a constant relationship of reciprocal conditioning with the two other kinds of knowledge (reason and intuition), and with their respective corollaries on these same points of knowledge, power, politics.

These problems are worked through in what is generally known as Spinoza's monism, which is summarised by the famous first principle "a single substance for all the attributes." Deleuze recasts this principle to avoid any simplification as follows: "To make body a power which is not reducible to the organism, to make thought a power which is not reducible to consciousness. Spinoza's famous first principle (a single substance for all attributes) depends on this assemblage and not vice versa." (1987: 62), but in order to come to terms with the real orientation of this principle it is necessary to deal with the complex mechanism presented in the Ethics.

2.1 Idea and Immanence

Let us begin with the Spinozian conception of the idea. However, a detour from Plato's conception of Idea will not only serve as a guide to determine two different constructions of the same concept, but also reveal two very important notions, ie. Immanence and selection, the difference in conducting these concepts might be seen as

regulating, throughout the history of philosophy, the positions of different philosophers for and against transcendence. This theme of the difference of conduct before immanence, as the ultimate trait of the philosopher, haunts Deleuze's entire work. The presence of Plato within the context of discussion seems to me to be justifying my recourse to him here.

Deleuze presents the motivation of Platonic doctrine of Ideas as conditioned by two apparently contradictory demands: the invocation of an order that is immanent to the cosmos, and the refusal of the barbarian transcendence. Greek philosopher is not the Eastern sage who formally possesses wisdom, he becomes the friend of wisdom who confronts rivals who are now seen as free and are positioned in an equal distance of demand for the same wisdom in question. The philosopher, therefore, has to assess their laying claim to knowledge. Choosing the truthful and legitimate claimant without committing violence to the friendship demands that the concept should exist in a time which has the form of anteriority; that truth already pre-exists.

He puts time into the concept, but it is a time that must be Anterior. He constructs the concept but as something that attests to the pre-existence of an objectality [objectite], in the form of a difference of time capable of measuring the distance or closeness of the concept's possible constructor. Thus, on the Platonic plane, truth is posed as presupposition, as already there. This is the Idea (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994: 29).

The full scope of the theory of ideas, which develops in a scenario of "the Father, a double of the father, the daughter, and suitors" (ibid, 30) - the Father being the Idea that possesses the daughter firsthand, his doubles as the legitimate participants or claimants, and the suitors as false pretenders¹ - culminates in the invention of a new transcendence:

He will have to invent a transcendence that can be exercised and situated within the field of immanence itself. This is the meaning of the theory of Ideas. And modern philosophy will continue to follow Plato in this regard, encountering a transcendence at the heart of immanence as such. The poisoned gift of Platonism is to have introduced transcendence into philosophy, to have given transcendence a plausible meaning (the triumph of the judgement of God) (Deleuze, 1997a: 136-7).

The final formulation of Platonic Idea is, thus, this: the theory of Ideas is organised as a dialectic of rivalry, which operates as an apparatus of selection between truthful claims (judgement), and whose functioning is made possible by introducing transcendence into immanence - the sign of transcendence is, therefore, immanence's being made immanent to something else; rather than its being immanent to itself. Within these coordinates, Idea is a phenomenon of height.

In the conclusion of the above mentioned article, Deleuze raises the question of whether a reaction to Platonism and its transcendence abandons the Platonic selection, or constructs different methods of selection. Deleuze finds this possibility in Spinoza and Nietzsche. We will return to this point after presenting the Spinozian conception of idea.

The definition of idea, in *Ethics*, might seem to bear no originality, or suggest no difficulty in understanding, at first sight: "By idea, I mean the mental conception which is formed by the mind as a thinking thing" (*Ethics*, II, def. 3). When it is read, however, together with the definition of the body, just at the top of the same page, and the third axiom of the next page, it is understood that we need subtle and complicated terminological distinctions: "By body I mean a mode which expresses in a certain determinate manner the essence of God, in so far as he is considered as an extended thing" (*E*, II, def. 1). "Modes of thinking, such as love, desire, or any other of the passions, do not take place, unless there be in the same individual an idea of the thing loved, desired, &c. But the idea can exist without the presence of any other mode of thinking" (*E*, II, ax. 3).

In a first determination idea is a mode of thinking that is primary in relation to other modes of thinking. That this primacy does not derive from conferring any privilege over the idea will become clear from the

account of parallelism of body and mind. But before that, the phrase "expression" that appears in the definition - that it "expresses in a certain determinate manner the essence of God" in so far as he is an extended thing - already points toward a chiasmus of body and mind. The necessary explanations in order to account for the nature of this intermingling will be found in the explanations of substance, attributes and mode.

Substance, Nature or God designates, in Spinoza, the only free cause, because it is the cause of itself (self-cause), whose essence necessarily involves existence, and whose conception can be found independently (E, I, def. 3). Attributes constitute the infinite essence of Substance, and substance consists in infinite attributes expressed in its eternal and infinite essentiality (E, I, def. 4 and 6). Though attributes are infinite in number, numerical distinction thereby being irrelevant for them, and is merely an abstraction of ours, the only attributes that we know are extension and thought. It is for this reason that the definition of attribute is given by Spinoza as "that which the intellect perceives as constituting the essence of substance" (E, I, def. 4). Infinite intellect and the idea of God will therefore play an important role in the exposition of Spinozian monism; ie. epistemological and ontological parallelisms of body and mind. And, mode is "the modifications (affectiones) of substance, or that which exists in, and is conceived through, something other than itself" (E,

I, def. 5). Modes, therefore, cannot be free causes, and the type of causality that they are involved in can only be a necessary chain of causality which opens itself up to infinity.

The autonomy of body and mind, or rather the fact that the chain of necessary causality which they enjoy in existence as being autonomous because of their belonging to two different attributes, would remain incomplete, if it was not added that, from the point of view of essence, they belong to one and single substance, the modes of which exist in the attributes. Therefore, expression is never lacking at each moment in such a way that it fulfils the requirements of absolute, at the level of modes as well; but one can still detect inadequacy in respect to the encounter of bodies, at the level of modality. This absolute that is in question is an absolute without totality; and the modality of the modes that are in question are infinitely finite. Deleuze points to this aspect:

Spinoza repeatedly underscores the irreducibility of the modes to mere fictions, or beings of reason. This is because the modes have a specificity that requires original principles (for example, the unity of diversity in the mode, Letter XXXII, to Oldenburg). And the specificity of the mode has to do less with its finitude than with the type of infinite that corresponds to it (1988: 92).

What is an idea, then? If we are going to reply to

this by anticipating what we will expose below, the following chain of equivalence will appear: I have an idea of something whenever I regard \perceive \ affirm an external body as present. But, presence for me is only the affection of my body, therefore "the object of the idea constituting the human mind is the body, in other words a certain mode of extension which actually exists, and nothing else" (E, II, prop. 13). As such, idea involves the nature of the affected body, and indicates the presence of affecting body ("involves" and "indicates" being related to the dimension of "expression", of course); the body or mode, or the "individual" that now appears under a new composition formed of the encounter of these two bodies is itself an affection of substance. It is a part of substance because it exists in the attributes that constitute the essence of substance, which means that affections are modes themselves. Substance being one and indivisible, body and mind are one and the same thing, now seen under the attribute of thought, now under the attribute of extension. "Each thing is at once body and mind, thing and idea; it is in this sense that all individuals are animata" (Deleuze, 1988: 86).

We have said that Plato's basic move was to introduce transcendence into the immanence. But, it is necessary to recall the steps of this move: making time the form of anteriority, which doubles the concept and makes possible the vertical fall-and-withdrawal of Idea.

If, for example, the concept in question is virtue, the one who is virtuous is not the one through whom virtue will be realised, he must be the one who has never been anything other than virtuous, therefore the virtue of the first one, instead of realising what is virtuous, becomes virtuous "according to" the virtue of the second whose virtue always judges without itself being allowed to be judged. It is the same with the fate of immanence. Deleuze and Guattari seems to have touched this veritable point with a fine formulation:

Instead of the plane of immanence constituting the One-All, immanence is immanent "to" the One, so that another One, this time transcendent, is superimposed on the one in which immanence is extended, or to which it is attributed... (1994: 44).

Such is the confusion of the concept with the plane. Of course, in Plato cogito could not arise; time being a form of anteriority, reasoning did not have the speed of reflection yet; it contemplates. It is with Descartes, and after him with all the philosophy of reflection that consciousness will become a site of immanence, immanence being immanent to a thinking subject. Each time with an invented time, and making immanence "extended to..." Perhaps, Spinoza is the only example to measure the distancing and nearing to immanence, for whom time is radically lost, and space is constituted dynamically as extensive envelopment of intensity (essence expressed in

existence; existence assembling essence). The material of the idea being found not in a representative but in an expressive content enabled Spinoza to avoid constituting the plane of immanence as a field of consciousness. This immanent destination of idea is therefore what we are going to deal with.

2.2 Monism; the Parallelism of Mind and Body

When establishing the chain of equivalence in defining the idea above, we proceed from the "ideas that we have"; that is, the ideas that we have in a lived duration which define what happens to our body. But we must also proceed, as it were, from the inverse direction, seeing that we reached to the substance that we are as its affections. Besides, therefore, the ideas that we have, there are also "the ideas that we are", in so far as substance is the cause that produces every thing and idea. In his proofs Spinoza uses two different syntaxes as if to account for the double aspect of the ideas we mentioned. He talks about God's being the cause of an idea not in so far as he constitutes the essence of our mind, but in so far as he is the cause of an idea that we have, the cause of which is an other idea, whose cause is, in turn, an other idea, and to infinity (in such a way to correspond with the infinite attribute of thought); and in a similar way, God is the cause of an

actually existing body not in so far as he is the cause of the actual reality of it, but in so far as he is regarded as affected by some mode of extension, in which one body is the cause of an other, the cause of which is an other body, to infinity (which corresponds with the infinite attribute of extension). But, there are also such statements as God is the cause of the essence of things, because he is not only the cause of their existence, but also their essence; and God constitutes the essence of mind in so far as there is an idea that corresponds to it which is in him. We can say that these point towards a veritable perspectivism: the perspective of inadequacy (the ideas that we have), and that of adequacy (the ideas that we are; which are necessarily adequate because they are in us as they are in God); the perspective of duration (an abstracted conceptualisation of existence), and of eternity (existence conceived as such, as an eternal truth).

What does it mean to "have" the idea of God, for example? The importance and problematic nature of this question becomes clear if one considers what must already have been clear from what has been said: that is, in Spinoza, God's power is not like that of a tyrant or king, that he does not act by the freedom of will, and that his understanding, or intellect, is not such that he possesses the knowledge of something that he is capable of being not producing (all of which indicates the break with the Judeo-Christian conception of God, his being

blamed for atheism, and which in his eyes are mere anthropomorphic and anthropocentric abstractions of men). Book One of his Ethics is mainly an attempt to undermine these illusions.

Wherefore the intellect of God, in so far as it is conceived to constitute God' s essence, is, in reality, the cause of things, that both of their essence and of their existence. This seems to have been recognised by those who have asserted, that God' s intellect, God' s will, and God' s power, are one and the same. As, therefore, God' s intellect is the sole cause of things, namely, both of their essence and existence, it must necessarily differ from them in respect to its essence, and in respect to its existence. For a cause differs from a thing it causes, precisely in the quality which the latter gains from the former (E, I, 17, note; emphasis added).

Given that this explanation asserts that God' s understanding should be seen as one with his realised power of action, and his necessity of existing, are we going to say that in so far as we "have" the idea of God, we know all through him, and know all about him? For, according to a central proposition of the Second Book of Ethics, "an infinite number of things follow in infinite ways" from the idea of God, which "can only be one" (prop. 4). We must add to this another proposition: "The human mind has an adequate knowledge of the eternal

and infinite essence of God'' (E, II, prop. 48). And we must recall that the ideas that we have are always inadequate in so far as they represent what happens to our body; since we are not the cause of this idea, this idea indicates the state of our body plus the presence and the effect of an external body; when, on the contrary, we become the cause of an idea, as a condition of its being adequate, it is explained by our essence, or power of knowing, and it expresses another idea as its cause, and the idea of God as determining this cause. The ideas that we are are necessarily adequate; since they are in God, and he is the adequate cause of these. But, we see that the ideas that we have can also be adequate. Inadequacy defines the first kind of knowledge, which Spinoza calls imagination, and adequacy defines the second kind of knowledge, which is called reason, and which is the condition of passage to the third kind of knowledge called intuition (Cf. E, II, 50, note). In order to make clear what has been said, we can pay attention to the structure of the idea: an idea represents something that exists in an attribute (objective reality of the idea), and it is itself something that exists in the attribute of thought (form, formal reality of the idea) (Cf. Deleuze, 1988: 86). From the perspective of causality, this leads to the distinction between formal cause and material cause: formal cause refers to a logical power, a power of comprehension and explanation, which does not reduce the objective reality of the idea in its being present in us;

that is, our being conscious of it; material cause refers to an expressive content, which frees the objective reality of idea being found in its representing something; because the material cause of an idea is an other idea in the attribute of thought. Deleuze formulates this in a subtle way:

The form of the idea is not sought in a psychological consciousness but in a logical power that surpasses consciousness; the material of the idea is not sought in a representative content but in an expressive content, an epistemological material through which the idea refers to other ideas and to the idea of God. Logical power and epistemological content, explication and expression, formal cause and material cause are joined in the autonomy of the attribute of thought and the automatism of the mind that thinks. The adequate idea represents something truthfully, represents the order and connection of things, only because it develops the order of its forms and the automatic connections of its material in the attribute of thought (1988:75).

To have the idea of God, therefore does not mean to know everything pertaining to him, because we can only know what we are involved in - thought and extension -, and it does not serve as a common notion in itself (common notions defining the ideas of reason); because, as Deleuze says, it is inseparable from its formal and material assembling, and as the note to the 48th

proposition that we mentioned above clearly indicates - where Spinoza says that it is generally the abstractions of imagination that determine the idea of God for human beings.

The importance of the idea of God derives from its constitutive relationship with common notions, the elaboration of epistemological and ontological parallelism, and the passage from inadequate to adequate ideas, which is, in turn, as we will see, inevitable for the theory of affects, and the selection between the affects.

To conclude the account of parallelism, we will show the function of the idea of God in the passage from epistemological to ontological parallelism in order to satisfy all the demands of monism. The theses of epistemological and ontological parallelisms are, respectively, these: according to the first one, the idea and its object in a different attribute form one and the same "individual", according to the second, modes under all attributes form one and the same modification (or, one and the same affection for all modes) (Cf. E, II, 7, note). The principle of the first parallelism can be found in the Spinozian conception of causality, which was related in the note to the 17th proposition of the First Book of Ethics we quoted above, and according to which a cause, in order to be a cause, remains in itself, and an effect, in order to become an effect, separates itself from the cause. By this way, according to an isomorphism

(identity of order), isonomy (equality of principle), and isology (identity of being) between mind and body, idea and what it represents forms one and the same individual in terms of their causation. The principle of the second parallelism, however, is different and difficult. Why does the mind perceive only the modifications expressed through extension, if all modes under all attributes form one and the same modification? If a single affection traverses substance in which we are in harmony, why is all this appearance of dissension? Of course, our answer will not be the solution of this question; partly because this is not a question but an answer. If, then, "this cannot be solved" is the answer, this answer belongs to nobody, precisely because nobody ceased to come with questions from another answers; but not everybody did this with the same strength of desire and same force of the attempt to affirm existence². And the greatness of Spinoza lies in the fact that he has a veritable suggestion about the "composition" of the strength of desire and the forces of affirmation.

What enables the passage from epistemological to ontological parallelism is the idea of God. We know why. Because, it must be understood objectively; God's power of existing being accompanied by his power of comprehending all that follows from his power or essence; and this objectivity must be accompanied, in turn, with the requirements of the formal reality of the idea. Which means nothing less than that the idea of God must be

formed; that without this condition it cannot become a common notion, and that the task of fulfilling this belongs to the composition of the existing modes. This explains the modal status that is given to the idea of God; ie. it is only a mode of the attribute of thought; that is, God cannot essentially be defined as a thinking being, but absolute power of thinking belongs to his essence. And, it also explains the privilege given to the attribute of thought, being "the entire objective condition which the absolute power of thinking possesses a priori as an unconditioned totality" it can, by the intermediation of the idea of God, transfer unity from substance to the modes, although at the level of ontological parallelism all the attributes, including thought, are equal as forms of essences and forces of existence (Deleuze, 1988: 98). By this exposition the entire Ethics can be seen as a theory of power. And, this will enable us to engage with modal essence and existence, which will have importance for some problems peculiar to art.

2.3 Power

If, the full scope of the distinction between the kinds of knowledge is designed to enable a distinction in terms of the strength of thought displayed by each kind - logical power surpassing consciousness, expressive

content keeping representative content in a constant state of tension - and, if a bodily disposition corresponding to the state of power represented by thought is searched by means of the theory of the parallelism of mind and body, this is because, divine essence or Nature can be read in terms of power (potentia). From what has been said until now, it was clear that thinking is not a privilege of a moral subject, in so far as all modes of thinking derive necessarily from the absolute activity of Nature, imagination as well as reason. We have seen that the apparent breaks at the level of modality could form an integral part of the substantial continuity. And, this becomes clearer when it can be seen that the apparent moral or intellectual hierarchy can be written in terms of a natural hierarchy; a hierarchy of power.

2.3.1 Affection, Affect

First of all, a terminological adjustment. In so far as modes are affections of substance, affections (affectio) are modes themselves. These affections are necessarily active, in so far as substance is the only free cause and explains their nature. Affections are also the modifications of modes, they designate what happens to them. This "happening" that takes place between modes can be named with a minor Spinozian concept:

encounter. One body encounters an other body. Affection of a human body with an external body involves both the nature of human body as affected, and the nature of external body as affecting, and the idea of this affection represents the external body as present until the body is affected in such a way so as to exclude the existence of the said external body (E, II, prop. 16 and 17). Presence for the human mind is strictly tied to affection, and there is no negation in the mind (such as pertaining to will and judgement) save that of the idea. These affections are images, corporeal traces, or signs. And, Spinoza says that the mind imagines when it regards things in this fashion³ (E, II, prop. 17). In so far as alive, then, humans cannot stop imagination, since they cannot stop the encounter with external bodies, which means that they are essentially open to affections. One might be tempted to interpret this as men being ultimately prey to inadequate ideas, and that one cannot be said to be more perfect than an other, and one idea is not more perfect than another idea. But, this is not the case; and as might be understood from the above argument, the perfection or reality (which are taken as synonymous terms in Spinoza [E, II, def. 6]) does not consist, in Spinoza, in the once and for all cancellation of imagination and inadequacy, which is impossible; it demands a change in nature, in perspective, and in power which is real. The theory of affects will serve to this aim.

Now, image affections, or ideas constitute a state of the affected body and mind; the perfection, reality, or capacity of action cannot be separated from the duration in which they are experienced, which means that they designate a more or less perfection than the preceding state. Spinoza names these passages, transitions, whereby the activity of power of the body diminishes or increases, affects (affectus) (E, III, def. 3).

The most important aspect concerning affects is the nature of difference between them and affections. Although affects-feelings derive from image-affections as their cause, affects are not representative; they designate the passage from one represented state to another, in terms of the correlative variation of the affecting bodies. In the third book of Ethics, which is in its entirety devoted to the derivation and definitions of affects, Spinoza suggests that there are, with the addition of desire, only three affects to which all the others can be traced back; namely, pleasure, pain, and desire. The nature of desire gets an explanation from the principle of conatus. Conatus is the endeavour of every being to persevere in its existence (E, III, prop. 6); whereby it constitutes the actual essence of the said thing (ibid. , prop. 7); it involves an indefinite time, since the modal essence, (which, as a degree of power and an intensive part, agrees with all the other elements of essence) is only determined, qua this essence, as conatus

when it comes to exist. This is why the parts that agree in intensity no longer agree in the elements of existence - therefore existence determined by duration within eternity as an indefinite duration with a beginning but not a determined end (ibid. , prop. 8). Finally, the mind is conscious of this endeavour, whether it has adequate or inadequate ideas (ibid. , prop. 9). Desire is this appetite of affirming existence (not tending to pass into it) with consciousness thereof, which is the cause of this consciousness (because "in no case do we strive for, wish for, long for, or desire anything, because we deem it to be good, but on the other hand we deem a thing to be good, because we strive for it, wish for it, long for it, or desire it." (ibid. , prop. 9)).

Pleasure defines "a passive state wherein the mind passes to a greater perfection", an increase in the capacity of acting; and pain defines its contrary, passage to a lesser perfection, a decrease in the same capacity (E, III, 11, note). The same note defines pleasure and pain in reference to body, as stimulation (titillatio) or merriment (hilaritas) in the case of pleasure; suffering or melancholy in the case of pain. But with one reservation; stimulation and suffering are valid for parts of the body which are more affected than the rest, while merriment and melancholy are valid when all parts of the body are alike affected⁴. When it happens that there is a good encounter between two bodies there is an increase in the power of acting, because there is established a relationship that expresses two

bodies as one under a single composition. When the affect of pleasure turns back on the idea from which it follows it becomes love, and the affect of pain becomes hatred. Love and hatred are, thus, defined as "pleasure or pain accompanied by the idea of an external cause" (E, III, 11. , note). Although, pleasure still being a passion - the idea about the thing I love being in me, and the cause of this idea being an external cause that checks the adequacy of the feeling and the idea it presupposes - its indication of an increase prepares for a different distinction between passions and actions, and production of "active joys" - there is never an "active pain, or sadness", since sadness indicates a decrease in the activity. Such active joys arise from adequate ideas, whereby the formal possession of our power gives us a power of thinking, ideas of which express the essence of the affecting body in its agreement with our essence through the essence of Nature - because, the formal presence of the idea of agreement does not search for an object to be agreed; just like we deem something good because we desired it, agreement indicates a stage where there is a turnover in the affirmation of existence from an nth power. These ideas give rise to internal joyful affects. And this is the third kind of knowledge, intuition, to which Spinoza reserves the word Blessedness.

The real scope of imagination is infinite, it is checked, held in tension by infinity. I should emphasize one point: Spinozian account of imagination gives

imagination the widest possible topology, let alone trying to expel it. It affirms the highest love of signs in their "process of composition, decomposition, and genesis", let alone trying to do away with them. This is very different from the Kantian transcendental imagination and its teleology of "as if"; because it satisfies the condition of the transcendental within immanence without any teleology: the passage between two immanent states being transcendental itself.

2.4 The Mechanisms of the Affect

...my humanity does not consist in feeling with men how they are, but in enduring that I feel with them.

Nietzsche, Ecce Homo

Having said the difference of nature between image-affectations and feeling-affects, it must be shown in what way the Spinozian inventory of affects differs from an alternative designation of them as, as it were, 'states of mind'. It seems that Spinoza wants to prevent a psychological misinterpretation of his theory of affects. In the appendix added to the Third Book of Ethics, titled 'The Definitions of Emotions'⁵, where he returns to a summary (re)explication and naming of affects, he emphasises that they must be understood in the way he defines them and not in the way they are understood by the people:

I am aware that these terms are employed in senses somewhat different from those usually assigned. But my purpose is to explain not the meaning of words, but the nature of things. I therefore make use of such terms, as may convey my meaning without any violent departure from their ordinary signification (E, III, def. of emotions, 20).

This can become clear if we just dwell on a single example. As it will be remembered love was pleasure accompanied by the idea of an external cause. This idea-affection can have as its content anything that indicates an increase in the capacity of action (pleasure) which determines an action (desire) that has its object as good. The state that this affection constitutes the actual essence of the said individual necessarily defines a perfection, which means that neither the pleasure, nor the desire nor what is regarded as good have in themselves perfection. Even in the contrary case of hatred-pain-bad combination, the state constituted by the affection as essence is perfection. The difference lies in the transition from a less to a greater perfection or from a greater to a less one. This transition can have incredible speed and combinations, in such a way that there is no affect save than that of singular relationships of motion and rest, due to which no calculation for the constitution of a moral subject is possible. Among other things, this means that names are lacking for affects. In fact this explains negatively the

constitution of a moral subject: one will have to use a very limited number of names for what happens to him which, in fact, demands infinite filtering. Let us take as an example the affect of cruelty. For Spinoza 'the nature of things' under this affect that 'is called' cruelty is as follows. When someone conceives that another whom he hates loves him, he will go under the conflicting affects of hatred and love. If hatred prevails he will try to injure the lover by whom he is loved. He cannot directly injure the lover because even if he hates him, he at the same time has a conception that he loves him. The affect of cruelty is in itself revealing because, whereas he usually uses two persons, Spinoza here introduces three persons for the demonstration. No one tends to take cruelty on oneself. Therefore the demonstration becomes more legible when it is reconstructed from the perspective of the lover: the cruel is the one who tries to do injury to the one we love, without any reason at all.

But who is the one that we love? The first note to the 41st proposition of the Third Book of Ethics, in whose second note Spinoza opens up the issue of cruelty, strongly encourages a Nietzschean answer: Man himself, that which Nietzsche calls the internalization of man.

If anyone conceives that he is loved by another, and believes that he has given no cause for such love, he will love that other in return.

If he believes that he has given just cause for the love, he will take pride therein (III. xxx. and note); this is what most often happens (III. xxv.), and we said that its contrary took place whenever a man conceives himself to be hated by another. (See note to preceding proposition.) This reciprocal love, and consequently the desire of benefiting him who loves us (III. xxxix.), and who endeavours to benefit us, is called gratitude or thankfulness. It thus appears that men are much more prone to take vengeance than to return benefits (E, III, 41 and note; emphasis added)

If reciprocity in love, let alone defining blessedness for which love is without expectation of benefit, points toward a nature more prone to take vengeance, then this is all the more explanatory for the creditor-debtor relationship within cruelty. For, the cruel is not "evil" in his activity conceived as the capacity and strength of his body, his activity appears bad only when it is associated with the image of something hated. If love was supposed, for a moment, perfection or good in itself, then it should be said that not only the lover, but the cruel-loved as well acts through love (with the conception of his being loved). As we will find Nietzsche saying, the equation "injury done can be paid off by the pain suffered" precedes "the criminal deserves to be punished because he could have acted otherwise." But how could this strange equivalence possibly emerge? By means of which "person met person for the first time, and measured himself person against

person'' (Nietzsche, 1994: 39). It presupposes that

...man must first have learnt to distinguish between what happens by accident and what by design, to think causally, to view the future as the present and anticipate it, to grasp with certainty what is end and what is means, in all, to be able to calculate, compute -and before he can do this, man himself will really have to become reliable, regular, automatic [notwendig], even in his own self-image, so that he, as someone making a promise is, is answerable for his own future! (Nietzsche, 1994: 39)

It lies in indebtedness, responsibility, and ability to make promises. It was again Nietzsche, with incomparable lucidity and ingenuity, who formulated this:

The debtor, in order to inspire confidence that the promise of repayment will be honoured, in order to give a guarantee of the solemnity of his promise, and in order to etch the duty and obligation of repayment into his conscience, pawns something to the creditor by means of the contract in case he does not pay, something which he still 'possesses' and controls, for example, his body, or his wife, or his freedom...The equivalence is provided by the fact that instead of an advantage directly making up for the wrong (so instead of compensation in money, land or possessions of any kind), a sort of pleasure is given to the creditor as repayment and compensation, -the pleasure of having the right to exercise power over the powerless without a thought... (ibid,

There is nothing surprising in hearing that pain gives pleasure to someone who inflicts or contemplates it. This testifies to the vectoriality of the affect. Because pain, which is a reaction, is replaced by pleasure in so far as it is acted upon. The creditor's pleasure, then, consists in acting upon the pain caused by the debtor, in case that he does not pay. There must not be any confusion here. For Nietzsche, the creditor does not presuppose or recognize the debtor. The creditor is the powerful; and it is in him that responsibility, as the privilege of keeping the standard of value animated by the memory of the will, conscience, and justice emerge. He encounters the other with his power, being its own criterion, which at the same moment puts the other in the position of debtor, as the one who claims to share the right to make a promise. That is why punishment, concerning its purposes and the variety of its purposes throughout the history, is said to be "absolutely undefinable". And yet he openly rejects the idea of its being executed because the miscreant was held responsible:

Throughout most of human history, punishment has not been meted out because the miscreant was held responsible for his act, therefore it was not assumed that the guilty party alone should be punished: -but rather, as parents still punish their children, it was out of anger over some wrong which had been suffered,

directed at the perpetrator, -but this anger was held in check and modified by the idea that every injury has its equivalent which can be paid in compensation, if only through the pain of the person who injures (Nietzsche, 1994: 43).

"Out of anger over some wrong which had been suffered" writes Nietzsche. It is as if the creditor has already a memory of the debtor; but there is precisely no exchange between parties; no exchange of feeling. On the contrary, the creditor possesses a measure to calculate the feeling. But what is that? A piece of affect, a feeling: pleasure; the pleasure of having the right to make him suffer, once the challenge of justice is accepted. Which should be understood as the pleasure that arises from acting upon a pain whose recollection and resemblance codes what is to be avoided.

This is the system of affects, the system of cruelty. There is no judgement here, just like there is no signification. This is a senseless cruelty. The question of meaning will arise with the internalization of pain and suffering. That is why Spinoza says he is not concerned with the meaning of words; and that is why Nietzsche says this soil, the soil of cruelty, is not the place where "bad conscience" emerges.

Bad conscience emerges after an irreducible break, after the emergence of State on the spot. Whereby the feeling-affect is delegated to a state of mind; guilt, duty, love is moralised and idealised. That is why "the

one we love'' is man; who is everywhere but is found nowhere. True, the names are lacking for affects, but the system of cruelty consists in ''eating the name''; hence its cannibalism. But,

It should not be thought that a semiotic of this kind functions by ignorance, repression, or foreclosure of the signifier. On the contrary, it is animated by a keen presentiment of what is to come. It does not need to understand it to fight against it (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 118).

Will we conclude, then, seeing that cruelty implies, in the last instance, for Spinoza, the desire sullied with hatred such that it remains in the paranoid circle of bad conscience; and that the only solution is to sharpen the intelligence, and salvation through reason? And, seeing that Nietzsche shows the place bad conscience fertilises as reason, the calculation of instincts, intellectualisation of pain, will we conclude that this is the point where Nietzsche and Spinoza diverge? This is not the case. Spinoza does not give an intellectualist account of affects and desire. There is no direct path to reason from pleasure and love. Spinoza merely wants to emphasise that one needs to select; and this is first of all because one has always already selected and has been selected: power to power, affect to affect, person to person.

Nietzsche's allusion to Spinoza, in his On the

Genealogy of Morality, shows us that we have another opportunity to discuss the apparent difference between the two philosophers. Even if, it is where Nietzsche seems to underline Spinoza's "intellectualism." Pursuing the thread of discussion he opened on the purpose of punishment, and having stated that punishment cannot function as to make someone feel guilty, Nietzsche questions the place of morsus conscientiae ("bite of conscience", which is rendered "disappointment" in the Elwes translation of Ethics) in Spinoza in relation to the parallelism of feeling of the wrongdoers about the same topic. I will quote, here, the whole section, in order to, highlight the stakes of the argument.

Spinoza became aware of this in a way that made him show his true colours (to the annoyance of his critics, who systematically attempt to misunderstand him on this point, Kuno Fischer, for example), when one afternoon, rummaging around among who knows what memories, he turned his attention to the question of what actually remained for him, himself, of that famous morsus conscientiae -he who had relegated good and evil to man's imagination and angrily defended the honour of his 'free' God against blasphemists who asserted that God operates everything sub ratione boni ('but that would mean that God is subject to fate and would really be the greatest of all absurdities'). For Spinoza, the world had returned to that state of innocence in which it had lain before the invention of bad conscience: what had then become of morsus conscientia? 'The opposite of gaudium,' he finally said to himself, '--a

sadness accompanied by the notion of a past event which turned contrary to expectation.' Eth iii, Propos. xviii Schol. i ii. For millennia, wrongdoers overtaken by punishment have felt no different than Spinoza with regard to their 'offence': 'something has gone unexpectedly wrong here', not 'I ought not to have done that'--, they submitted to punishment as you submit to illness or misfortune or death, with that brave, unrebelling fatalism which still give the Russians, for example, an advantage over us Westerners in the way they handle life. If, in those days, there was any criticism of the deed, it came from intelligence, which practised criticism: we must certainly seek the actual effect of punishment primarily in the sharpening of intelligence, in a lengthening of the memory, in a will to be more cautious, less trusting, to go about things more circumspectly from now on, in the recognition that one was, once and for all, too weak for many things, in a sort of improvement of self-assessment. What can largely be achieved by punishment, in man or beast, is the increase of fear, the intensification of intelligence, the mastering of desires: punishment tames man in this way but does not make him 'better', -we would be more justified in asserting the opposite. ('You can learn from your mistakes' as the saying goes, but what you learn also makes you bad. Fortunately it often enough makes you stupid.) (Nietzsche, 1994: 59-60).

It is obvious that Nietzsche is not for calculation and mastery of desires; but it is less obvious that he blames Spinoza for teaching in that way. Could it rather

be the opposite? Is not Nietzsche suggesting a 'selection of affects' that is perfectly compatible with Spinoza? For, it is also obvious that Nietzsche is not for "letting go", cancellation of the "memory of will" - this is clear from the opening pages of his essay, memory 'is by no means merely a passive inability to be rid of an impression once it has made its impact' (ibid, 39) - which is actually already played out in the will to nothingness of bad conscience. ("Animosity, cruelty, the pleasure of pursuing, raiding, changing and destroying - all this was pitted against the person who had such instincts: that is the origin of 'bad conscience'" [ibid, 61]). It was Nietzsche, who wrote in Ecce Homo, about the Russian fatalism, the decision "no longer to accept anything at all, no longer to take anything, no longer to absorb anything -to cease reacting altogether." (1989: 230), as a way of "keeping the health", hygiene, during the periods of decadence. "Accepting oneself as if fated, not wishing oneself 'different' -that is in such cases great reason itself." (ibid, 231). We must understand this word for word: selection of affects, ceasing to react; this is only in order to "remain healthy"; just like pleasure, for Spinoza, is not perfection, that is health, as such. It is neither a matter of preferring one affect over another, if "learning from one's mistakes" were to be taken in this sense, and which would indicate being on the side of reason, nor advising pure savagery of affects. It is a matter of finding other ways of

selection than the Platonic way. And, Nietzsche and Spinoza are one at this point. Affects are not what you think; but what you think can never be separated from your affects. The Spinozian doctrine of necessary derivation of affects from the absolutely infinite substance should be taken very seriously. Assuming them as such, as necessary, indicates a threshold in their concatenation: the one then sees the light in the shadow; through the idea of God in Spinoza, and through the Will to Power in Nietzsche.

We must mention two other aspects by means of which the explanation of the non-psychological nature of affects gets their full elaboration. The first one was already presupposed by and implicated in what we have written above; namely that pleasure and pain are activities, activities of transition. This is not in contradiction with the arguments according to which pleasure and pain are passions and there is no active pain or sadness -even pleasure becomes activity only when it is referred to and caused by adequate ideas. Spinoza's words would leave no doubt on the point. After stating that pleasure and pain consist in the transition from a less to greater or a greater to less perfection, he writes

I say transition: for pleasure is not perfection itself. For, if man were born with the perfection to which he passes, he would possess the same, without the emotion of pleasure. This appears more clearly from the

consideration of the contrary emotion, pain. No one can deny, that pain consists in the transition to a less perfection, and not in the less perfection itself: for a man cannot be pained, in so far as he partakes of perfection of any degree. Neither can we say, that pain consists in the absence of a greater perfection. For absence is nothing, whereas the emotion of pain is an activity; wherefore this activity can only be the activity of transition from a greater to a less perfection -in other words, it is an activity whereby a man' s power of action is lessened or constrained (E, III, def. of emotions, 2 & 3).

It is a strange world, that of Spinoza' s; where one always finds himself saying and wondering at, just like the narrator in Blanchot' s La Folie du jour, finding that he had always been extremely happy even in those entirely bad hours, when he believed that he was perfectly unhappy (1996: 11).

The second aspect concerns the status of "indifference." It would, at first glance, be difficult to conceive indifference in such a world of incessant activity, where even the breaks themselves have an inevitable role. When Spinoza writes that,

The human body can be affected in many ways, whereby its power of activity is increased or diminished, and also in other ways which do not render its power of activity either greater or less (E, III, post. 1)

this acceptance of indifference seems to contradict the continuous variation of power that is demanded by affects. A beautiful taxonomy of bodies given by Spinoza as hard, soft and liquid might be evoked here for clarification. Spinoza defines hard, soft and liquids bodies according to their contact with larger or smaller surfaces, from the perspective of the contact with surface, and their liability to change their position, from the perspective of movement. But liquid bodies are defined as those whose parts are in motion among one another (E, II, ax. 3 after prop. 13). So that a liquid body can also have the characteristics of hard and soft bodies without ceasing to be liquid. Because, liquid could also be said to be hard (even the hardest) from the perspective of the contact with surface, but liquid from the perspective of motion of parts among one another. Indifference, seen as conservation of nature within and despite affection in many ways, is not incompatible with continuous differentiation.

From another aspect, in so far as it defines the absence of variation of power, indifference is lovelessness. But, taken in its positivity, lovelessness defines the lack of a law or criterion of love, which means that one is always vigilant to the movements of love -in other words those of affects.

We must note that according to these two qualities the hypotheses of indifference is in conformity with those of the ontological parallelism ("one affection for all the modes under all attributes"), and the general

anti-teleological orientation of Ethics. That is, God does not act for some aim, or for the sake of some good - particularly for the good of humans. We can, therefore, say that indifference concerns less the preservation of the nature \ actual being of the body, than the affection' s being strictly tied to presence; ie. presence of an idea which differs from and contrary to other ideas.

Indifference, then, complements the two mechanisms of affects; namely, their anti-psychological and non-mental nature, and their quality of transitional activity.

Gilles Deleuze' s basic points on the nature of artistic creation, his highly selective approach about the questions of art and to the artists he handles (''which one'' is an artist?); his rejection of a general system of fine arts; his attempts to evaluate artistic practices as finding their necessity in the thrusts of corporeal vitality, which manifests art as a search for health; his conception of the artist as the actor of becoming and art as the inventory of becomings; his elimination of the spectator and reception as categories from his theory of sensation; his opposition to a linguistic semiology both in literature and in cinema, I think, rests on the Spinozio-Nietzschean system of affects, along the coordinates that we tried to outline: idea as surface effect and as sign; affects as vectorial signs that follow according to the variation of power; a selective activity of affects which manifests them as the

figures of conatus-desire; anti-psychological and anti-teleological stream of affects which testifies to their transitional nature as the correlate of becoming.

3 JUDGEMENT

In what does the system of judgement consist of? It seems to us that one of Deleuze's greatest contributions to a pragmatic semiology is that he has done with the commonplace according to which judgement is coexistent with entry into language, with the fact of speaking -but a commonplace that is not innocent, given that its stupidity and malevolence constantly works to convey the regime, which it actually presupposes as its reason of existence, as the only and ultimate one. While talking about the system of cruelty as that of the affects, and the origin of bad conscience as a necessary complement to the internalization of affects, that is their allocation to mind as its states, we begged the discussion of a whole semiological aspect of the problem. In a very general way, it can be said that Deleuze makes use of the elements of two "regimes of signs", as he names them, with Felix Guattari, in their A Thousand Plateaus, in elaborating his favourite themes concerning art: presignifying semiotic, or the so-called primitive or territorial representation; and the countersignifying semiotic proper to animal rising nomads and war machine.⁶

In his essay "To Have Done with Judgement" (1997c: 126-35), raising the question of what will be distinguished from judgement, Deleuze refers to the

system of cruelty in relation to Nietzsche's work on debt, which we mentioned above. As a sign of the consistency of theoretical lineage that I articulated from Spinoza, I want to quote the abrupt opening lines of his essay:

Kant did not invent a true critique of judgement; on the contrary, what the book of this title established was a fantastic subjective tribunal. Breaking with the Judeo-Christian tradition, it was Spinoza who carried out the critique, and he had four great disciples to take it up again: Nietzsche, D.H. Lawrence, Kafka, Artaud (ibid, 126).

What is at stake in the creditor-debtor relationship is, simply put, that man recognized himself in man, and not in something else. This is a human, all-too-human principle; and it is there. But this is not the Hegelian master-slave dialectic, because pain is kept in its exteriority, giving pleasure to someone who acts on it, and it does not signify something above itself.⁷

We must turn to Anti-Oedipus to see why system of cruelty, presignifying or non-signifying semiotic, does not signify. Its secret lies in the explanation of why savage formations are oral or vocal.

These formations are oral precisely because they possess a graphic system that is not aligned on the voice and not subordinate to it, but connected to it, co-ordinated "in an organization that is radiating, as it were,"

and multidimensional (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983: 188)

In this assemblage there is a triple independence of the articulated voice, inscribing hand and the evaluative eye. It must be emphasized that the eye sees, and does not read the sign inscribed on the body. The voice constitutes the action of alliance; the hand that inscribes constitutes the body of filiation (passion); and the reaction of the eye evaluates, that is, sees the declension of the two. Everything in the system, as Deleuze and Guattari note, is active, acted upon and reacted to. There is no signification because the topological body of alliance presents only codes (and not significations) according to the evaluation (and not reading) of the eye: a drawing on the wall, a mark on the body are parts of the whole territorial body, and function as codes of finite blocks of debt; that is a series of "not-to-dos" for a practiced eye. Hence the polyvocality, multidimensionality of the sign. It circulates throughout the territory in tune with filiation codes thanks to both the autonomy of writing and the evaluative eye. As Deleuze re-writes in the essay we mentioned,

One begins by promising, and becomes indebted not to a god but to a partner, depending on the forces that pass between the parties, which provoke a change of state and create something new in them: an affect. Everything takes place between parties, and the ordeal is not a

judgement of God, since there is neither god nor judgement (1997c: 127).

In Anti-Oedipus the emergence of signifying semiotic is shown to be coexistent with the irreducible break initiated by the emergence of despotic State. The state initiates a veritable overcoding, which passes from a new organization of the lateral alliance and indirect filiation of the territorial regime. What the despot overcodes is the primitive voice-graphism-eye triangle, in such a way as to make it a base for a pyramid "all of whose sides cause the vocal, the graphic, and the visual to converge toward the eminent unity of the despot" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983: 205).

In the first place, graphism aligns itself on the voice, falls back on the voice, and becomes writing. At the same time it induces the voice no longer as the voice of alliance, but as that of the new alliance, a fictitious voice from beyond that expresses itself in the flow of writing as direct filiation. These two fundamental despotic categories are also the movement of graphism that, at one and the same time, subordinate itself to the voice in order to subordinate the voice and supplant it. Then there occurs a crushing of the magic triangle: the voice no longer signs but dictates, decrees; the graphy no longer dances, it ceases to animate bodies, but is set into writing on tablets, stones and books; the eye sets itself to reading. (Writing does not entail but implies a kind of blindness, a loss of vision and of the ability to appraise, it is now the

eye that suffers, although it also acquires other functions (ibid, 205).

This is the regime of the signifier, which has its own substance of expression: faciality. Given without being seen, in such a way so as to bring lack and excess together in a single term, the face of the despot not only organizes signs into circles but also induces a blossoming of circles by way of the constant interpretation that is demanded by facial expressions. It is here, as Deleuze and Guattari notes, that the question " 'What does it mean?' begins to be heard, and the problems of exegesis prevail over problems of use and efficacy. The emperor, the god -what did he mean?" (ibid, 206). We can see why debt becomes infinite: voice and seeing are doubly depotentialized. The eye suffers to read because the sign now becomes the sign of sign, which is constituted by the voice of alliance of the despot; one cannot speak because what one speaks now is the given voice of the despot. Signifier, which abstracts every content by formalization, subordinates one' s affects to a form, at the same time makes one' s informed forms inadequate for one' s affects. The debt is infinite; in this Kafkaesque milieu you run from one trail to another to be apparently acquitted and find your destiny to be infinitely postponed.⁸

The parallel to these considerations of Anti-Oedipus appears in the "Judgement" essay, in the following way:

In the doctrine of judgement, by contrast, our debts are inscribed in an autonomous book without our even realizing it, so that we are no longer able to pay off an account that has become infinite... At bottom, a doctrine of judgement presumes that the gods give lots to men, and that men, depending on their lots, are fit for some particular form, for some particular organic end. What form does my lot condemn me to? But also, Does my lot correspond to the form I aspire to? This is the essential effect of judgement: existence is cut into lots, affects are distributed into lots, and then related to higher forms (this is a constant theme in both Nietzsche and Lawrance: the denunciation of this claim to "judge" life in the name of higher values) (Deleuze, 1997c: 129).

In all that has been said, the notion "overcoding" should indicate one thing: that the territorial body is overcoded by the despotic body of the State, that we are expelled from our territory does not mean that it has been lost. On the contrary, that it is overcoded means that we are still on it. Bad conscience, the system of judgement and the state are fictions; but this is precisely what makes them very effective. According to the Spinozian principle "imaginationes do not vanish at the presence of the truth, in virtue of its being true, but because other imaginations, stronger than the first, supervene and exclude the present existence of that which we imagined" (E, IV, 1, note). What is more, territorial representation was also a repression of the great intense

germinal flux, the Body without Organs. Now, the opposition Deleuze established between the system of cruelty and the system of judgement, with respect to their divergent and opposing procedures (cruelty versus infinite torture; sleep or intoxication versus the dream, vitality versus organization, the will to power versus a will to dominate, combat versus war), as if to offer the former as the antidote of the latter, illuminates an important aspect of Deleuze's philosophy of art.

As he relates in the beginning of the essay, all the four names had personally, singularly suffered from judgement and its procedures: accusation, imprisonment, deliberation and verdict. This is what makes their work a real experimentation: a search for health, a selection of affects, combatants as the very ground of a combat that passes both against judgement and more importantly between the parts of the body of the combatant.⁹ The theme of art as an enterprise of health, which necessarily takes at its disposal becomings, is a constant theme in Deleuze, which was elaborated best in one of his latest essays, "Literature and Life":

Literature then appears as an enterprise of health: not that the writer would necessarily be in good health (there would be the same ambiguity here as with athleticism), but he possesses an irresistible and delicate health that stems from what he has seen and heard of things too big for him, while nonetheless giving him the becomings that a dominant and substantial health would render impossible

(1997d: 3; emphasis added).

This search for health has to pass from the system of cruelty because the disorganized body, the body stolen by the judgement of God is still alive; still the bodies penetrate into each other, inhabit each other despite their apparent privatization. And, it is no surprise that this process had to potentialize that which has been separated from what it can do: vision; as seeing and hearing.

Daniel W. Smith has analysed the results of such an understanding of experimentation; taking his departure from a passage in the Logic of Sense, he follows the paths of Deleuze' s theory of sensation. A passage will suffice to give a hint of the project:

In this case, the principles of sensation would at the same time constitute the principles of composition of the work of art, and conversely it would be the structure of the work of art that reveals these conditions (1995: 29)

However, we see no exigency to call this procedure a "recasting of the Kantian transcendental project." All the elements of such a theory of sensation, elaborated by Smith, can found in a Spinozian reserve.

Within this framework art becomes the writing of materiality itself, a thrust of corporeality. And, this has an important impact on Deleuze' s writing strategy on art. What he says for his writing practice on the history

of philosophy, which consists in producing "conceptual portraits", "creating a likeness in a different material", something that one has to produce rather than reproducing anything (Deleuze, 1995: 135), could also be said for his writing on art. Because, this is the only way to escape judgement; because "if it is so disgusting to judge, it is not because everything is of equal value, but on the contrary because what has value can be made or distinguished only by defying judgement" (Deleuze, 1997c: 135).

3.1 The "Critical and Clinical" Project

François Zourabichvili, in his fine essay about the notion of "percept" in its relation to the critical and clinical project, reconstructs the definition of the notion:

What is a percept? Deleuze says: 'a percept in becoming' (CC 112). Not that the perception is of a moving object, for it is my perception that changes, my power of perceiving rather than the way I perceive the object. In what sense, then, does it change? What is seeing, what is being seen? To see is to potentialize sight, to raise it to a second power, to make sight itself powerful, while in its ordinary employment it is separated from what it can do. How does sight regain its power when it becomes vision, or percept? When one sees the invisible, the imperceptible, or when what cannot be seen is perceived: the invisible

enveloped in what one sees, not as a hidden world beyond appearance, but animating sight itself from within appearance, or what one sees... What is a percept? A critical-clinical perception. Critical because we discern a force in it, a particular type of force, and clinical because we evaluate the declination of this force, its inclination, its ability to fold or unfold itself (1996: 189-90).

For Deleuze, the being of the work of art lies, finally, in its being "a block of sensations, that is to say a compound of percepts and affects" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994: 164) If as percepts, the art work envelops a force together with its declination and inclination, and as affect it preserves the variations, in the form of vectors, of the capacity of this force; then art criticism, or philosophy of art should invent means of evaluation which would not fall behind or block what has already been archived by the work of art. Evidently, signifying semiotics would not help for this aim. Because the art work already presupposes the accomplishment of what has been suppressed by this semiotics: potentialization of vision, seeing and hearing; and active discharge of affects rather than their being fitted to a form for an end. This semiotic would only work to separate the artwork from what it can do. Deleuze names the alternative enterprise "critical-clinical": "A clinic without psychoanalysis or interpretation, a criticism without linguistics or signifiante." (1987: 120). It should be noted that

despotic signifying regime can be a part of a work of art. But as we have seen, it presupposes a plane of composition, an assemblage and the coexistence of other semiotic regimes with different assemblages. What Deleuze wants to emphasize is that criticism should regard this plurality, and clinical should follow the becoming of the lines of this plane; that is the declension of the force. Simply put, the disagreement with Lacan, as it appears in Anti-Oedipus, was that Lacan seems not to accept the reality of different regimes of signs than that of the despotic.¹⁰

This explains the privilege given to painting in The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis; which was not allowed to the actor, for example. The painter, says Lacan, does not wish to be looked at like the actor, who embodies gaze and gives something to the eye, if only to cause the viewer lay down his gaze: the suffering eye. The temporality of the subject in psychoanalysis demands that the body which one has to "map him" is by definition an impossible body: the face of the despot, as his whole body, which hides nothing behind the mask that the face is. So, does Lacan say that the actor, who is already in a geometral space, has nothing to disturb the vision of the viewer, because he already is appealing to that vision of the viewer? (Lacan, 1977: 100-1)

But, neither only the painting says, "You want to see? Well, take a look at this!", nor the actor is someone who says "Come and watch me."¹¹ All art demands

4 RECEPTION

In a fascinating article, Marguerite Duras opens up the issue of minority in the context of cinema spectatorship. It is obvious, as Deleuze and Guattari say, that minorities are not defined by the smallness of number: "A minority can be small in number, but it can also be the largest in number, constitute an absolute, indefinite majority." (1987: 469). The relations internal to the number define minority: is the set constituted by the number denumerable (majority), or nondenumerable (minority); whereby the characteristic of the nondenumerable appears as, not the set or its elements, but "the connection, the 'and' produced between elements, between sets, and which belongs to neither, which eludes them and constitutes a line of flight." (ibid, 470)

It is for these reasons that Duras begins with the indefinite, largest number of minority, which she calls "the original viewer", who goes to movies for entertainment, to forget and to escape himself, who consists of "roughly the whole blue-collar population", bricklayers, plumbers, the foreman; but also of "many scientific types",

the ones who have studied medicine, physics,

film, the ones who have only studied sciences, whose studies never diverged from the main track, never with anything to vary them, find themselves with those who have had a technical education or no education at all. Along with these people you must consider the vast majority of critics, those who validate the choice of the original viewer, who sanction "personal films" and defend action films adapted to everyone's taste, and who show such hatred for le cinema d'auteur that you can't avoid seeing here as well a suppressed anger, but of a source other than what is offered as a pretext (Duras, 1990: 12-6).

And, Duras rightly call this vast mass a majority. Because of the perfect reason that this mass readily links itself up with the disgusting axioms of society and capitalism; that is, it remains denumerable, gets easily identified in the opinion-polls, in the questionnaires of the stupidest TV show: linking itself up with the axioms of human rights, it goes to movies to cry before the pains of humanity, the "cruelties" of the concentration camps; linking itself up with the axioms of the social bonds of gossiping jolly peoples, to laugh at sexist jokes, "to rediscover the thing that makes one laugh, the thing that will while away the time, the constancy of the childish game, the violence of wars, of massacres, of riots, virility in all its forms, the virility of fathers, of mothers, from every angle, the good old laughs on women, the cruelties, the sex life of others." (ibid, 13).

Duras does not say that her viewers, who range between fifteen and forty thousand, are a minority. But, she says that it is an important figure; and adds her fear of finding the young filmmakers, who are "inconsolable at not going beyond the thirty-thousand-people mark," one day "doing anything to reach the three-hundred-thousand mark to catch up with that figure, the one that ruins, and that will ruin them." And, we can call this number of viewer minority; not because, again, it is smaller; but because it is nondenumerable. Constituted by those who are found in the majority, but only in the process of a departure from it, therefore already in the process of becoming something else with the connections between sets that belong to none. And, that is why Duras cannot talk about them; because she does not recognize them. But, remains the slogan of minority: "If I am fewer in number, I am just as inevitable, just as irreducible." (ibid. 14)

As for the "original viewer", the majority, Duras says all that can be said:

This viewer, I think, we must leave to himself. If he must change, he'll change, like everyone, all at once or slowly from words overheard in the street, from being in love, from something he's read, from someone he's met, but alone. In a solitary confrontation with change. (ibid, 16)

From now on, everything is left to becoming.¹²

4.1 The Community of Affects

There are good reasons to start a discussion on reception in art with the question of minorities. Because reception always has to do with community and communication.

It is Jean-François Lyotard who gave new openings to the problem of reception within an articulation of Kantian premises. We will closely examine his essay, "Something Like Communication... Without Communication" (1991: 108-19), in order to assess his relevance for the issue, but also to assess the differences between it and the Deleuzian track we are pursuing.

These are the basic points of his essay and the problems he related them with:

1) Against the theories of communication, according to which communication is intersubjective confrontation and interactivity, Lyotard invokes the Kantian notion of communicability, which necessarily precedes the mediation of understanding as being its condition, and points toward a community of feeling (*sensus communis*), that differs in its im-mediacy, as the correlate of the im-mediacy of communicability, from any psychological, social, pragmatic or generally anthropological community:

This communicability, as a demand and not as a fact, precisely because it is assumed to be originary, ontological, eludes communicational activity, which is not a receptiveness but

something which is managed, which is done
(ibid, 109).

2) This communicability, as it appears in the judgement of the beautiful, defines a passibility, which "as the possibility of experiencing (pathos) presupposes a donation. If we are in a state of passibility, it is that something is happening to us, and when this passibility has a fundamental status, the donation itself is something fundamental, ordinary (ibid, 111). And "all representations presuppose space and time as that by which something happens to us and which is always here and now: the place and the moment. It has to do not with concepts but simply with modes of presentation (ibid, 111-2). And, Lyotard relates this donation to the matter of sensation in Kant, who called it big X; and to Heidegger's Being.

3) Lyotard, then, questions the possibility and status of aesthetic feeling, within the frameworks of communicability and *sensus communis*, when it issues from the calculated, that is conceptual, re-presentation of the new *techne*, the techno-scientific world. It is here that he detects an attack to space-time as the form of donation. And, it is here, again, that he invokes the Kantian sublime, which bring to fore the form-less, the cancellation of the immediate communicability. The failing of space-time with its corresponding Heideggerian notion of the retreat of Being. Only "conditions" of

space and time remain now. And this shows, for Lyotard, the importance of the avant-gardes which, as if it is a response to the techno-scientific, get to work on conditions of space and time. This is the situation of the one without donation, "the painting of the fateless."

4) Lastly, Lyotard warns against a confusion between passible and passive. Whereas passivity is opposed to activity, passibility is not. In fact passive \ active opposition presupposes passibility. After noting that, in Kant, with the sublime, passibility does not disappear but becomes "a passibility to lack", he concludes with the questions of the status and meaning of the here-and-now under the influence of the new technologies in relation to art.

By this schema, Lyotard, strongly challenges the humanist ideology of communication by illuminating what it is that lies behind the celebrated ideas of "interaction" and the autonomy of the receiver. This is still the Cartesian model of mastery:

The aim nowadays is not that sentimentality you still find in the slightest sketch by a Cezanne or a Degas, it is rather that the one who receives should not receive, it is that s\he does not let him\herself be put out, it is his\her self constitution as active subject in relation to what is addressed to him/her: let him\her reconstitute himself immediately and

identify himself or herself as someone who intervenes (ibid, 117).

And, he also shows that there is a corporeal communality, constituted by passibility, preceding all forms of sociality that might be invoked by choice. He brilliantly opposes the demands of interactivity, the pitiful little ideology of demanding assent: "When you painted, you did not ask for 'interventions' from the one who looked, you claimed there was a community." (ibid, 116)

But, this schema has also its drawbacks originating from its Kantian reserve. First of all, it must be said that Spinozian conception of affects as passion meets the demands of passibility and does not contradict it. In so far as affects inhere "feeling of power", the capacity for being affected, they do not exclude passibility.

But, Lyotard, who ultimately develops his scenarioization upon the Kantian aporia of sensibility and conceptuality, seems not to consider Kant's operations on space-time. This, in a way, concerns the legitimacy of the movement Lyotard traces from the relevance of space-time to its destruction by technoscience, and in sublime, to salvage its accessibility by acting on the conditions of space-time, which is attributed to the avant-gardes. Kant could render the conceptual aporetic to the aesthetic, only by making

space the form of exteriority, and time the form of interiority. That is, as Smith puts it,

...since he defined the form of sensibility as extended space, Kant limited the application of intensity to the matter of sensible intuitions that come to fill that space. But Maimon, like Hermann Cohen after him, argued that since space as a pure intuition is a continuum, it is the form of space itself that must be defined a priori as intensive quantity: there is therefore an internal and dynamic construction of space that necessarily precedes the representation of the hole as a form of exteriority (which implies that space is actualized in a plurality of forms) (1996: 36).

That is, what Kant invoked with the sublime, he had already suppressed in the aesthetics; and conversely we can say that sublime could appear by means of this suppression only. This has important consequences for the discussion of the techno-science and the body Lyotard puts forward; together with the seeming indispensability of the fate of man via space-time.

For Spinoza, the "conditions" of space-time, if we are still going to name them conditions, can only be "movement and rest", which are the conditions of sensibility, or aesthetics, as such. They do not presuppose space; since being mutually exclusive they designate intensive magnitudes whose correspondence would be the point zero. In Hermann Cohen's fine formulation

of the problematic,

Space and time itself, the sensible conditions of the unity of consciousness, insofar as they represent *quanto continua*, are constituted as continua by the reality of intensive magnitude as the condition of thought. Intensive magnitude consequently appears immediately as the prior condition of the extensive... Such was the necessity that led to the infinitely small, positing something that became a unity not in relation to One but in relation to Zero (quoted in Smith, 1996: 53, note 21).

And Spinoza writes this in his own way as follows:

Hence it follows, that a body in motion keeps in motion, until it is determined to a state of rest by some other body; and a body at rest remains so, until it is determined to a state of motion by some other body. This is indeed self-evident. For when I suppose, for instance, that a given body, A, is at rest, and do not take into consideration other bodies in motion, I cannot affirm anything concerning the body A, except that it is at rest. If it afterwards come to pass that A is in motion, this cannot have resulted from its having been at rest, for no other consequence could have been involved than its remaining at rest. If, on the other hand, A be given in motion, we shall, so long as we only consider A, be unable to affirm anything concerning it, except that it is in

motion. If A is subsequently found to be at rest, this rest cannot be the result of A' s previous motion, for such motion can only have led to continued motion; the state of rest therefore must have resulted from something, which was not in A, namely, from an external cause determining A to a state of rest (E, II, Lemma 3. Coroll. After prop. 13).

So, Spinozio-Deleuzian position cannot share Lyotard' s position on the body that is expressed as "but we must not put too much trust in this word, for if space and time are hit and attacked by the new technologies, then the body is too and has to be." (Lyotard, 1991:116). It is true that a body is attacked, and never been ceased to be attacked; which is the organized body. But, this is nothing other than the spontaneity of the Body without Organs: its trait of working against itself. And, it is highly doubtful whether we should retain the notion "attack" or destruction for this operation. This preference, in using the term, can only be the expression of a certain perspective. It might be that Lyotard' s position involves a certain blindness for Nietzsche' s critique of conceiving body as a "medium", which was anticipated by Spinoza. As it is expressed in the Will to Power:

The work of art where it appears without an artist, e.g., as body, as organization

(Prussian officer corps, Jesuit order). To what extent the artist is only a preliminary stage.

The world as a work of art that gives birth to itself - (1968: 419).

And, echoing this, Deleuze emphasizes, in his work on Nietzsche, the error in thinking the body as medium.

What is the body? We do not define it by saying that it is a field of forces, a nutrient medium fought over by a plurality of forces. For in fact there is no "medium", no field of forces or battle. There is no quantity of reality, all reality is already a quantity of force... What defines a body is this relation between dominant and dominated forces. Every relationship of forces constitutes a body - whether it is chemical, biological, social or political (1983: 39-40).

These remarks show us that we might have another station for discussing the question of techno-science, and the questions posed by it. It seems, it would not be an exaggeration to assert that techno-scientific apparatus, with all its modifications, is a part of our body. This does not mean welcoming the calculated, Gestell-ed, sensibility of techno-science; in a way that would recall Baudrillard. In fact, it is important to see that all of Baudrillard's analyses depend on similar

premises -but only at the level of premises; we are not, of course, comparing Lyotard' s dense philosophical oeuvre with Baudrillard' s sociology- with the exception that Baudrillard' s thesis consist in a negative estimation of recovering passibility, or sensus communis.¹³

What it means, for us, is precisely this: it shifts the focus and measure of the questions Lyotard poses as those of the techno-science, after stepping to the side of the conceptual, once the aporia has been established. This has two implications: the category of reception must be displaced to the point of irrelevance in the name of a general creativity -which is continuous despite apparent breaks (the break that is apparently introduced by the receiver/spectator: In what does the receiver' s creation consist of? This tautological question asks nothing but the force of creation, its sense and value); in conformity with the demands of Spinozian substance. And, there should be a double salvaging: of philosophy, which is associated with the conceptual, from the model of State form, from the State thinkers; and of art from their aesthetics; but that aesthetics which is constituted by the State form of thought as counterpart to its own conceptual.

It might be that man is late, concerning art, compared to Nature. If we remain in the Lyotardian schema, we can say that Nature is avant-gardist. And the problem of reception expresses, first of all, a

perspective: the perspective of the spectator, with regard to existence, Nature, as such. This aspect concerns the whole problem of art criticism or the philosophy of art. What does art criticism, in its dominant forms, today, do if not the prolongation of what is left from the operation of the spectator: separating artwork from what it can do? The funny thing is that art criticism, above all these, tries to pass for a critique of spectator position, its structures etc. Here is the linguistic semiotics vis-à-vis the cinema. It seems to us that Deleuze's criticisms of linguistic approaches to cinema find their philosophical root in the considerations that we tried to count above. The essential focus of Deleuze's criticism on film criticism, as it is found in the dialogues of Negotiations for example, is that film criticism usually finds it enough to describe films or "apply to them concepts taken from outside film,"

The job of criticism is to form concepts that aren't of course "given" in films but nonetheless relate specifically to cinema, and to some specific genre of film, to some specific film or other. Concepts specific to cinema, but which can only be formed philosophically. They are not technical notions (like tracking, continuity, false continuity, depth or flatness of field, and so on), because technique only makes sense in relation to ends which it presupposes but does not explain (1995: 57-8).

This passage also gives clues about the form that the aporia of sensibility-conceptuality has taken in Deleuze's philosophy. Deleuze had always kept his distance to this specifically Kantian problem. When he writes, for example, that "there is no reason to oppose knowledge through concepts and the construction of concepts within possible experience on the one hand and through intuition on the other. For, according to the Nietzschean verdict, you will know nothing through concepts unless you have first created them -that is constructed them in an intuition specific to them..." we can also understand the significance of his sentences that we find in Cinema 2: The Time-Image, which reads: "The theory of cinema does not bear on the cinema, but on the concepts of the cinema, which are no less practical, effective, or existent than the cinema itself" (1989: 280).

If we were to say a single trait that makes Deleuze's two volumes on cinema different than any other book it would be its practical or effective aspect: One can learn to make cinema by reading those two volumes. Because what it does is to convey the workshop of a given director, sometimes of a single film. And, to read these does not require more than thinking with the concepts -that are to be changed when they are found inadequate- that Deleuze created from that film or author only. To create in a different material what the artwork creates in another material. That is the only principle.

So, what will a community of affects consist in? There is no doubt that such a community exists, but in such a way that it is (de)constituted by the fluctuation of affects. Which means that this community is deconstituted by the same movement that constructs it. That this community is not drastically separate from our human communities, and that many diverging lines can also intermingle within differing perspectives has been witnessed by three different, and in themselves perfectly complete, studies: "the inoperative community" defined by Jean-Luc Nancy (1991); "the negative community" that Blanchot witnesses (1997); and "the coming community" described by Agamben (1993).

Community is the place of the political, but because it is a place that has never "taken place" it announces at the outset the primary deterritorialization of the political, work-lessness (Nancy); because it makes itself felt by the "demand" for community whether it exists or does not this community is both unavowed and negative (Blanchot); and because it consists in this ephemeral existence it is already at the threshold, always in the process of coming (Agamben).

And these enable me to return to the minorities. Whenever the issue of reception of art is opened up it is announced at the outset that no interpretation can exhaust its possibilities, with the guarantee added that everyone could have his own interpretation. But on no occasion we are informed about the actualizations that

are made manifest by these possibilities. On the contrary we can talk about a cracked line of creation that enters into an impasse here but animated there. Because a possibility is always a possibility of a perspective, and once it enters into the scope it necessarily has a reality whether it is assumed or not. Such was the demand of the Spinozian common notions, as concepts, that were thought as already given. A person, who is defined by his affects, his capacity of acting and his capacity of being acted upon, can only be followed in his encounters that necessarily makes a change in this combination. A critic is that person only after the film he saw the novel that he read; and therefore cannot write on that film or on that novel, but can only write with that film or with that novel. But here, then, the question becomes which one is becoming, which one is becoming a minority, and what are his capacities and his dead-ends?

5 CONCLUSION

We talked about formulating different methods of selection than the Platonic selection of claims. And we found components of such a method in Spinoza and Nietzsche, particularly highlighted in their Deleuzian reconstruction. A selection of affects that consists in following corporeality rather than the demarcation of moral and ideal spheres; establishing a cracked but continuous line of creation rather than placing transcendences within apparent points of break; constructing an economy of violence rather than investing a juridical system that is allegedly based on expelling violence. Deleuze had already given a subtle expression to these in the Plato essay:

Such methods would no longer concern claims as acts of transcendence, but the manner in which an existing being is filled with immanence (the Eternal return as the capacity of something or someone to return eternally). Selection no longer concerns the claim, but power: unlike the claim, power is modest. In truth, only the philosophies of pure immanence escape Platonism -from Stoics to Spinoza or Nietzsche (1997a: 137)

''Filling oneself with immanence''; this means to have the intensity and speed of a fluid body rather than the slow or fast movement in extension; and active discharge of emotions as affects rather than a displacement and resistance of emotions.

It is not enough to satisfy oneself with a vague ideal of art. On the contrary, as we said just in the beginning, it is the demand for eternal structures that would not be sullied with aesthetics that marks such an ideal. Plato was in no way against the image; he was for a certain image that he thought could be cultivated by giving a logic to resemblance and recollection as the inner mechanisms of affection. It is with Spinoza that we witness resemblance and recollection as the necessarily split logic of affects (for resemblance and recollection; the propositions 13 to 17 of the Third Book), which necessarily envelops the image without resemblance and eternity in such a way that substance for a turnover, which does not have recourse to transcendence, but on the contrary has as its condition expelling transcendence, to fill oneself with immanence is never lacking.

This formulation enabled Spinoza to avoid the questions of whether passions should be mastered, or, on the contrary, all attempts for mastery should be dropped, which troubled Cartesians and empiricists. For, once the problem is posed in terms of power the opposition between passions and reason becomes an opposition of power to power; and power cannot be decided not to conduct its own

operations; it is rather that decisions arise out of power.

And, this perspective opens a field beyond object and subject. The other, in this field, indicates nothing but a set of capacities, a block of affects, a possible world. That the object of desire is lost should be understood as a radical loss; to such a degree that functionality cannot be introduced to desire in order to make it a part of the analysis. "Existence is objectless"; this principle could replace the alternative phrasings of "there is no object, or it is lost" and "it is a fiction, or partly so". The asymmetric reciprocity of affects in reference to their agents (or bodily supports) cannot, in this case, be seen as subject to subject, or object to object relationship; it has to do with becoming that discards objectality even if it refers to it in its process.

Deleuze sees artists as the travellers of such a field. Situating art on a single plane to the degree that it cannot be distinguished from the most trivial attempt to affirm existence, keeping health, and organization of matter, gives it its greatness. Different because same; inevitably recognized because same, but unbearable in its difference. He, of course, has a strict taste for which one that will be the artist; but this is only because not to die from indigestion. Man, as our resemblance to ourselves, holds us back. But art is the thrust for the thing without resemblance and the annihilation of the

miserable memory. That is why, Deleuze writes that art shows the "existence of the possible", liberates it from where it enters into an impasse.

Finally, we can say about Deleuze what he had said for Spinoza:

Writers, poets, musicians, filmmakers -painters too, even chance readers- may find that they are Spinozists; indeed, such a thing is more likely for them than for professional philosophers. It is a matter of one's practical conception of the "plan." It is not that one may be a Spinozist without knowing it. Rather, there is a strange privilege that Spinoza enjoys, something that seems to have been accomplished by him and no one else. He is a philosopher who commands an extraordinary conceptual apparatus, one that is highly developed, systematic, and scholarly; and yet he is the quintessential object of an immediate, unprepared encounter, such that a nonphilosopher, or even someone without any formal education, can receive a sudden illumination from him, a "flash". Then it is as if one discovers that one is a Spinozist; one arrives in the middle of Spinoza, one is sucked up, drawn into the system or the composition (1988: 129).

NOTES

1. To see the elaboration of this dialectic of rivalry
Cf. Deleuze, 1990:253-266.
2. On the question "Who will answer this answer?",
see Deleuze and Guattari, 1987:110.
3. To recall what is evident, I am quoting Spinoza:

The mind does not err in the mere act of
imagining, but only in so far as it is regarded
as being without the idea, which excludes the
existence of such things, as it imagines to be
present to it. If the mind, while imagining
non-existent things as present to it, is at the
same time conscious that they do not really
exist, this power of imagination must be set
down to efficacy of its nature, and not to a
fault especially if this faculty of imagination
depend solely on its own nature- that is (I.
def.7), if this faculty of imagination be
free. (E, II, prop.17).
4. The whole psychoanalytic program appears as the
dechipement of the privileged organs, or those
organs, which are over invested with pleasure. But
for Spinoza organ does not precede the affect, on
the contrary organ presupposes the affect.
Psychoanalysis is more Kantian than Spinozian on the
point of an intense body, it seems. That is, it is
an empty Idea whose reality is ideal. The main point

of critique against psychoanalysis in Deleuze and Guattari was the inability of the former of thinking the Body without Organs. (Cf. Deleuze and Guattari, 1983: ch.1, and 1987:149-167) This trait of dissension also makes intelligible the principle of the Body without Organs;

You have to keep enough of the organism for it to reform each dawn; and you have to keep small supplies of signifiacance and subjectification, if only to turn them against their own systems when the circumstances demand it, when things, persons even situations, force you to; and you have to keep small rations of subjectivity in sufficient quantity to enable you to respond to the dominant reality. Mimic the strata. You don't reach the BwO, and its plane of consistency, by wildly destratifying. That is why we encountered the paradox of those emptied and dreary bodies at the very beginning: they had emptied themselves of their organs instead of looking for the point at which they could patiently and momentarily dismantle the organisation of the organs we call the organism. (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987:160-1)

This is compatible with the relative privilege given to pleasure, although it is a passive state. The same considerations are what also express the stakes in the confrontation with Foucault: in the discussion of "pleasure or desire": "I cannot give any positive value to pleasure, because pleasure seems to me to interrupt the immanent process of desire..." (Deleuze, 1997b: 5).

5. The Elwes Translation that I am using renders Spinoza's affectus as 'emotion'. Deleuze refers to this same notion, both in his work on Spinoza and in his own work, as 'affect'. For reasons of terminological consistency, and in order to keep the theoretical emphasis - because emotion might sometimes appear in Deleuze as the psychological misinterpretation of the nature of affects - I prefer using the notion of affect.

6. These topics are the concerns of the two chapters "587 B.C. - A.D. 70: On Several Regimes of Signs" and "1227: Treatise on Nomadology: The War Machine" in A Thousand Plateaus (1987: 111-49 and 351-424); and the entire 3rd chapter "Savages, Barbarians, Civilized Men" in Anti-Oedipus (1983: 139-273)

7. "The meaning of existence is completely dependent on it: existence is meaningful only to the extent that the pain of existence has a meaning (UM III. 5). Now, pain is reaction. Thus it appears that its only meaning consists in the possibility of acting this reaction or at least localising it, isolating its trace, in order to avoid all propagation until one can re-act once more. The active meaning of pain therefore appears as an external meaning. In order

for pain to be judged from an active point of view it must be kept in the element of its exteriority. There is a whole art in this, an art which is that of the masters. The masters have a secret. They know that pain has only one meaning: giving pleasure to someone, giving pleasure to someone who inflicts or contemplates pain. If the active man is able not to take his own pain seriously it is because he always imagines someone to whom it gives pleasure... There is a tendency to invoke pain as an argument against existence; this way of arguing testifies to a way of thinking which is dear to us, a reactive way. We not only put ourselves in the position of the one who suffers, but in the position of the man of ressentiment who no longer acts his reactions. It must be understood that the active meaning of pain appears in other perspectives: pain is not an argument against life, but, on the contrary, a stimulant to life, 'a bait for life', an argument in its favour.'" (Deleuze, 1983b: 129-30).

8. "The signifier is the sign that has become a sign of the sign, the despotic sign having replaced the territorial sign, having crossed the threshold of deterritorialization; the signifier is merely the deterritorialized sign itself. The sign made letter. Desire no longer dares to desire, having become a desire of desire, a desire of the despot's desire. The mouth no longer speaks, it drinks the letter.

The eye no longer sees, it reads. The body no longer allows itself to be engraved like the earth, but prostrates itself before the engravings of the despot, the region beyond the earth, the new full body." (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983: 206)

9. This aspect often arouses the suspicions and criticisms of Deleuze's "romanticism" toward artists. Dana Polan opens up this issue in relation to Deleuze's book on Francis Bacon; and he succeeds in situating the problem as an inevitable writing practice of Deleuze. See (Polan, 1994: 229-55).

10. The related passage reads,

O signifier, terrible archaism of the despot where they still look for the empty tomb, the dead father, and the mystery of the name! And perhaps that is what incites the anger of certain linguists against Lacan, no less than the enthusiasm of his followers: the vigor and serenity with which Lacan accompanies the signifier back to its source, to its veritable origin, the despotic age, and erects an infernal machine that welds desire to the Law, because, everything considered -so Lacan thinks- this is indeed the form in which it produces effects of the signified in the unconscious (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983: 209).

11. These points have strongly been analyzed in a larger

context by Ulus Baker (1996: 32-7).

12. Duras' relation to number, that which she calls "pure number", highly connotes, from its aspect of "irreducibility" to a system that will cause it; and thereby making itself reality itself, what Deleuze and Guattari calls "numbering number." "A numerical sign that is not produced by something outside the system of marking it institutes."

This is what one finds in her essay titled "Pure Number" (1997: 95-8). Her project of making a list of the now closed Renault factory workers, which would be the pure number designating proletariat in its purity, whereby, "Reality, yet incompared with this number, would be the reality of incomparable number; pure number, without interpretation; that word itself" (translation mine). Likewise, the pure word "Jew".

13. One can see the hypotheses in his Simulations (1983) and Forget Foucault (1987); which are repeated throughout all his other books.

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