

# **The Organisation of Excess**

## **Movement, Analysis and Alter-globalisation**

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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## **Abstract**

This thesis involves a reading of the political problematics of the alter-globalisation movement. The thesis suggests that some of the fundamental problems faced by the alter-globalisation movement can be traced to its emergence in the crucible of intensive moments of political activity, at, for example, anti-summit protests. The expansion of political possibilities experienced during such moments, stands in contrast to the constricted sense of political possibility experienced during more quotidian times. To analyse the relationship between the two sets of political experiences we examine Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of antiproduction, the Body without Organs, and the socius; which we will argue carries the inheritance of Bataille's concept of nonproductive expenditure. In the light of this theory we conceptualise intensive moments of political activity as moments of excess. We then examine the concept of an analytical war machine as a mode of organisation that can operate across the ruptures and discontinuities produced by moments of excess. The aim is, in part, to provide a mode of analysis that can operate across periods of transformation, even when the very presuppositions of the analysis are themselves subject to change. To do so we develop the concept of an analytical territory and examine the practices of the alter-globalisation movement through Deleuze and Guattari's territorial concept of the refrain. This thesis, then, provides a novel and innovative reading of the political problematics of the alter-globalisation movement, and fundamentally reconceptualises some familiar repertoires and practices. At the same time, however, the thesis can be read as a novel and innovative interpretation of the political problematics contained in Deleuze and Guattari's work.

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## Chapter One

### Introduction

Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare upon the brains of the living. And just when they seem engaged in revolutionising themselves and things, in creating something that has never yet existed, precisely in such periods of revolutionary crisis they anxiously borrow from them names, battle cries and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in their time-honoured disguise and in this borrowed language (Marx 1968a: 97).

This thesis is born, in part, from my own experiences within the alter-globalisation movement.<sup>1</sup> In particular, it is born from the episodic

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<sup>1</sup> This movement has been known by many different names. The name used to refer to it might variously reflect the specific context in which particular areas of the movement developed, or the specific framing that the namer wants to place upon the movement. Perhaps the most widely used name outside the movement, and the least used inside it, is the anti-globalisation movement. This name arose in the context of the 1999 protests against the World Trade Organisation summit in Seattle. As this is commonly seen as the point of emergence of the movement into the public eye it has had widespread and persistent usage. It is unpopular within the movement, however, because it tends to frame the movement as localist, and against increased global ties. Indeed Graeber (2002: 63) has called the term “anti-globalisation”, “a coinage of the US media”. In the UK it has been common to use the term anti-capitalist movement, primarily because the perceived point of emergence of the movement was the Carnival against Capitalism protests in London on 18 June 1999. Within movement circles perhaps the most popular names are: the movement of movements, or the global justice movement. In French speaking countries, however, it is common known as the altermondialiste movement. This has given rise in English to the name, the alter-globalisation movement. We will adopt this name in this thesis because it

experience of intense moments of collective political activity at, for instance, anti-summit protests. These moments have stood in contrast to my experience of political activity in more everyday periods, where the sense of political possibility is much more constricted. This thesis can be seen, in part, as a reading of the alter-globalisation movement through the problematic relationship between these two distinct experiences of political activity. Indeed we will argue that this distinction has formed a meta-problematic around which the alter-globalisation movement has revolved. To put this into another register, we could say that the problem which the movement has grappled with, but been unable to resolve, is the development of forms of organisation that can operate across the different contexts of the expanded sense of possibility found in intensive moments of political activity, and the perceived constriction of possibility in an everyday experience that is conditioned by neoliberalism's domination of common sense.

To some this may seem an untimely problem. Summit protests, even if their form persists, are hardly new; indeed the excitement about their novelty seems to belong to another age. Yet it is precisely this sense of untimeliness that provokes this revisitation. If it is impossible to draw firm boundaries around social movements, it is sometimes necessary to mark them with loose boundaries in order to gain some analytical purchase. One point with which we could mark the end of a certain phase of the alter-globalisation movement is the emergence of the severe, worldwide economic and social crisis in 2007. This crisis was, in many ways, a confirmation of the criticisms of neoliberal globalisation that the movement had put forward. It is also, however, a good point with which to mark the distance that has been travelled. The summit protests of the alter-globalisation movement, and the organisational and action repertoires with which they are associated,

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more accurately reflects the desire for a different globalisation to that imposed by neoliberalism.

emerged in the late 1990s during a period of neoliberal hubris. A prevailing mood at the time saw neoliberal capitalism as, not just the inevitable final form of society, 'the end of history', but also saw in it the potential to solve the world's problems. The emergence of the alter-globalisation movement had such a dramatic effect precisely because it problematised this view. The movement's slogan *Another World is Possible* is a rejoinder to the neoliberal mantra *There is No Alternative*.

The context within which the social movements of the present, or the near future, will have to operate, is quite different to the context of the alter-globalisation movement's emergence. The era of neoliberal hubris has faded, its ideological bluster has been severely shaken and yet the processes of neoliberalism continue to operate and the direction of neoliberal reform continues largely unabated. From our position in 2010, however, it seems unlikely that the crisis is over. A private debt crisis has been recomposed into to a sovereign debt crisis. The debts have been socialised and the costs shifted disproportionately onto the poorest in society. There is a prospect of troubled times ahead.

The alter-globalisation movement's untimeliness, then, provokes the desire to return to the movement, not to repeat it uncritically, but to understand it anew so that we may extract problematics, concepts, tools and technologies that can be useful in movements to come. In this respect, then, we can agree with Hardt and Negri (2009: 368) when they say:

Those movements have left behind, in fact, an arsenal of strategies of disobedience, new languages of democracy, and ethical practices... that can eventually be picked up and redeployed by new initiatives of rebellion.

We must, however, think carefully about the manner in which this inheritance is passed on. In the quote from *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, with which we began this chapter, Marx (1968a: 97) notes the tendency for those within revolutionary situations to draw on, and repeat the traditions of past generations of struggle. There are, however, different

modes in which this repetition can take place. When Deleuze (2001: 92) reads the same passage he finds that:

[H]istorical repetition is neither a matter of analogy nor a concept produced by the reflection of historians, but above all a condition of historical action itself... historical actors can create only on condition that they identify themselves with figures from the past... According to Marx, repetition is comic when it falls short – that is, when instead of leading to metamorphosis and the production of something new, it forms a kind of involution, the opposite of authentic creation.<sup>2</sup>

If present generations of struggle are to prevent the inheritance of past generations of struggle from weighing “like a nightmare upon the brains of the living” (Marx 1968a: 97), then they cannot repeat those traditions uncritically. However, to refuse any inheritance from past generation would leave you unarmed and disorientated in the face of historical conditioning. Authentic creation requires forms of repetition that “constantly criticize themselves, constantly interrupt themselves in their own course, return to the apparently accomplished, in order to begin anew” (Marx 1968a: 100). What we seek then in our return to the alter-globalisation movement is not a comprehensive recreation or account of the movement of the kind that would overcode future generations of struggle. We seek, rather, a mode of repetition that will allow future generations of struggle to generate ‘something new’ and confront the problematics of their own time. With this in mind we will seek to use the alter-globalisation movement to develop and illustrate some political problematics and concepts that, while situated and cramped by their context,<sup>3</sup> have the potential to resonate with other struggles.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> When Deleuze speaks of comic repetition, here, he is referring, of course, to Marx’s (1968a: 97) famous passage: “Hegel remarks somewhere that all facts and personages of great importance in world history occur, as it were, twice. He forgot to add: the first time as tragedy, the second as farce.”

<sup>3</sup> The concept of ‘cramped space’ can be found in the work of Deleuze and Guattari, but it is in Thoburn (2003) that the concept is given prominence and made into a key component of his rendering of a Deleuzian politics. Deleuze (1995: 133) describes the crux of the concept

The thesis is also cramped by its theoretical approach, in this respects it is a reading of the political problematics of the alter-globalisation movement through the prism of a conceptual assemblage that draws, primarily, on the work of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari.<sup>5</sup> But we might equally say that it is a reading of Deleuze and Guattari through the prism of the alter-globalisation movement's political problematics. We also seek, then, to repeat Deleuze and Guattari in a particular manner. Rather than produce a fetishised repetition that defers to them as master theorists, we seek to put their concepts to work within the problematics of the present. To do so requires that we also return Deleuze and Guattari, and the other

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when he says: "We have to see creation as tracing a path between impossibilities... Creation takes place in bottlenecks." This is used by Thoburn to argue for a 'minor' style of writing that uses the bottlenecks of its context to produce authentic creation. For Thoburn the concept of cramped space can protect us against presuppositions of plenitude; that is, the notion that we can make history just as we please. Thoburn's intention is, rather, that we should pay attention to the limits that capital displaces on to us. We can only agree with this intention, while also pointing to the danger of mistaking capital as the only active element. We should also be wary of the concept's potential for an essentialist reading, in which it is used to identify and privilege the most cramped sector, the most oppressed people. It is more in keeping with our thesis to say that the innovation of social movements finds its own cramped space. As Deleuze (1995: 133) goes on to say: "A creator's someone who creates their own impossibilities, and thereby creates possibilities."

<sup>4</sup> In a similar vein I should make clear that my experiences of participation in the movement have also positioned and cramped my reading of it. This thesis does not, therefore, claim to be an entirely objective or universal account of the political problematics of the alter-globalisation movement. It is, rather, what Deleuze and Guattari (1988) would call a minor reading. This means that the problematics abstracted from the movement carry the marks of my involvement in, what Juris (2008: 59-60) would call, the more "autonomous" and "radical network-based" areas of the movement. More importantly though my reading carries the marks of my geographical and social position in the developed world, or global North. I acknowledge that the problematics of the alter-globalisation movement might look very different to a member of one of the large peasant movements from the global south.

<sup>5</sup> Although we draw on the theoretical contributions of many other authors, Marx, Bataille, and Foucault, in particular, we do so primarily by positioning them in relation to Deleuze and Guattari's approach.

theorists we encounter, to the political problematics with which they were themselves entangled. In this way we can find resonances and dissonances between our problematics and theirs. As such we find some other historical repetitions in the thesis, some quite surprising antecedents, as events such as May '68, the French, American and Haitian Revolutions, and even the German peasant revolts on the sixteenth century, appear and re-appear.

## The Chapters

We begin the thesis proper in Chapter Two where we begin to develop our own approach to the political problematics of the alter-globalisation movement by positioning it in regards to some other approaches. We focus, in particular, on the behaviourist and pluralist inheritance that runs through certain strands of the treatment of social movements in political science and Social Movement Theory. By doing so we seek not only to develop useful concepts, such as 'repertoires of contention', but also trace certain *lacunae* within, in particular Political Opportunity Theory and Resource Mobilisation Theory. We will then use these *lacunae* to trace the transcendental dimensions to neoliberal forms of power. In the last section of this chapter we conceptualise these dimensions of power through a reading of Foucault's concept of neoliberal governmentality and Deleuze's conception of control societies. What we find, particularly important in these conceptions is their focus on neoliberalism's ability to "compel obedience not through the commandment of a sovereign or even primarily through force but rather by structuring the conditions of possibility of social life" (Hardt, Negri 2009: 6). Neoliberalism's domination of the 'common sense' view of the world has become so pervasive that it has dramatically restricted political possibility.

We begin Chapter Three by suggesting that the form taken by the alter-globalisation movement, in which the movement is "made present to itself" (Tormey 2005: 340) only at intensive, episodic moments, such as summit protests, is a symptom of neoliberalism's transcendental dimensions of power. It is only by exceeding neoliberalism's conditioning of possibility that this conditioning can be brought into focus. We then move to the discussion

of a methodology that can bring these dimensions of power within analysis and reveal the symptomatic mode of reading that we applied to political science and Social Movement Theory in the previous chapter. We then move from a strategy of reading to Deleuze's concept of a symptomology, which allows us to group experiences together on the basis of their shared affective qualities. Such a grouping might include experiences that would seem divergent if analysed etiologically, that is through an attribution of causality. In particular it allows us to examine moments such as summit protests alongside what may seem like more major events, such as, for example, May '68. Drawing up this symptomology will allow us, therefore, to draw upon a wider range of concepts.

It is from this symptomology that we seek, in Chapter Four, to develop the concept of moments of excess and analyse it in relation to concepts that capture the transcendental structuring of experience. We do so by examining Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of anti-production, the socius and the Body without Organs, which, we will argue, attempts to resolve Bataille's concept of unemployed excess and Marx's analysis of surplus value and revolution. Through this we seek to recompose the analytical problematic of the relationship between moment of excess and the experience of everyday life, into organisational questions, such as: If moments of excess bring about the opening up of political possibility then how do we act without overcoding that possibility with a new instrumentality that closes us off from events to come? Or, how do we build lasting forms of political organisation where the lessons of previous events and generations provide the grounds for continuing innovation? When Guattari considers the concept of moments of excess he proposes the organisational form of the analytical war machine, which indicates a form of organisation that can act as an analyser of the movement and its desires, while simultaneously transforming its organisational structures in line with this analytical process. It is this proposal that marks a point of transition in the thesis, which now shifts from an analysis of moments of excess to an exploration of the diagram of an analytical war machine through a reconceptualisation of the practices and repertoires of the alter-globalisation movement

Chapter Five begins this task by examining the alter-globalisation movement's overriding concern with organisational process. We seek to intensify this concern by positioning it in regards to Guattari's (1996: 260) definition of the left as a "processual passion". We pose this problem as a means of exploring the form of analysis appropriate to an analytical war machine. That is to say, a form of analysis that can operate across the ruptures and discontinuities produced by moments of excess. Or, to put this differently, how can we analyse and strategise when the very presuppositions and assumptions of our analysis and strategy are themselves subject to change? To approach this problem we examine the literature of revolutionary transition, before moving to Deleuze's critique of Kant on the grounds of his failure to include the genesis of established values within the scope of his analysis. This allows us to discuss the inclusion within our analysis of the structuring role of economic value upon the presuppositions of our everyday, 'common sense' understanding of the world. We end the chapter with a discussion of Spinoza's notion of conatus, which, we propose, provides the ethical basis for our project of analysis. We will also propose that Spinoza's ethics of affect reveal the processual passion of the alter-globalisation movement to be ultimately motivated not by a passion for certain procedures but by the joyful passions that come with our increasing ability to act in the world.

With this form of analysis established we turn in Chapter Six to a reconceptualisation of the alter-globalisation movement as a nascent analytical war machine. We do so by tracing Guattari's analytical practice, in both political and psychiatric groups, and its subsequent influence over Deleuze and Guattari's conceptions of organisation. We explore, in particular, the distinction they draw between subject and subjugated groups and the influence of this distinction on their concept of territory. We end the chapter by examining the alter-globalisation movement through the concept of an analytical territory and, in particular, by reconceptualising some of the movement's repertoires as refrains. The territorial concept of the refrains, we suggest, might help future generations of struggle to repeat the alter-

globalisation movement's practice in a manner that will avoid the overcoding of new movements and serve as a basis for authentic creation.

## Chapter Two

### The Politics of Movement

“To go through the experience of thinking differently – in a different way or from a different perspective – creates new possibilities. And perspectives aren’t different takes on the same thing, but each one a world in itself. Likewise, words aren’t different clothes for one object, but can create their own object.” (Turbulence 2009: 2)

#### Introduction

This chapter takes on the appearance of a search for analytical resources, or even a methodology, which we could then apply to our object, the intrinsic political problematics of the alter-globalisation movement. The chapter is indeed structured around an examination of the treatment of social movements within the fields of political science and sociology, assessing them for their adequacy in respect of the problematics with which we are concerned. However this characterisation, if presented as an account of an intellectual journey, contains a certain artifice. I would rather assert that the form of explication doesn’t and indeed shouldn’t follow the form of investigation. The first reason for this is purely formal; the more open ended process of analysis, which gradually identifies and refines the problematics of the research, must be narrowed and systematised to allow a narrative flow.<sup>6</sup>

Beyond this, however, is a political or methodological concern to avoid the presentation of the research as a disinterested and objective survey of

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<sup>6</sup> Or as Marx (1982: 102) would have it:

Of course the method of presentation must differ in form from that of inquiry. The latter has to appropriate the material in detail, to analyse its different forms of development and to track down their inner connection. Only after this work has been done can the real movement be appropriately presented.

the field. Indeed one of the aims of the chapter is to problematise the political and methodological consequences of claims to objectivity. The relationship between the form of analysis and its object might be better characterised as one of entanglement and mutual presupposition, or, in reference to the material to come, one of feedback. The narrative form of the chapter is not disinterested but is structured by the overall objectives of the thesis. In this light we might better characterise this chapter's role as one of positioning for the purposes of explication; that is, revealing the chosen conceptual and methodological apparatus of the thesis by positioning it in relation to other conceptual and methodological approaches. This will be an ongoing process throughout the thesis but in this chapter we start with some approaches, more dominant within both political science and sociology, that are further away from our own, moving to analytical approaches with which we share more presuppositions later in the thesis as our conceptual apparatus becomes more refined.

The difficulty in this chapter, then, is finding points of connection and communication between analytical traditions that share few presuppositions and little conceptual lineage. We might go further and say that the usual incommunicability between traditions derives from divergent ontologies. To overcome this I employ a strategy of reading that seeks to identify problematics that are absent yet inherent to the texts and which become visible and important in relation to our own problematic. We will conceptualise this methodological strategy more fully, and name it as a symptomatic reading, in the next chapter.<sup>7</sup>

This chapter has three sections. In the first section we examine the incorporation of social movements within political science before moving, in the second section, to its treatment within the field of sociology. To some

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<sup>7</sup> So why don't we lay out the operative methodology in detail here? This however, would short-circuit the positioning nature of the chapter. Instead we will allow the methodology to haunt this chapter before being elaborated in its own right and on its own terms in the next chapter.

extent this follows a historical chronology as the main locus for the study of social movements moves from political science to sociology in the 1960s.<sup>8</sup> It is fair to say that we shall engage in only a schematic historical reading of these disciplines, structured in relation to the distinct characteristics and problematics of the alter-globalisation movement. These readings emphasise a shared intellectual inheritance derived from a post-war turn towards behaviourism and a certain form of modelling drawn from the two related fields of systems theory, or cybernetics, and rational actor theory. Tracing this lineage will allow us bring out what is most useful from these traditions while illustrating certain *lacunae*. We make this argument clear in the third section, which attempts a preliminary exposition of the forms of power with which the alter-globalisation movement has attempted to come to grips. We do so through Foucault's concept of neoliberal governmentality and Deleuze's conception of control societies.

## **The Model of Political Science**

The alter-globalisation movement has certainly affected political science; the concept of globalisation, for instance, has become more prominent and problematised in its wake. Yet while its initial concerns have had some impact, its form and the politics intrinsic to its form have largely been elided in globalisation literature. If attention is paid to the alter-globalisation movement it is generally through typologies based on criteria relevant to the pre-existing ideological commitments of the authors, rather than any criteria intrinsic to the movements themselves. This typological or taxonomical approach can create some useful distinctions; the danger, however, is that, even at their best, they miss much of the political creation endogenous to movements, and at worst they create categories that are wildly at odds with movement experiences.

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<sup>8</sup> Social movements are, of course, discussed in other areas of writing, in particular political philosophy and what we might call movement writing. We will position the thesis in relation to these areas during the course of the thesis.

The realist perspective in International Relations, for instance, with its emphasis on states as the principal political actors, has only a limited role within their analysis for trans-national social movements. Indeed in the years following the events of 9/11 the primary means of incorporating the alter-globalisation movement within a realist narrative has been the category of extremism. Bobbit (2008) for instance seeks to include the alter-globalisation movement within the category of 'market state terrorists', as, isomorphic to radical Islamism, it operate in networks and might seek to gain access to weapons of mass destruction and so gain the force of a nation state.<sup>9</sup> Admittedly the realist paradigm does also contain some less hysterical assessments of the alter-globalisation movement; however extremism remains perhaps the central category of analysis in neoliberal and neoconservative interpretations.<sup>10</sup>

Neoliberalism has so comprehensively captured the middle ground of political debate that its assessment has been the one to which all others must position themselves. As such neoliberalism provides the most general of taxonomies, with all political and economic approaches classified as orthodox, heterodox or extremist. Orthodox, of course, is merely a signifier for neoliberal, while what we might characterise as liberal pluralist or global social democratic positions have dominated heterodox views on globalisation. These latter approaches, while often more sympathetic to the movements, also construct transcendent taxonomies that insulate their conceptual apparatus from contamination.

For Steger (2003: 113), for instance, the chief distinction within "antiglobalist forces" is that between particularist and universalist protectionism. The former "are more concerned with the well being of their

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<sup>9</sup> We will examine the role that the category of extremism plays within neoliberal ideology later in the thesis.

<sup>10</sup> Let's be clear, this is not merely a methodological issue. Such thinking has had real material effects as it has fallen back upon and structured much of the police and security service responses to the movement.

own citizens than with the construction of a more equitable international order based on global solidarity” (Steger 2003: 114). While the latter “point to the possibility of constructing a new international order based on the redistribution of wealth and power” (Steger 2003: 115). Steger includes the American conservative activist Pat Buchanan amongst the particularist, protectionist wing of ‘antiglobalism’. This does reflect, to some extent, debates and distinctions raised within the movements themselves. In the late 1990s, for instance, the Dutch anti-racist group De Fabel van de Illegaal critiqued the initial framing of the campaigns against the Mutual Agreement on Investment, and the institutions of global governance, for allowing the far right to influence left wing politics. A particular focus of this critique was the willingness of some left wing activists to share a platform with Pat Buchanan. Following such debates, influential organisations such as Peoples Global Action (PGA) changed their hallmarks to specifically exclude discriminatory behaviour (Davies 2005). Steger, however, also includes the Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez amongst the particularists. The accuracy of his inclusion is much more ambiguous. Chavez’s prominent, although controversial participation within ‘universalist’ movement spaces - such as the 2006 and 2008 World Social Forums - suggests the limits of the utility of this typology.

An alternative approach can be seen in Held and McGrew’s (2003) typology, which aims to illustrate the potential for a new social middle ground. ‘Anti-globalisation’ forces are split here into global transformers, statist/protectionists and radicals, while pro-globalisation forces are split into neoliberals, liberal internationalists and institutional reformers. As this typology is constructed it reveals liberal internationalists, institutional reformers and global transformers all occupying the overlapping political position of cosmopolitan social democracy. This new social middle ground leaves neoliberals excluded on one side with statist/protectionists and radicals excluded on the other.

The alter-globalisation movement suffers a double elision in this typology. Firstly any transformation of politics brought about by the

movement's emergence is elided into a typology that merely valorises Held and McGrew's pre-existing political positions. The mechanism with which this is done produces the second elision, as the movement is reduced to a question of issues. The social democratic position seeks to frame the movement around issues, such as the democratic deficit in global governance structures, to which the most likely solution involves institutional reform. The framing of the movement around issues has been the source of ongoing political struggle. Hewson (2005), for instance, provides an account of the reduction of a far-reaching and expansive alter-globalisation movement into the issue of African poverty during the 2005 Make Poverty History campaign. For Held and McGrew (2003) the alter-globalisation movement is, at best, pre-political; that is to say that while it can indicate a failing in the present structure of institutional politics, actual political change must take place in a different political register, that of representative politics.

In response to the reduction of the alter-globalisation movement to issues, we could suggest that, in a sense, the movement constituted itself as an excess to issue-based politics. Klein (2000), for instance, locates the emergence of the movement in the disillusion with single issue and identity politics. Indeed one of the most popular slogans of the initial phase of the movement, originally attributed to the Zapatistas, reads: "Many Yeses, One No". We can take this as a sign that the point of commonality for the movement is the one no, a rejection of neoliberal capitalism, rather than any amalgam of single-issues. In this thesis we argue that the alter-globalisation movement is, in part, a search for a means of identifying and acting against the form of power that accompanies neoliberal policies. In the final section of this chapter we will examine this form of power as a dispositif that transcendentally structures not just national government policies but also everyday life, and indeed even global governance structures. Of course from such an analysis a programme to merely reform the structures of global governance will be found inadequate.

This indicative literature, however, is merely an instantiation of a more general and longstanding elision of social movements within the field of

political science. It is easy to see how the extra-institutional nature of social movements has led to an obscuring of much that makes them distinctive. There is, as Blaug (1999: 33) puts it, “a tyranny of the visible” towards ‘anti-institutional radicalism’ in the dominant methodologies of political science. Indeed Eschle (2004: 62) describes, more specifically, a double elision of social movements in the field of international relations through:

[A] general neglect in IR of ‘social movements’ and social movement theory. Movements have traditionally been seen as located not in the international but in the domestic, and not in the political but in the social... They are, therefore, doubly invisible in IR and the proper subject matter of sociology. In addition, they disrupt the usual categories of state-centric, pluralist or structuralist IR and are difficult to assess through the dominant IR methodologies.

Beyond this, however, we can identify a specific framing, and elision, of social movements traceable to political science’s inheritance of behaviourist models of the political system. The emergence of political science, as a distinctive approach, involved a shift of emphasis away from, on the one hand, a traditional focus on the comparative study of institutional structures, and, on the other hand, from overt political theorising (Birch 2007). Barber (2006: 541) explains the context of this development:

In the wake of World War II and its twin nightmares of totalitarianism and the holocaust, politics remained crucial to social science. But in the space of a single decade, the attractions of a political science that acquired its scientific credentials by moving away from the messiness of politics and embracing the seeming exactitude of terms such as “behavior” and “system” came to dominate, and methodology appeared to displace politics as the focus of political science.

The premise of behaviourism is the prediction of future behaviour based on the empirical study of past behaviour. It involves a rejection of the study of an entity’s internal structure as a means of predicting behaviour. This approach is oriented, therefore, to questions of ‘what is happening?’ rather than questions of how or why. In the light of Barber’s comments we can speculate that part of the motivation for the emergence of this approach

was a desire to develop a 'value-free' 'science' of behaviour that would transcend the messy world of politics. The project depended then on 'value-free' methodologies and throughout the 1950s there were attempts to develop empirical methodologies within political science by importing those of other disciplines. We will briefly examine the two main strands of this development, Rational Actor Theory and Systems Theory, before tracing their inheritance on the study of social movements.

The basic presuppositions of Rational Actor Theory are contained in a methodology imported from the field of economics. These are adequately summarised by Monroe (1991: 78):

The traditional rational actor is thus an individual whose behaviour springs from individual self-interest and conscious choice. He or she is credited with an extensive and clear knowledge of the environment, a well-organized and stable system of preferences, and computational skills that allow the actor to calculate the best choice (given his or her preferences) of the alternatives available to him or her.

Such a model of the human is constructed not as an ontological claim; although in operation it de facto becomes one, it is, rather, posed as a methodological assumption. Adherents do not claim that all of human behaviour follows the rational actor model; they do claim, however, that it models enough past behaviour for it to act as a useful predictor for future behaviour.<sup>11</sup>

The second development in political science in the 1950s was the rise of a functionalist form of systems analysis deriving from the work of Robert Easton (1953, 1992). The project here is an analysis of the political system derived from a reductive model of a biological organism seen through its interaction with its environment. Although Easton denies a relation to the

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<sup>11</sup> The failure of 'orthodox' economics to predict the global economic crisis that began in 2007 has caused some loss of confidence in this system of modelling.

economism of rational actor theory, the two approaches share certain characteristics. As Joseph (2004: 41-3) puts it:

Both systems theorists and rational choice theorists were influenced by the hopes of making the study of society more 'scientific', perhaps even making it possible for the social sciences to rival in prestige and achievement, the natural sciences.

Easton's theory, for instance, is an importation into political science of Ludwig Van Bertalanffy's General Systems Theory. Van Bertalanffy's schema, closely associated with the post-war paradigm of cybernetics, is derived from a shift in the biological sciences away from modelling biological entities as closed systems towards modelling them as open systems, but with a focus, in particular, on the points of interaction between the entity and its environment. As is common to the cybernetic paradigm, the model is drawn at such a reductive level that an isomorphism can be identified across biological, mechanical and social systems.

At its most abstract the model represents the entity under study as a 'black box' whose internal structure is left undetermined. The 'black box' has inputs and outputs that can be studied empirically, and most importantly, it has a feedback system that links inputs and outputs, allowing the entity to adjust its behaviour in response to its environment. When Easton applies this to political science he produces a model of the political system that matches the diagram in figure one.

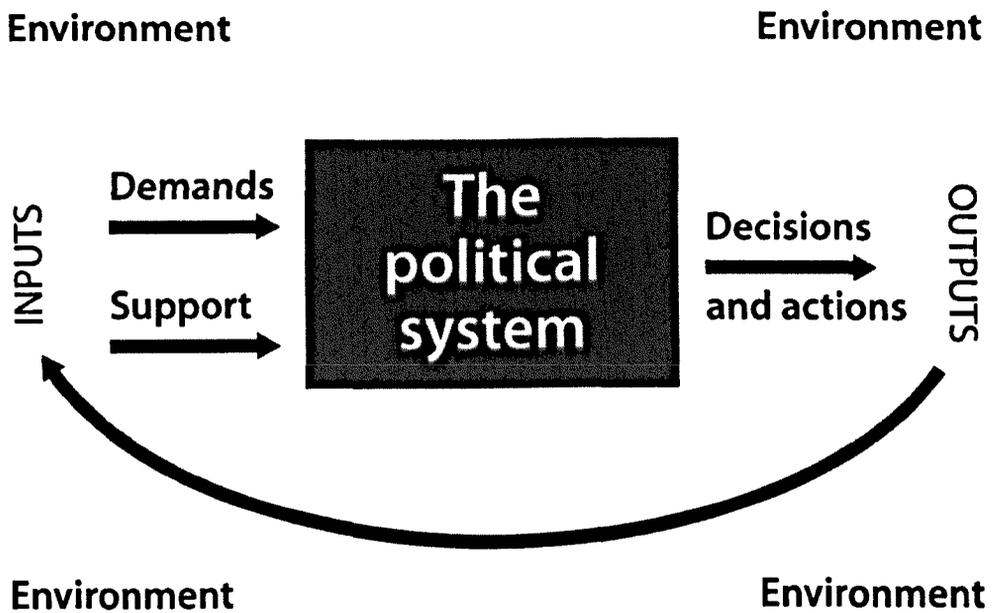


Figure 1. Diagram of Easton's model of the political system.

As Birch (2007: 236) summarises:

In outline, the political system can then be portrayed as composed of inputs (articulated and aggregated) into a 'black box; where authoritative decisions are made, outputs from the 'black box' in the form of policies, and feedback from the society that is affected by the policies.

The abstractness of this model has the advantage of being applicable to the political system at different levels of scale. It also leads, however, to a major problem of definition, as at this level of abstraction it is difficult to delineate any particular system from another. How, for instance, do you specify the political system as opposed to the psychological or economic system? This is particularly difficult when the outputs of one system form part of the inputs of another. As Easton is dealing with the political system we might expect delineation through reference to a particular conception of power. For Easton (1953: 141), however, power is not the central phenomenon of political life. He provides, instead, the now famous definition: "a political system, can be designated as the interactions through which values are authoritatively allocated for a society" (Easton 1992: 193). We should note a certain functionalist circularity at work here. Easton aims to

provide a value-neutral model of a system of value allocation. Power, and its relationship to the construction of values, is outside the model's remit.

There are, of course, a number of problems with this definition. Firstly, the structuring effect of one system upon another is difficult to detect; indeed forms of power arising from the overlap of such structuring effects, or indeed that operate transcendentally to specific systems, become ungraspable. The structuring effect that the functioning of the economic system may have on the construction of values, for instance, is reduced to an input of the political system (Joseph 2004). Secondly, there is the presupposition of a limited model of change; feedback may modulate the system but cannot change its overall orientation and structure. Once again, however, accounting for change is not Easton's primary concern. The structuring problematic of his model is to show how systems persist through challenges and crises. It is this that explains the primary role of the mechanism of feedback, and in particular, the ability of a negative feedback loop to maintain a homeostatic entity within an open system.

If we take as our analytic point of departure the capacity of a system to persist, and if we view as one of the possible and important sources of stress a possible drop in support below some specifiable minimum, we can appreciate the importance of information-feedback to the authorities (Easton 1992: 198).

From the perspective of our problematic, a systems analysis approach could contain some advantages. It allows, for instance, a shift of focus from institutions to process; that is, from a more static analysis of institutional structures toward a more dynamic focus on political processes. This should allow the inclusion of social movements within political science, at least as part of the social feedback mechanism that contributes to the formulation of political inputs into the 'black box' of political decision-making. However if we follow Robert Dahl's (2006) development of Easton's systems approach into the model of pluralism, or polyarchy, we can see that even this limited role is not always accepted.

Dahl developed his model as a critique of C. Wright Mills' analysis of the construction of a dominant power elite out of the overlapping elites of different social sectors. Dahl's (1964) famous study of the operation of the political system in New Haven led him to propose a different model, in which competition between different groups and interests prevented any one group from establishing dominance. There was therefore, to expand on Easton's behaviourist systems model, such a plurality of groups contributing to the political systems inputs that no one group benefited exclusively from its outputs. The idea that no group is, in principle, excluded from the feedback mechanisms of the political organism is central to the pluralist thesis. This hypothesis, however, entails a renewed elision of social movements. As Meyer and Lupo (2007: 124) explain:

Social movement theorists attacked this theory as inappropriate and inaccurate for their studies. If all groups can achieve power under the pluralist model, then the model assumes social movements and protest politics to be irrational acts of insurgency that have unnecessarily skirted the more legitimate avenues of participation.

This assumption of an unproblematic pluralism was brought into question by the upsurge in social struggle in the late 1960s. We can, therefore, see Social Movement Theory, as it has developed within the field of, primarily American, sociology, as an attempt to adapt the theory of pluralism in the light of this upsurge in social movements. As such it makes a certain sense to trace some of the consequences of the influence of both a systems theory-derived pluralism and a rational actor, methodological individualism. This is of more than just historical interest as these shortcomings are still visible within contemporary treatment of the alter-globalisation movement. The tendency within political science, for instance, is to treat global social movements as either pathological, in neoliberal and neoconservative accounts; or pre-political, in the accounts of global social democrats. It was precisely the desire to rescue social movements from castigation as either pathological or pre-political that spurred the original

development of US Social Movement Theory. It did so, however, while carrying the inheritance of political science's behaviourism.

## **The Model of Social Movement Theory**

Moving our focus from the discipline of political science to that of sociology follows the trajectory of the principal site of social movement study from the 1960s on. Indeed we can see the impetus for the development of Social Movement Theory in the United States as, at least partly, rooted in attempts to build on the pluralist models of political science while avoiding its perceived shortcomings (Lupo, Meyer 2005). It should be noted that Social Movement Theory is often placed within a lineage of different, although related antecedents. Early treatments of social movements tended to conceptualise them alongside such phenomena as crowd behaviour, fads and panics (Le Bon 2001, McKay 1995).<sup>12</sup> Other models, such as Collective Behaviour Theory viewed social movements as socially pathological episodes. In this view social movements arise with the breakdown of the social structures that would normally channel behaviour towards non-contentious paths (McAdam, Snow, 1997). Kornhauser (1959), for instance, sees social movements as irrational behaviour brought about by the psychological frustration and social dislocation that occur during exceptional periods of breakdown and material uncertainty. Similarly Smesler's (1962) strain theory sees social movements as products of the fear and uncertainty let loose by rapid social change. This, for Semsler, is one of the external preconditions for the development of social movements, which needs a structural strain, such as a grievance, a shared understanding of that grievance and an inability on the part of existing power to address it.

It is easy to understand how the characterisation of movements as irrational, aberrant and disorganised fell out of favour towards the end of the 1960s. US universities were themselves swept by social movements,

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<sup>12</sup> We examine the related antecedent of Crowd Theory in Chapter six.

providing the impetus for a more sympathetic conceptualisation (Tarrow 1998). This social movement theory was a response to the political need to legitimate social movements and reject their characterisation as self-indulgent, irrational outbursts (McAdam, et al 2001). The desire, instead, was for a conceptualisation of movements that shows the participants as ordinary people acting rationally and in an organised fashion towards a collective goal. The intellectual context in American universities, however, carried the inheritance of both rational actor theory and systems theory.

We can bring out this inheritance by exploring the role of Mancur Olson's (1965) book, *The Logic of Collective Action*. Olson's starting point is the classic formulation of rational actor theory. The principal unit of experience is the individual, who on the whole acts rationally and autonomously towards a goal of utility maximisation. From this starting point, groups can only be an aggregation of individuals who happen to have a shared interest. The problem this perspective has in accounting for group behaviour arises because any collective interest is strictly subordinated to individual interests. If these interests become separated then individual interests assert themselves and collective behaviour breaks down. From this Olsen constructs a version of the classic problem of the free rider. There is a rational unwillingness to bear the costs of acting if the same benefit can be gained by free riding on the actions of others. As Olson (1965: 16) puts it:

The rational individual has no incentive to act as his own efforts will not have a noticeable effect on the situation of his organization, and he can enjoy any improvements brought about by others whether or not he has worked in support of his organization.

This problem is exacerbated when the benefits of group action aren't limited to the members of the group, or, to use Olsen's terminology, when the aim is not a selective interest but a public good.

[O]nly a separate and 'selective' incentive will stimulate a rational individual in a latent group to act in a group-oriented way. In such circumstances group action can be obtained only through an incentive that operates, not

indiscriminately, like the collective good, upon the group as a whole, but rather selectively toward the individuals in the group (Olson 1965: 8).

This of course creates a certain difficulty in accounting for social movements oriented towards public goods - civil rights movements, for example, or the emergence of environmentalism. If, however, collective action and social movements are only possible if people are willing to bear the costs, then we could create an explanation through reference to factors that could reduced the costs of participation and therefore affect a cost/benefit analysis. We can use this problematic to position the two main strains of social movement theory that have developed, primarily in the US, from the late 1960s; Resource Mobilisation Theory and Political Opportunity Theory.

Both theories retain many of Olsen's presuppositions, positing goal-orientated movements and utility-maximising participants but each offer slightly different explanations of the mechanisms with which the costs of participation are lowered. For Political Opportunity Theory, as Tarrow (1998: 20) explains, "Changes in political opportunities and constraints create the most important incentives for initiating new phases of contention." This can mean that social movement emergence is explained through reference to changes in the structure of the existing political system.<sup>13</sup> The concept of political opportunity can, however, extend to wider conceptions of transformations brought about by struggle.

By political opportunities, I mean consistent but not necessarily formal, permanent or national dimensions of the political struggle that encourage people to engage in contentious politics. By political constraints, I mean factors like repression, but also like authorities' capacity to present a solid front to insurgents that discourage contention (Tarrow 1998: 20).

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<sup>13</sup> We can see here how such a conceptualisation would fit with a pluralist conception as in this perspective movements should not emerge if political institutions are functioning properly.

A change in political opportunity structures, then, can reduce social movement start-up costs or make them prohibitively expensive. The initial agency for the emergence of movements is located externally, although initiator movements can create new opportunities for subsequent movements.

Resource Mobilisation Theory, which we can associate initially with the work of McCarthy and Zald (1973, 1977), is closely related to Political Opportunity Theory and to some extent overlaps with it. The key distinction is that whereas, “writers in the political opportunity tradition emphasize the mobilization of resources *external* to the group” (Tarrow 1998: 77), Resource Mobilisation Theory emphasises the mobilisation of internal resources. The latter seek a solution to Olsen’s collective action problem through reference to the ability of movement initiators, or ‘movement entrepreneurs’, to mobilise resources that would reduce the cost of movement participation and raise the potential for benefit. The emphasis, therefore, is on the enabling effects of shared resources. Resource Mobilisation Theory, then, has the advantage of moving the focus of enquiry away from the question of ‘why social movements occur’ towards the question of ‘what they do’ (Tarrow 1998).

As it’s rarely the case that constraints can be imposed or selective incentives provided by movement initiators, one of the major resources available is innovation around established forms of action (Tarrow 1998). The most useful, and influential, way of conceptualising these forms of action is as ‘repertoires of contention’, which Tilly (1995: 26), defines thus:

The word repertoire identifies a limited set of routines that are learned, shared and acted out through a relatively deliberate process of choice. Repertoires are learned cultural creations, but they do not descend from abstract philosophy or take shape as a result of political propaganda; they emerge from struggle. People learn to break windows in protest, attack pilloried prisoners, tear down dishonoured houses, stage public marches, petition, hold formal meetings, organise special-interest associations. At any particular

point in history, however, they learn only a rather small number of alternative ways to act collectively.

Such a conception allows a delineation of movements around the forms of action they adopt, and, in addition, carries an emphasis on the creativity of social movements. As McAdam (1995: 234) says: "We often know a protest cycle by the innovative tactical forms to which it gives rise."<sup>14</sup>

This conception of movement repertoires suggests some dynamics with which to model social movements. Firstly, as Tilly (1995: 26) makes clear, "[e]ach routine within an established repertoire actually consists of an interaction among two or more parties. Repertoires belong to sets of contending actors, not to single actors." Repertoires are, for Tilly, the means by which groups make claims upon others. The party to which the claim is made is usually the state, but there may be other contending groups making similar claims. There is, then, a dynamic interaction between these different actors, as each one adapts to the moves of the others.

Another dynamic that the concept brings into play, however, is the diffusion of innovative repertoires into wider society. One of the jobs that the concept of repertoires does is:

[To] disaggregate the popular notion of protest into its conventional and less conventional components. In each period of history some forms of collective action are sanctioned by habit, expectations, and even legality, while others are unfamiliar, unexpected, and are rejected as illegitimate by elites and the mass public alike. (Tarrow 1998).

The term strike, for instance, can be traced back to 1768 when British seamen struck the sails of their vessels and brought London's commerce to

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<sup>14</sup> The concept of movement repertoire has also been extended to organisational repertoires and even discursive repertoires.

a halt (Rediker 1989: 110).<sup>15</sup> Early strikes were shockingly unacceptable and often met with considerable violence. "As late as the 1870s it was barely known, poorly understood, and widely rejected as a legitimate form of collective action. By the 1960s however, the strike can be considered as an accepted part of collective bargaining practice" (Tarrow 1995: 332).

It is from these dynamics that Tarrow (1995) constructs the model of the 'cycle of contention' or 'protest cycle'. These begin with moments of rapid repertoire innovation, which Tarrow (1995: 328), following Zolberg (1972), calls "moments of madness". These are often intensive and highly creative moments involving movement initiators. Social movement emergence might, then, be understood as the self-generation of political opportunities through repertoire innovation. As repertoires become more established then they become more modular or transferable. This dynamic can lead not just to widened participation in the movement but the development of spin-off movements by others who take advantage of the opening the repertoire has created. Or as Traugott (1995: 3) puts it: "modularity facilitates mobilization by reducing start up costs." These dynamics of diffusion combined with the response of the state, or the party to which the claim is made, eventually cause the cycle to come to an end. As Edwards (2009: 213) summarises:

The protest cycle peaks with widespread diffusion and emulation, then declines as assimilation and neutralisation prevail; the outcome is the demobilisation of the new movements and the adoption of most of the new repertoire by existing organisations.

With this model, then, the lifecycle of a social movement describes a parabolic arc, from innovation, to diffusion, to resolution, leading to a widened repertoire and, perhaps, to the addressing of the initial claims on the political system. As McAdam (1995: 236) makes clear "[r]epertoires,

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<sup>15</sup> Rediker (1989) constructs a picture of the seaman as an early example of the wage-earning, collective worker whose early proletarianisation provides the context for the invention of the strike.

then, are properly viewed as among the key cultural innovations whose diffusion gives the protest cycle its characteristic shape and momentum."

The concept of repertoires of contention was developed by Tilly (1995: 28) specifically to escape from what he perceived to be teleological presuppositions contained in "the prepolitical/political dichotomy employed by E. J. Hobsbawm and George Rude." Tilly saw in this dichotomy a form of developmentalism, which judged movements as either pre-cursors to, or cul-de-sacs from, the labour movement.<sup>16</sup> Tilly had previously developed a taxonomy of movements based on the assessment of their claims as competitive, reactive or proactive, but rejected this as also tainted by developmentalism. One of the questions we might reasonably ask is whether resource mobilisation theory doesn't carry its own teleological assumptions and as such prioritises certain struggles over others. Calhoun (1993), for instance, argues that Tilly's model of the modern social movement is intimately tied to the rise of the nation state and perhaps even more specifically to the example of Chartism.

Charles Tilly... in some of the most important and influential work in the field, tied the study of social movements closely to state making and economic issues. An advance on collective behavior psychologism, this produced a kind of mirror image in which only directly political-economic, nationally integrated, and state oriented movements received full attention (Calhoun 1993: 413).

Of course if the modern repertoire of social movements is tied to the nation state we can ask whether it can be adapted to trans-national movements, and in particular a movement that focuses on the phenomena of neoliberal globalisation.

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<sup>16</sup> Toscano (2010: 51) has a very different reading of Hobsbawm's distinction in which the designation prepolitical "though by no means entirely free from the historical-materialist condescension towards primitive forms of anti-capitalism, rests on an understanding of politics in terms of its efficacy, durability and capacity to generate a new and better world."

We can take Eschle (2004: 71) as providing a reasonable summation of at least the initial framing of the concerns of the alter-globalisation movement.

[M]ost activist accounts in recent years have focused more centrally on phenomena associated with economic globalisation: the increasing power of corporations, the growing role of international financial institutions, and the neoliberal policies of trade liberalisation and privatisation propounded by the latter and from which the former benefit. These are seen to produce economic inequality, social and environmental destruction, and cultural homogenisation. They are also accused of leaching power and self-determination away from people and governments – of being anti-democratic.

We can see that such concerns would not fit easily into a schema oriented towards 'nationally integrated and state oriented movements'. It is, however, quite feasible for the 'democratic deficit' caused by globalisation to be understood as a change in the political opportunity structure, which in turn could be used to explain movement emergence. Accordingly the concept of repertoire does seem transportable to the alter-globalisation cycle of protests. Indeed we will use the concept, and ultimately modify it during the thesis.

However, Resource Mobilisation Theory's teleological commitments are not exhausted by its attachment to the nation state as the principal field of analysis. We will argue that there are some additional, implicit teleological commitments contained in some *lacunae* inherited from the behaviourist turn in political science. Firstly, Resource Mobilisation Theory's conception of repertoires is understood as a mechanism of claim-making; the political problematic that structures the theory, then, is that of pluralism.<sup>17</sup> Indeed we can go further here and claim that the parabolic arc of the social movement

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<sup>17</sup> This accords with the assessment of Chesters and Welsh (2006: 15) when they say: "The dominance of pluralist models of interest representation and inclusion within the United States are significant features of all established US approaches. These have orientated resource and frame-work towards prevailing national political opportunity structure."

cycle of contention is isomorphic with the feedback loop in Easton's diagram of the political system. Both Resource Mobilisation Theory and Political Opportunity Theory, therefore, carry Easton's analytical focus on, and assumption of, the survival of the existing political system. Yet while the latter explains movement emergence in terms of a lack, the former explains it in terms of an excess, and as such remains analytically open to political problematics that focus on the creativity of social movements.

We can explore this by thinking through the different orientations of the concept of a claim, or demand, and the concept of a problematic.<sup>18</sup> Claims and demands are by their very nature claims or demands to someone or something. They are claims or demands put to an existing state or state of affairs. Even if they are implicit rather than explicit they are always, to some extent, within the terms and sense of what exists. The analytical focus on the making of a claim or demand in Resource Mobilisation Theory helps to explain its analytic focus on the diffusion of repertoires into the normalised functioning of the existing political system rather than a focus on the mechanisms of their creation.<sup>19</sup>

In addition to claims and demands, however, we can understand social movements as forming around problems. This shouldn't be understood in a simple functionalist fashion, as if there is a pre-existent problem which then produces a social movement that, in turn, forces the state or capital to respond and solve the problem. It is rather that social movements form their

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<sup>18</sup> There is a danger here that we are eliding the distinction between a claim and a demand; however, in relation to the political problematic that we are trying to develop, claims and demands function similarly enough to make this a legitimate move. It is, after all, a small enough leap from a political problematic based on claim making to Della Porta and Diani's (1999: 233) claim that, "all movements make demands on the political system".

<sup>19</sup> This also returns us to the orientation towards the nation state. Within the field of globalisation, however, there is an additional problem of who it is exactly demands could be put to.

own problematic at the same time as they are formed by them.<sup>20</sup> Social movements usually involve a moment of rupture through the creation of a new problem. That is, they problematise a certain area of the social field that was previously treated as unproblematic. With this rupture comes a whole new set of questions and problems that don't fit with existing sense and cannot be removed with a simple solution. As Rajchman (2001: 105) puts it: "there is no form of government that can rule out or completely silence those problems that are not obstacles to be removed but rather are points around which new 'becomings' arise, new ways of thinking take shape". As this new way of thinking, or new sense, takes hold it produces its own problematics and questions and it is in the interrelation between this new sense and the sense of the existing socius that movements move. This concept of movement problematics, therefore, can help us to think about movements in terms of their attempts to break with existing sense and ask their own questions on their own terms. The central concern of our thesis is precisely the conceptual, political and organisational consequences of this difficult relationship between the existing sense of society, or the socius, and a movement's creation of its own sense.<sup>21</sup>

To think this through in terms of repertoires we could say that a movement innovates a repertoire that imperfectly expresses a certain problematisation of the existing state of affairs. The movement must then problematise its own modes of acting as it attempts to pose questions that don't make sense from within the sense of the existing socius. We can say, then, that the development of repertoires carries an additional dynamic to the

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<sup>20</sup> We could even say that, apart from their performative aspects, demands are redundancies when thought in relation to problems. As Deleuze (2006b: 380) says: "You always get the solutions you deserve depending on the problems that have been posed."

<sup>21</sup> In subsequent chapters we will conceptualise this as about the creation of new sense through escaping the fetishisation of existing values. When we problematise different effects of capital, for instance, we are trying to get to the problems that can't be posed from within the socius of capital. But we can only do this through the creation of new values, or as De Angelis (2007) would say, the creation of new value practices.

ones identified previously. The movement must try new innovations in repertoires as it tries to grasp the wider problematic of the complex social field within which they operate.<sup>22</sup>

This is not to dismiss demands and claim making as unimportant. We might instead propose the image of movements as doubly articulated. Demands are the side of the movement that is orientated towards what already exists. Demands are the appeal for recognition of new problems. Problematics, however, are the side of social movements that face away from the existing world and towards new ones. In addition, we can say that problematics move more quickly than demands, which function, in some ways, as the freezing of movements. We can illustrate this point anecdotally before, in later chapters, we explore it conceptually. In 2006 Olivier Marcellus (2006: 1), a founding participant in the important alter-globalisation network People's Global Action, wrote: "People have been saying for some time that what the movement needs are some real victories. But – it's a strange but frequent phenomenon – when movements finally win them, they often go unnoticed." The context for this statement was the collapse of the Doha round of trade talks, which seemed to signal that the World Trade Organization was effectively defunct. One of the slogans of the initial cycle of anti-summit protests was 'Kill the WTO'. Yet when this demand was effectively achieved there seemed to be no widespread feeling of victory in the movement; there was rather a feeling of impasse. We would suggest that by the time the demand to 'Kill the WTO' had been achieved the problematic of the movement had moved on - that is to say, the movement had new problems to deal with.

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<sup>22</sup> We should point out that there is some overlap here with some elements of the concept of repertoires. We could look to Tarrow (1998: 41), for example, when he says:

Like the demonstration and the strike, the barricade had an internal, as well as an external logic. As they faced off against hostile troops, the defenders came to know each other as comrades, developed a division of labor of fighters, builders, and suppliers, forming networks of comrades that would bring them together in future confrontations.

Within the field of Social Movement Theory the reading of the alter-globalisation movement that comes closest to this conception can be found in Chesters and Welsh (2006), who create a theoretical assemblage from the work of Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari, Gregory Bateson and Alberto Melucci.<sup>23</sup> Of particular pertinence here is their concept of reflexive framing, which they define as, “the sense making practices of actors necessary to situate themselves in relation to a domain” (Chesters, Welsh 2006: 9). This concept is distinguished from the frame analysis, derived from the work of

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<sup>23</sup> Melucci's work represents a quite different strand of Social Movement Theory to the traditions of Resource Mobilisation and Political Opportunity Theory. His work is perhaps amongst the most useful of the tradition known as New Social Movement Theory. This developed not in the pluralist dominated atmosphere of the United States but, primarily, within a 1980s European post-Marxist milieu. As such the perhaps paradigmatic characterisation of a New Social Movement lies in the distinction created by a perceived shift from material or class based 'old' movements towards normatively based or even identity based 'new' movements. The danger in such a characterisation is that it universalises the political concerns of a particular period and fails to encompass the concerns of movements to come. The alter-globalisation movement, for instance, could be characterised as a complex mix of both 'old' and 'new' social movement concerns. It carries many of the characteristics described by Calhoun (1993: 404):

One of the most striking features of the paradigmatic NSMs has been their insistence that the organizational forms and styles of movement practice must exemplify the values the movement seeks to promulgate. This means, at the same time, that the movements are ends in themselves. Relatedly, many NSMs are committed to direct democracy and a nonhierarchical structure, substantially lacking in role differentiation, and resistant to involvement of professional movement staff.

Indeed Melucci (1996: 30) comes close to our own problematic when he says:

[A social movement] does not just restrict itself to expressing a conflict; it pushes the conflict beyond the limits of the system of social relationships within which the action is located. In other words, it breaks the rules of the game, it sets its own non-negotiable objectives, it challenges the legitimacy of power, and so forth".

Yet, as we have already argued, the alter-globalisation movement could be seen as a move away from the seriality of identity politics towards a renewed concern with the effects of material production. Indeed this distinction has provoked the creation of the category, 'newer social movements' (Murray 2006).

Erving Goffman, which is usually deployed in the study of social movements. As Chesters and Welsh (2006: 16) make clear the usual conception of frame analysis employed in the study of social movements is orientated towards placing social movement organisations “on the path towards realisable ends within a *national polity*”; as such it is developed “explicitly *against* adopting abstract master frames such as capitalist inequality on the grounds that these could not be transformed into credible grievance frames capable of resonance and amplification.” Chesters and Welsh (2006: 16) critique this empirically, pointing to the alter-globalisation movement’s successful mobilisation of “millions of people in hundreds of countries” using “a neo-liberal capitalist axiomatic as its ‘master frame’”.

To produce a reflexive frame analysis adequate to this task Chesters and Welsh (2006) re-emphasise Bateson’s work in respect to Goffman’s. That this creates certain overlaps with our own problematic can be seen in this summary:

Bateson’s take on framing then is a wide-ranging one that relates to both individual processes of psychological framing and the collective consequences of these frames in selecting certain differences as categories of fact that structure human activity on the basis of both cognitive and affective processes (Chesters, Welsh 2006: 13).

We can link this conception of framing with a critique of Easton’s model of the political system through Bateson’s involvement in cybernetics and, in particular, his conception of second order cybernetics.

We earlier identified Easton’s ‘black box’ concept of the political system as an application of Von Bertalanffy’s General Systems Theory. We could also associate it, and the more general turn towards behaviourism in political science, with the closely associated paradigm of cybernetics. The term cybernetics, popularised by Nobert Wiener, is taken from the ancient Greek word *kybernetikos*, meaning ‘good at steering’ or steersman (Gere 2002: 52). Easton’s diagram of the political system as a black box, with inputs, outputs and a feedback mechanism, is isomorphic with the electrical engineering circuit diagram drawn up by Wiener during his Second World

War work to develop a feedback mechanism which would allow anti-aircraft gunners to predict the trajectory of their target across the delay between the firing of the ordinance and its arrival.<sup>24</sup> As Lafontaine (2007: 29) explains:

Based on his work on the AA predictor, Wiener and his colleagues began an epistemological revolution by rejecting the intrinsic study of beings and things and focusing the analysis instead on interactions between objects, regardless of their nature (physical, biological, artificial or human).

Central to the establishment of the paradigm of cybernetics were a series of cross-disciplinary meetings held between 1946 and 1953, known as the Macy conferences. Both Wiener and Bateson were part of the core group of participants at the conferences.<sup>25</sup> The set of theories that arose, however, had specific limitations, as Gere (2002: 121) summarises:

(T)he cybernetics that emerged out of the Macy Conferences and elsewhere in the 1940s and '50s was typical of the period. It was largely based on engineering paradigms, and was interested in idealized systems of homeostasis and feedback. It adhered to the traditional scientific view of the observer as standing outside of the system being observed.

In 1968 Bateson organised a new conference aimed at incorporating questions of reflexivity and the position of the observer within cybernetics. This approach, which became known as second order cybernetics, aimed, "to understand how the human activity of representing and modelling both natural and social processes inevitably contributed to shaping and altering those very same processes" (Holmes 2009). In 1973, during an interview

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<sup>24</sup> The human pilot was just one of the heterogeneous elements that had to be made equivalent as information so as to be incorporated into ballistic trajectories. Indeed, as Lafontaine (2007: 32) explains, "the concept of feedback provides the basis for the theoretical elimination of the frontier between the living and the non-living." We could trace a line here through information theory to, among other things, Donna Haraway's (1991) conception of the cyborg.

<sup>25</sup> Another member of the core group was John von Neuman, the inventor of game theory and therefore an intellectual precursor to Olsen (Lafontaine 2007).

with Stuart Brand (1976), Bateson and his wife Margaret Mead drew the pair of diagrams in figure two as an explanation of the distinction between first and second order cybernetics. The first diagram is recognisably isomorphic with Easton's 'black box' model of the political system, with Easton, as the modeller, taking the place of the engineer outside, and transcendent to, the circuit. In the lower diagram the engineer, in this case Wiener is entrained within the system. As the interview continued Bateson and Mead added themselves within the circuit, as they themselves are the modellers or the circuit with Wiener inside. This is, of course, a recursive dynamic.

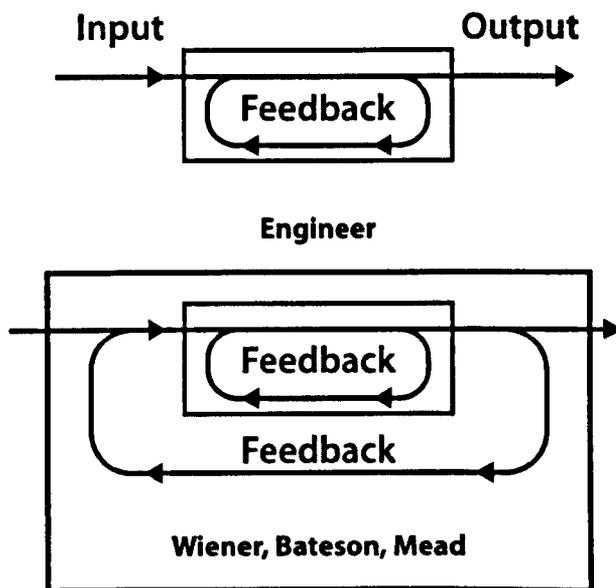


Figure 2. Diagram of first and second order cybernetics.

Second order cybernetics is an ambiguous paradigm; it is antecedent to many subsequent developments, such as complexity theory or cognitive science (Protevi 2009). It could potentially, however, involve a re-politicisation of cybernetics, as the values, and their consequent structuring effects, are brought within the scope of analysis.<sup>26</sup> The collapse of second order cybernetics in the late 1970s, due, in part, to the difficulty of resolving its recursive nature leads us away from following this path directly.

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<sup>26</sup> Indeed Holmes (2009) suggests that Bateson's movement from a cybernetic to a more ecological conception of systems has strong parallels with Guattari's later conceptions of ecosophy and meta-modelling.

Rather than follow the concept of reflexive framing, however, we will, in Chapter Four, use Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of the Body without Organs and the socius as a means of approaching the problematic of sense making.<sup>27</sup> Before that, however, we will follow the alter-globalisation movement's anti-neoliberal problematic through Foucault's conception of neoliberal governmentality, and Deleuze's conception of control societies. These concepts open up an analysis of neoliberalism through reference to its sense-making, while simultaneously grasping its relation to cybernetic mechanisms of feedback.

## The Neoliberal Steersman

Foucault (2008) developed his conception of neoliberalism through a series of lectures delivered from 1978-1979 and latter published as *The Birth of Biopolitics*. In these lectures Foucault conceives neoliberalism as a mode of governmentality, a concept succinctly defined by Read (2009: 29) as "a manner, or a mentality, in which people are governed and govern themselves." Foucault (2008) locates the novelty of neoliberalism in the transformation it effects within the liberal mode of governmentality and its attendant subjectivity *homo economicus*. The subjectivity of *homo economicus*, or economic man, involves the extension of the mode of rationality that we associate with the economic realm across the whole of society. For an example of such thinking in the political sphere we can look to the public choice theorists James Buchanan and Gordon Tullock when they declare that "[t]he average individual acts on the basis of the same overall value scale when he participates in market activity and in political activity" (cited in Surowiecki 2004: 263).

In contradiction to many conceptions of neoliberalism, and indeed to the implications of its name, Foucault (2008: 131) states that we should

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<sup>27</sup> The concept of the Body without Organs could, in part, be thought of as a means of putting a stop to the recursive search for the conditioning of the present.

“avoid at all costs” mistaking neoliberalism for a mere repetition of the classical liberalism of, for example, Adam Smith. For classical liberals the market is a natural form, which requires only the absence of government interference, and the upholding of the right to private property. Under these conditions markets will allow the invisible hand of individual self-interest to maximise social utility. The rationality of *homo economicus*, in this schema, is based on man’s natural “propensity to truck, barter, and exchange one thing for another” (Smith 1991: 117). For neoliberalism, however, *homo economicus* is based not on exchange but competition. This produces an important distinction, as the purely competitive market is, in some ways, artificial. It requires state intervention to produce the right conditions for competitive markets and more intervention to spread market forms through the rest of society. This intervention to create market forms turns components of the state into entrepreneurial entities in competition for resources. In the university sector, for example, neoliberal reform has created a situation in which not only is each university in competition with other universities but each department within the university is in competition with each other and other departments in other universities. Not only this but each individual member of staff or student is constructed to be in competition with each other. The result is a proliferation of bureaucratic mechanisms of measure, which falls back upon its object, structuring, and corrupting productive activity.

By participating within these proliferating markets, individuals are constantly forced into cost/benefit judgments based on economic value. There is constant pressure to behave as though the individuals themselves were competitive entities, or indeed, human capital. This constant, enforced participation in markets act as a kind of training, which naturalises the notion that individuals are enterprises who should invest in themselves to maximise their utility. For Foucault (2008: 226), then, under neoliberalism: “*Homo economicus* is an entrepreneur, an entrepreneur of himself”.

Foucault’s analysis, then, portrays neoliberalism as a paradoxical entity that intervenes into society to create its own presuppositions, or as Lemke

(2001: 202) says, it is “a political project that endeavours to create a social reality that it suggests already exists.” Neoliberalism’s presuppositions, then, fall back upon society and begins to structure society’s sense of itself or, as David Harvey (2005: 3) puts it: “Neoliberalism... has pervasive effects on ways of thought to the point where it has become incorporated into the common-sense way many of us interpret, live in, and understand the world.” The creation of a neoliberal common sense involves the imposition of a manner of living, and indeed of a certain kind humanism, by which we mean a model of the human. This has many overlaps with the behaviourism that we find in political science. As Lemke (2001: 201) explains:

Whereas in the classic liberal conception, homo economicus forms an external limit and the inviolable core of governmental action, in the neo-liberal thought of the Chicago School he becomes a behavioristically manipulable being and the correlative of a governmentality which systematically changes the variable "environment" and can rightly expect that individuals are characterized by "rational choice".<sup>28</sup>

We can see here some connections to a cybernetic system in which the expectations of the modeller influence the system they are, apparently, observing. This connection, however, is brought out much more clearly in the concept of control societies that Deleuze (1995) detects as a latent concept in Foucault’s work.<sup>29</sup> Deleuze (1995) outlines the diagram of control by contrasting it to the diagram of disciplinary. In the latter, individuals move through an array of institutions each containing their own distinct logic, laws and practices; their distinct ‘dispositif’, which provides its own limits to thoughts and action, and its own distinctions of normality and deviancy. Throughout their life a person might be a pupil at school, a soldier in the

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<sup>28</sup> Despite rational choice theory’s protestations that its assumptions are merely methodological we can see through its entrainment within neoliberalism that it is operatively ontological.

<sup>29</sup> Deleuze borrows the term control from William Burroughs, who wrote a series of essays on the concept (see Burroughs 1984).

army, a worker at the factory, a father in the family and a patient at the hospital. Each dispositif, however, is a variation on a common diagram of power that takes the form of the 'panopticon' (Foucault, 1977).<sup>30</sup> Deleuze (1995) detects in Foucault's later work, however, the notion that the hard striations of distinct disciplinary institutions are being replaced with hybrid, and "ultra rapid forms of free-floating control" (Deleuze, 1995: 178). The disciplinary institution of the school, for instance, gives way to the environment of life-long learning and continuous assessment that is needed to maintain the individual as a competitive entity. As Deleuze (1995: 181) says: "Control is short-term and rapidly shifting, but at the same time continuous and unbounded, whereas discipline was long-term, infinite and discontinuous."

Existence within control societies, then, requires continuous participation within its circuits of communication. It incorporates and manages populations through mechanisms of feedback, but these mechanisms do not allow the participants to reach or control the overarching parameters of that participation or the conditions under which it takes place. We could look to the rise of the focus group as the paradigmatic form of political participation in societies of control. The focus group provides feedback but it never gets to set the questions or make the decisions about how that feedback is incorporated within the political system. If the feedback does breach the parameters set by the political 'engineer', of course, it can simply be discounted. Isn't this precisely the way that contemporary structures of power would like to incorporate social movements? As mechanisms of feedback whose excessive components are ignored in the reduction of the movement to issues that fit within existing sense.

This does not necessarily imply fully conscious control over the system by some kind of 'engineer'. Of course the 'engineer' is also entrained within

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<sup>30</sup> The model of the panopticon, developed by Jeremy Bentham, has a series of cells all of which can be observed from a central point. The inhabitants of the cell, however, can never know when or if they are being observed.

the system and its modulations are, to a large degree the result of self-modulation. As Deleuze (1995: 178) makes clear, “Confinements are *molds*, different moldings, while controls are a *modulation*, like a self-transmuting”. In disciplinary societies the diagram of the panopticon ensures that the subject never knows when they are being watched; as a consequence the subject has to internalise this judgment of their behaviour. In control societies the assessment is similarly indeterminate but now the criteria for judgment are also in constant modulation and subject to feedback mechanisms. As a consequence we can never be sure what the criteria for judgment is or what the norm is. We find ourselves in a Kafkaesque maze of cybernetic bureaucracy in which final judgment is indefinitely postponed. “In the disciplinary societies one was always starting again (from school to the barracks, from the barracks to the factory), while in the societies of control one is never finished with anything” (Deleuze, 1995: 179).<sup>31</sup>

In the light of these analyses, of governmentality and control, the problem with neoliberal globalisation becomes more than merely trans-national corporations, governance structures, or flows of finance capital, acting beyond the purview of the nation state, and therefore structuring the conditions of possibility for national policy. Neoliberalism is now revealed as a dispositif of power that, by conditioning our common sense understanding of how to live a life, has transcendental dimensions unreachable by a political strategy of global governance reform. As Hardt and Negri (2009: 6) put it: “Such transcendental powers compel obedience not through the commandment of a sovereign or even primarily through force but rather by structuring the conditions of possibility of social life.” From this premise the political problematics of the alter-globalisation movement look very different.

Similarly we can see how an analytical methodology containing the humanist presuppositions of behaviourism creates certain *lacunae*, which

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<sup>31</sup> It is these characteristics that lead to Deleuze’s (1995: 175) warning: “Compared with the approaching forms of ceaseless control in open sites, we may come to see the harshest confinement as part of a wonderful happy past.”

remove the transcendental conditioning of possibility of social life from the scope of analysis. In the next chapter we will examine a more appropriate methodology before moving to an examination of the political problematic of the alter-globalisation movement in regards to neoliberalism's transcendental dimensions. We do this in Chapter Four by developing the concept of moments of excess in relation to Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of the Body without Organs and the socius. In Chapters Five and Six we will go on to examine some of the movement's organisational and action repertoires as moments in the potential construction of a diagram of an analytical war machine, which, we will propose, is an organisational form adequate to this problematic and, at an abstract enough level, transportable to future generations of struggle.

## Chapter Three

### Syptoms of Excess

The first impression was of a gigantic lid suddenly lifted, of pent-up thoughts and aspirations suddenly exploding, on being released from the realm of dreams into the realm of the real and the possible. In changing their environment people themselves were changed. Those who had never dared say anything suddenly felt their thoughts the most important thing in the world – and said so. The shy became communicative. The helpless and isolated suddenly discovered that collective power lay in their hands. The traditionally apathetic suddenly realised the intensity of their involvement. A tremendous surge of community and cohesion gripped those who had previously seen themselves as isolated and impotent puppets dominated by institutions that they could neither control nor understand. People went up and talked to one another without a trace of self-consciousness. This state of euphoria lasted throughout the whole fortnight I was there. An inscription scrawled on the wall sums it up perfectly: “Deja dix jours de bonheur” (ten days of happiness already) (Dark Star Collective 2001: 76).

It's a physical thing. The hairs on the back on your arms stand up. You get goosebumps. There's a tingling in your spine. Your heart is racing. Your eyes shine and all your senses are heightened: sights, sounds, smells are all more intense. Somebody brushes past you, skin on skin, and you feel sparks. Even the acrid rasp of tear gas at the back of your throat becomes addictive, whilst a sip of water has come from the purest mountain spring. You have an earnest conversation with the total stranger standing next to you and it feels completely normal. (Not something that happens too often in the checkout queue at the supermarket.) Everybody is more attractive. You can't stop grinning. Fuck knows what endorphins your brain's producing, but it feels great. Collectivity is visceral! (Free Association 2005a: 569).

## Introduction

The alter-globalisation movement is commonly accused of incoherence.<sup>32</sup> In part this is provoked by the movement's style of politics – the lack of a formal political programme, for instance – but there is, in addition, a perceived inconsistency in the identification of grievances and adversaries. Indeed the criticism 'they don't know what they are for' is entangled with the idea that 'they don't now what are they against'. Protests have taken place against a wide range of governance structures, from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to the World Trade Organization (WTO) to the G8 (group of eight leading industrialised countries) and even the summits of the European Union. Although we might point to a shared general direction of policy amongst these institutions, the so-called Washington consensus, the variation in targets has left some observers with the impression of a lack of focus. It has lent itself, *in extremis*, to the then UK Prime Minister Tony Blair's caricature of summit protesters as "an anarchists' travelling circus that goes from summit to summit with the sole purpose of causing as much mayhem as possible" (BBC News 2001). While these criticisms are ultimately misplaced we could use them to illustrate an important characteristic of the movement. Its coherence does not develop in a linear fashion. If we follow our previous argument that movements cohere around a shared set of problematics, then we can say that movements move through the development of these problematics. This development, however, contains moments of rupture and disjunction, as the movement seeks to break with the existing sense of political possibility in order to pose its own questions on its own terms.

The protests against the WTO meeting in Seattle in November 1999 are commonly seen as the alter-globalisation movement's moment of emergence. In fact the Seattle protest was one of a series of global days of

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<sup>32</sup> See, for example, Fotopoulos (2005).

action called by the organisation People's Global Action (PGA).<sup>33</sup> Indeed the London J18 Carnival against Capitalism preceded Seattle, taking place, as the name indicates, on 18 June 1999. The idea of a *global* day of action was, in part, an attempt to grasp and figure the forms of power brought to the fore by neoliberal globalisation.<sup>34</sup> The symbolism of a global governance summit, such as the G8 or the WTO, provided a date for a coordinated series of protests across a range of countries. 18 June 1999 was chosen as a PGA global day of action to coincide with the opening of the G8 summit in Cologne. Protests took place in 40 countries around the world but, as it turned out, the most significant protest took place not in Cologne but in London (Ainger 2009). In the period after Seattle the idea of global days of action, with simultaneous protests across different countries, began to lose purchase. The perceived success at Seattle, with the protests significantly disrupting the summit, meant that subsequent protests became focused on the city or region in which the summit was taking place.

One of the implicit arguments of the previous chapter is that the form a movement takes reflects its object and context, and in particular, the specific forms of power with which the movement participants are entangled and from which they are attempting to break free. One of the initiating problematics of the alter-globalisation movement was the attempt to get to grips with a form of power whose operation transcended forms of representative democracy, and indeed the related political imaginaries, centred on nation states. Seen through the prism of this problem a concentration on summit protest might seem a reductive move. Indeed Tormey (2005: 338) highlights the danger of "the fallacy of 'summitism' (the view that summits are major occasions for elite deliberation and governance

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<sup>33</sup> Of course we could trace the point of emergence back further, perhaps to the Zapatista uprising of 1 January 1994. The PGA emerged out of a series international meetings, called *encuentros*, initiated by the Zapatistas in 1996 (P.G.A. 2002).

<sup>34</sup> A prominent slogan used on publicity for the J18 protests in London, for instance, read: 'Our Resistance is as Transnational as Capital.'

and hence that shutting down summits represents a substantive and meaningful blow to global elites).” However despite this danger, and it is a danger that has been widely acknowledged in movement literature, summit protests have been a stubbornly persistent movement form.<sup>35</sup>

Perhaps this persistence can be better understood if we change our perspective to look at Seattle’s compositional, rather than overtly oppositional, effects. That is to say, the Seattle protests weren’t just significant for the effects they had on their adversary, the WTO; the most dramatic effects were on the composition of the movement itself. Seattle is forever associated with the startling alliance of ‘turtles and teamsters’. The image of environmentalists dressed as turtles finding themselves side by side with members of labour unions with whom there may previously have been some tension, has been used as a stand-in for a much wider array of participants who suddenly found they could act in common.<sup>36</sup> It would be a mistake, however, to see this in terms of formal alliances between pre-existing and unchanging political identities. The ‘turtles and teamsters’ could only come together in such numbers because a significant amount of union members disobeyed their own stewards, left the route of their permitted march, and joined those blockading the streets (Solnit, Solnit, 2009). Events such as Seattle create an excess; they are more than the sum of their parts.

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<sup>35</sup> So persistent indeed that we can trace a direct line of development through to the December 2009 protests at the Copenhagen COP15 summit on climate change and indeed the June 2010 protests against the G20 in Toronto.

<sup>36</sup> The protestors dressed as turtles were seeking to highlight one effect of the WTO’s policy of removing barriers to trade. In the case of the Sea Turtles the WTO overturned US environmental protections.

Four Asian nations challenged provisions of the US Endangered Species Act forbidding the sale of shrimp caught in ways that kill endangered sea turtles. In 1998, the WTO ruled that the US was not acting in compliance of WTO rules. Requiring shrimp nets be fitted with inexpensive ‘turtle excluder devices’ has been ruled ‘WTO-Illegal’ (Solnit, Solnit, 2009: 117).

We use the term 'compositional effects' to refer to this difference created by the event.<sup>37</sup>

The sense of new possibility created by Seattle was a significant factor in the subsequent expansion of the movement. More than this, however, I would argue that the shift of emphasis from opposition to composition actually allows a better grasp of dominant contemporary forms of power. Neoliberalism, treated as a dispositif of power, is too deterritorialised to be accurately figured through opposition. Hardt and Negri (2000: 190), who want to give the name Empire to this deterritorialised form of power, argue that this "smooth space" contains "no place of power". In this light, summit protests can be seen as a means of putting a place on the *non-place* of power, which, despite the dangers of reductionism, allows the compositional effects of the movement to take place.<sup>38</sup> It is, in turn, these compositional effects that reveal the transcendental dimensions of neoliberal forms of power. If, as argued in the previous chapter, neoliberalism operates, in part, through "structuring the conditions of possibility of social life" (Hardt, Negri 2009: 6) then it is only by exceeding these possibilities, and indeed creating new ones, that this conditioning can be brought into focus. We will argue then that the prominence of the evental form in contemporary social

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<sup>37</sup> We should add that this approach is not merely prompted by theoretical concerns but also reflects how such events are often experienced. See for instance this testimony from a participant in the 2001 Genoa protests against the G8:

One of the best things had been simply spending five days in Genoa living politics, meeting people, discussing ideas, just being there, smelling the tear-gas, feeling the adrenalin, watching the banks burn, being part of a militant and huge gathering. And feeling the shock of Carlo's death, the anger at the fascist behaviour of the police, the relief at getting away without being nicked. And lastly a feeling that we are at the centre of what is rising, not at the fringe of what is dying. (Hughes 2001:28)

<sup>38</sup> Again I would argue that such a position is broadly reflective of movement thinking:

The G8 is, if anything, a convenient excuse for us rebels to demonstrate our power – after all, capitalism and the state exists every day of the year, not just on days of action. The importance of these days lies not in shutting the summit down, but in inspiring people to demonstrate to take action into our own hands. (Trocchi, et al, 2005: 99)

movements can, then, be seen as a symptom of the dominant role of transcendental dimensions of power.

Such events have played a structuring role in the development of the alter-globalisation movement. Indeed Tormey (2005: 340) has argued that, along with Social Forums, summit protests are “one of the key moments when what is otherwise disaggregated crystallises... There are not many other moments when the movement is made present to itself”. If we return to our definition of social movements as the movement of problematics, then such events are key moments of disjuncture, which provoke dramatic shifts in these problematics. More than this though, we will argue that the shifts in the problematics to which the alter-globalisation movement has applied itself, revolve around an unsolved meta-problematic. This is the question of how these moments of excess relate to the politics of everyday life. Or, “how do we take those new worlds that felt so possible during the week of protests and generalise them so that they make sense in the rest of our lives?” (Harvie, et al 2005b: 15).

In this chapter we seek to open up such events by examining their affective qualities, or to put that in more familiar language, by examining what it feels like to be within such an event. We do so as a means of access to an event’s compositional effects, in order, in subsequent chapters, to draw out renewed political problematics and, in turn, re-conceptualise movement repertoires. By concentrating on the affects that are produced within expansive moments of collective action we hope to group them alongside the problematics produced by more overtly revolutionary moments, allowing us to clarify the movement problem in relation to other political and philosophical literatures. In particular, we want to recompose the movement problematic of the relation between moments of excess and everyday life into an organisational question: Can we conceive of a form of organisation that can help us act around the expansion of political possibility that comes in moments of excess without eliding that expansion within a new instrumental utility that closes us off from events to come? In the following chapter we read this problem through Deleuze and Guattari’s concepts of

antiproduction, the socius, and the Body without Organs, which, we will argue, seek to resolve Bataille's concept of unemployed excess with Marx's conceptions of surplus value and revolution. In Chapter Five we shift perspectives to examine the movement problem through reference to literatures on revolutionary transition and transvaluation before shifting again to examine institutional resources with which to reconceptualise movement practice. Before we get to this, however, we will establish a methodology appropriate to our problematic.

Another argument implicit in the previous chapter is that the methodology with which we study a movement should be adequate to the movement's form and object. More specifically, anti-neoliberal movements need a methodology that can bring neoliberalism's transcendental dimensions of power within the scope of analysis. To grasp this we can refer to the structuring problem we observed in second order cybernetics: the problem of the entanglement of the observer within the system they are observing. As transcendental forms of power operate through structuring the conditions of everyday experience, an empiricism based purely on our quotidian understanding of that experience is inadequate. We need instead a form of empiricism that can incorporate the transcendental structuring of experience. Indeed Deleuze calls his instantiation of this project a transcendental empiricism.<sup>39</sup>

We began the thesis with a reading, and critique, of some approaches to the study of social movements and in particular their conceptions of the alter-globalisation movement. In doing so we deployed a specific strategy of reading capable of relating this literature to the problematic of the thesis; we named this a symptomatic reading. Now that we have established the problematic of the transcendental dimensions of neoliberal forms of power, even though at the moment in a still quite schematic fashion, we can examine that reading strategy and its related epistemology in more detail.

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<sup>39</sup> This is, of course, a Kantian and indeed post-Kantian problematic and in Chapter Five we position Deleuze's instantiation of this problematic in relation to Kant.

## Reading Symptomatically

The concept of a symptomatic reading was developed, primarily by Althusser, in the seminal book *Reading Capital* (Althusser, Balibar 2006). The book itself was the product of an intensive group reading of Marx's *Capital: Volume One*, the aim of which was to unearth *Capital's* underlying philosophy. Such an approach ran counter to the then dominant reading of *Capital*, in which it was treated as an empirically based work of political economy, with Marx's philosophical contribution consigned to his early works. We should recall, however, that *Capital's* subtitle is 'A Critique of Political Economy'. As such, Althusser asserts, the aim of Marx's critique is not to correct the errors of the classical political economists, such as Adam Smith and David Ricardo, but to critique the project of political economy *tout court*. We should not treat *Capital* as an attempt to provide a new solution to the problems posed by political economy, but rather as a refusal of both the solution and the problem. Althusser and his students sought a methodology in the form taken by Marx's critique of the classical political economists. This methodology, which they named a symptomatic reading, was then, in turn, used to read *Capital* itself.

Althusser's strategy of symptomatic reading is based on a rejection of a model of knowledge that he calls naïve empiricism, which is unable to grasp the abstract dynamics that structure experience. In a naïve empiricism, reading is conceived as an act of interpretation that aims to penetrate a veil of formal properties and inessential impurities that separates the author's explication from the text's essential logos. A symptomatic reading does not seek to unearth the author's real intention or meaning. It seeks, rather, to unearth those points when the text's meaning breaks down. It is a reading that is oriented towards a text's gaps and *lacunae* because these moments can reveal an author's un-stated, and perhaps unconscious,

presuppositions. It is in the moments of non-sense that an absent yet structuring problematic can be detected.<sup>40</sup>

In our examination of Social Movement Theory and its behaviourist inheritance, we noted that such *lacunae* originated from the construction of black boxes. In this light, however, the concept of a black box, with its origins in engineering, reaches the limit of its adequacy. As Galison (1994: 246) explains: "Black boxes, as Wiener used the term, meant a unit designed to perform a function before one knew how it functioned." Black boxes are epistemological placeholders. When their internal workings become known, then the gap in knowledge becomes filled and they become, in engineering parlance, white boxes. By retaining systems as black boxes, however, behaviourism erases the possibility that the internal workings of black boxes could reveal other potential functions. In fact sometimes these functions could exceed or disrupt the overall orientation of the system within which they are placed. Behaviourism obscures the fact that black boxes can contain discontinuities leading to quite different systems, with different sets of knowledges and different fields of possibilities.<sup>41</sup>

Althusser makes a similar point in terms of the history of philosophy, calling for the rejection of "the ideology of the philosophy of the Enlightenment, i.e. in a teleological and therefore idealist rationalism"<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Deleuze (1995 N: 136) explains a similar strategy of reading when he says:

Philosophers introduce new concepts, they explain them, but they don't tell us, not completely anyway, the problems to which those concepts are a response... The history of philosophy, rather than repeating what a philosopher says, has to say what he must have taken for granted, what he didn't say but is nonetheless present in what he did say.

<sup>41</sup> This of course overlaps with another problem that arises with the transfer of engineering concepts to social systems. In engineering systems the engineer provides the teleology, while with social systems the social scientist is entangled within the system he is studying. This means that accounting for the presuppositions of the research must be included as part of the object of research.

<sup>42</sup> Although we have no room to elaborate here we should note a certain isomorphy between this idea and Deleuze's (2001) critique of the dogmatic image of thought.

(Althusser, Balibar 2006: 44). Indeed history, like written texts, must be read symptomatically if we are to escape from the conception of history as the inexorable movement towards an essential end point. Such a teleological imputation of intention contains a residual religiosity and it is Hegel that gives “the systematic form of the development of the concept” (Althusser, Balibar 2006: 44). As Althusser elaborates: “Th(e) immediate reading of essence in existence expresses the religious model of Hegel’s Absolute Knowledge, that End of History in which the concept at last becomes visible” (Althusser, Balibar 2006: 16).<sup>43</sup>

History does not, therefore, follow a progressive path towards fulfilled reason. As Althusser (2006: 44) argues:

[T]he history of reason is neither a linear history of continuous development, nor, in its continuity, a history of the progressive manifestation or emergence into consciousness of a Reason which is completely present in germ in its origins and which history merely reveals to the light of day. We know that this type of history and rationality is merely the effect of the retrospective illusion of a given historical result which writes its history in the ‘future anterior’, and which therefore thinks its origins as the anticipation of its end.

If, however, we see the history of reason as “a history punctuated by radical discontinuities” (Althusser, Balibar 2006: 44) then *lacunae* are not simply black boxes waiting to be filled in and turned white. They can,

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<sup>43</sup> This quotation reflects Althusser’s wider project to establish an epistemological break in Marx between the Hegelian, humanist early work and his mature, later work, primarily *Capital*. To cite such a project today might seem obtuse, perhaps anachronistic; however the contemporary resonances of the phrase “The End of History” should indicate that this is far from the case. It is after all the positioning of neoliberalism at the end of history from which the alter-globalisation movement has sought to escape. Francis Fukuyama’s (1993) *The End of History* might now, in turn, seem anachronistic, as the pinnacle of early 1990s neoliberal hubris. Yet Zizek (2009: 88) captures something of our age when he declares:

It is easy to make fun of Fukuyama’s notion of the “End of History”, but most people today *are* Fukuyamean, accepting liberal democratic capitalism as the finally found formula of the best possible society, such that all one can do is to try and make it more just, more tolerable, and so on.

instead, be markers of a disjunction in reason, revealing a problem previously obscured by an author's presuppositions.

In *Capital* Marx finds that Smith and Ricardo have answered the question of the value of labour correctly when they find it is equal to the value of the subsistence goods necessary for labour's reproduction. The strange element in this, as Althusser (2006: 22) points out, is that "it is the correct answer to a question that has one failing: it was never posed." Behind this anomaly Marx finds the problematic of surplus value, which proved to be a limit to both Smith and Ricardo's political economy. Grappling with this problematic leads Marx to distinguish labour from labour power and so recomposes the question 'what is the value of labour?' into 'what is the value of labour power?' Labour power is the "invisible problematic contained in the paradox of *an answer which does not correspond to any question posed*" (Althusser, Balibar 2006: 28).<sup>44</sup>

It is not that the classical political economists made a simple mistake of oversight; it is rather that the concept of labour power just wasn't visible from within their conceptual framework, or as Althusser would rather call it, from within their problematic. The *lacunae* are the key to breaking with one problematic and moving to another. "At certain moments, in certain symptomatic points, this silence emerges as such in the discourse and forces it against its will to produce real theoretical lapses" (Althusser, Balibar 2006: 86). A symptomatic reading, then, is one that can reopen a text from within the problematics of the present.

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<sup>44</sup> The classical economists struggled with the problem of where profit or surplus came from. Marx's distinction between labour and labour power allowed him to show that surplus value derived from the surplus labour. Labour power is the capacity to labour and it is this that the worker sells; surplus labour is the difference between this and the actual labour done. Foucault's analysis in *The Birth of Biopolitics* shows how neoliberal theorists recognise the *lacunae* around the figure of labour in classical political economy. The neoliberal solution, however, is to efface labour altogether and replace it with the concept of human capital, which means in effect the persona of capital, *homo economicus*. As such productive surplus is attributed to the competitive, entrepreneurial spirit.

When Althusser applies this symptomatic reading to Marx he discovers an unstated but structuring problematic in capital's operation, that of "immanent causality", in which every cause is also an effect. This is a difficult concept and we shall examine it in more detail and from a different angle later in the thesis through the concept of the Body without Organs. However for now we can use this brief explanation from Jason Read (2003: 32): "Elements of the capitalist mode of production that would appear to be its effects, such as the desire for accumulation on the part of the capitalist, or 'rationalized' hoarding, must equally be thought of as causes and elements of its functioning." Capital does not have an essence that is hidden behind its effects. Capital is a social relation, and as such it is merely a series of abstract dynamics, it is an abstraction but one that has concrete effects. Capital is all too real but it is, as Marx would say, a real abstraction.

## **The Non-sense of Social Movement Theory**

The alter-globalisation movement is explicitly anti-neoliberal, and indeed at times explicitly anti-capitalist. We have put forward the argument that neoliberalism relies on the transcendental structuring of experience. It seems appropriate then that our methodology incorporates these modes of the operation of power.

After this elaboration on the methodology of our reading of social movement theorising in both political science and sociology, we are in a position to rethink the *lacunae* that we found there. Although we initially traced these *lacunae* in terms of certain intellectual lineages, this is not the primary concern of the thesis. We are more interested in the transformation of political problematics that the *lacunae* make possible. Tracing an intellectual inheritance from the behaviourism of post-war Political Science through to the sociology of Social Movement Theory allowed us to highlight its analytical focus on the mechanisms by which social movement concerns and repertoires are fed back into the existing political system and its

institutions.<sup>45</sup> Their structuring problematic is, ultimately, the question of how political systems can sustain themselves.<sup>46</sup> This orientation towards equilibrium comes at the expense of an analytical focus on social novelty, specifically the creation of social novelty within movements. This seems an important *lacuna*, as the question of the excess of social movements is essential to the question of how social movements move or develop.<sup>47</sup>

These *lacunae* were initially obscured by the traces of Social Movement Theory's behaviourist inheritance and, in particular, the transcendental commitments that this entails. Behaviourism and systems theory, which treats a system as a black box in order to analyse its inputs and outputs, tends to eternalise and naturalise existing systems and experience. On the level of social systems, for instance, there is a tendency towards an organic functionalism. If social movements are reduced to pluralistic feedback mechanisms for the existing social and political system, then the overall orientation of that system, and indeed the values that orient it, are placed beyond analysis and transformation. There is, therefore, no room for systemic disjunction or discontinuity.

The second transcendental commitment that we found in Social Movement Theory was identified as an underlying humanism; by which we

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<sup>45</sup> We should again make clear that when we refer here to social movement theory we are referring primarily to the traditions of resource mobilisation and political opportunity theory. We are not claiming that there are no resources with which to approach our problematic from within the wider field of social movement theory, and in particular within some elements of new social movement theory. We are, rather, using important, and perhaps dominant, tendencies within the field as a means of illustrating and positioning our own thesis, which then goes on to draw from quite distinct areas of knowledge.

<sup>46</sup> This is, famously, the orientation of Easton's (1953, 1992) seminal systems theory approach to Political Science.

<sup>47</sup> We can see this problem as an iteration of the central problematic of post-structuralist theory. As Deleuze (1991a: 167) comments in relation to Foucault's work: "The critique of universals can be translated into a question; how is it possible that anything new might come into the world?"

mean a universalised model of human nature. Indeed we have traced the influence of Olsen's (1965) introduction of the free-rider problem as the proposed central paradox of collective action. This problematic, and its ontological commitment to methodological individualism, has had a foundational role in both Resource Mobilisation and Political Process theories. Such a conceptual framework, however, cannot analyse the abstract dynamics that structure quotidian experience and so cannot conceptualise any potential for transformations in subjectivity that changes in those abstract dynamics might bring about.

These transcendental commitments are, of course, related. As we mentioned above, it is difficult to account for change within an organicist functionalism and one means of doing so is through recourse to a transcendental humanism. In such a conceptual framework, as Read (2003: 36) explains, "subjectivity is capable of acting on history only insofar as it is placed outside of history as timeless possibility. Change and transformation can only be imagined by resorting to the image of a transcendental subject who is not touched by the violence of history." For a clear example of this we can refer back to Foucault's (2008) analysis of the conceptual framework of neoliberal theory in which social change occurs through the testing of imperfect institutions against an, in effect, eternalised human nature. In neoliberalism the result is the elevation of the competitive market and the liberal democratic state. Humanism functions not just as origin but simultaneously as destination.

The traces of this problematic became apparent when we looked at accounts of social movement emergence. While Political Opportunity Theory looks to changes in political opportunities external to social movements to explain their emergence, Resource Mobilisation Theory looks to internal factors, such as the innovation and adoption of repertoires and framing. These factors lower the cost of movement participation and make collective action possible. Again change here is explained through reference to a model of human behaviour, which functions as a transcendental determinant. But, while Political Opportunity Theory explains movement

emergence in terms of a lack, Resource Mobilisation Theory explains it in terms of an excess; as such, the latter remains analytically open to the creativity of social movements. More than this, although innovation is sometimes explained in terms of the initiative of movement entrepreneurs, it also provides a point of contact with the idea of the event as an intensive moment of collective creativity.

When Tarrow (1995, 1998) talks about movement structure he does so through reference to Aristide Zolberg's (1972) seminal article *Moments of Madness*. As Tarrow (1995: 92) explains: "Cycles of protest are crucibles in which moments of madness are tempered into permanent tools of a society's repertoire of contention." However, while Zolberg's article has been built on as a point of emergence for the parabolic structure inscribed on to movements, it is still something of an anomaly. Resource Mobilisation Theory has a tendency to treat initiatory events as black boxes from which social novelty, in the form of new action, organisational or framing repertoires, is an output. Indeed there is a related tendency to treat Zolberg's article as a black box, the mention of which stands in for a more rigorous treatment of intense moments of social movement creativity. When we read the article in detail, however, we find that there is much that points away from the analytical orientation of Resource Mobilisation Theory.

Zolberg's problematic is laid out in an introductory passage:

If politics is 'the art of the possible,' what are we to make of moments when human beings living in modern societies believe that 'all is possible'? We know with assurance that such moments occur, if only because those who experience them are acutely conscious of their unusual state. Speaking with tongues, they urgently record their most intimate feelings. Furthermore, they are often aware of affinities across time and space with others in similar circumstances (Zolberg, 1972: 183).

Zolberg draws on this urgent record and compares testimony from six Parisian events, beginning with the revolt of 1848. The article, written in 1972, is undoubtedly a response to the Paris *evenements* of 1968, and taking his cue from the awareness he found there "of affinities across time

and space with others in similar circumstances” Zolberg (1972:18) seeks out what is common in the experience of these moments. In 1968 there were living links to both the 1936 factory occupations that accompanied the Popular Front government, as well as the contagious enthusiasm that followed the 1944 Liberation of Paris. Contemporary commentators on May 68 also raised the antecedents of the revolutions of 1848 and the Paris Commune of 1871. Zolberg treats the commonality of experience he finds in these Parisian events as an example of a much wider phenomenon.

There is a tendency, within political science and theory, to either dismiss such moments as epiphenomenal, or, in the case of the French and American Revolutions, to treat them as foundational but exceptional (Negri 1999). As Zolberg (1972: 183) says: “Since we cannot ignore them, we segregate them from our main concern, the universe of normal political events.” By way of contrast he goes on to outline his own approach:

It is possible, however, that this prejudice as to what is normal and what is not hampers our understanding of politics, and that the meaning of moments when ‘all is possible’ can be better apprehended if we seek instead to share the experience of participants in order to understand the place of these moments in the political life of modern society (Zolberg 1972: 183).

While this seems a most useful approach it is hard to square with his characterisation of these events as *Moments of Madness*. This conceptualisation, despite any ironic intent, can’t help but erect the image of a homeostatic social normality. This, in turn, leads us back to Social Movement Theory’s analytical orientation towards the integration and normalisation of the madness. Rather than moments of madness, then, we might see these events as moments of non-sense, as *lacunae* within dominant sensibility.

Further more we might understand such moments when ‘all seems possible’ as the exceeding of existing subjectivities, that are premised on a more limited range of possibility. This means that we can characterise the phenomenon with which Zolberg is grappling as the transformation in subjectivity that occurs within intensive, collective events that expand the

sense of political possibility. It is this focus on the producibility of subjectivity that makes the article an anomaly when positioned within forms of Social Movement Theory that carry the inheritance of behaviourist forms of humanism. In this reading *Moments of Madness* is a *lacuna* within the corpus of Social Movement Theory, one that opens it up to other political problematics. Indeed we might say that Zolberg's article provides an answer to a question that pluralist Social Movement Theory doesn't pose.

So how are we to analyse the experience of these moments? One danger is that we renege on our critique of a humanist empiricism by adopting a methodology based on a competing transcendental model of the human. To do so would be to assert one experience as more *real* or *pure* than another. This is, in many instances, the trap classical anarchism can fall into, if it views the behaviour that occurs in such moments as corresponding more closely to a human nature that is essentially good but which has been corrupted by existing institutional forms, in particular the state.<sup>48</sup> In order to continue with our methodological approach we will have to shift its conceptualisation away from the textual focus of an Althusserian methodology of symptomatic reading to one that more easily incorporates the visceral embodied element of moments of excess. For this we turn to Deleuze's conception of a Symptomology.

## **A Clinical Approach**

Deleuze extracts a philosophical concept of symptomology from clinical practice in the fields of medicine and psychiatry. "Perhaps there are three different medical acts: symptomology or the study of signs; etiology, or the

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<sup>48</sup> We can also see Rousseau's noble savage in such a formulation, while Lefebvre's Marxist humanist analysis also risks such a position when he sees what he calls irruptions as a potentially unproblematic perpetual state in which: "Politics and political society will disappear by merging into civil society. The political function, as a specialised function, will no longer exist. Daily life will be transformed into a perpetual festival. The daily struggle for bread and work will no longer make sense" (cited in Zolberg 1972: 190).

search for causes; and therapeutics, or the search for and application of a treatment.” (Deleuze 2004: 132). The first medical act relates to the diagnostic role, and involves the grouping or linking of symptoms. Smith (2005:183) explains the procedure:

What a doctor confronts in an individual case is a symptom or group of symptoms and his diagnostic task is to discover the corresponding concept (the concept of the disease). No doctor would treat a fever or headache as a definitive symptom of a specific illness; they are rather indeterminate symptoms common to a number of diseases, and the doctor must interpret and decipher the symptoms in order to arrive at the correct diagnosis.

What interests Deleuze is the creative element of symptomology, and in particular the process through which clinicians reinterpret and rearrange symptoms to create new medical concepts; called syndromes in medicine and complexes in psychoanalysis. The symptomologist “distinguishes cases that had hitherto been confused by dissociating symptoms that were previously grouped together and juxtaposing them with others that were previously dissociated” (Smith 2005: 184). For Deleuze this creative element shows that symptomology does not function on the level of representation; its aim is not to replicate a part of the world through the medium of words. It is rather an active intervention into the world. A novel grouping of symptoms creates something new; a new way of understanding the world. This creates new possibilities which, in turn, fall back onto experience and structure it. As Guattari (1995: 205) argues:

Freud and his successors always wanted to present themselves as scientists who were discovering the universal structures of the psyche. The truth is they invented the unconscious and its complexes as great visionaries in other epochs invented new religions, new ways of experiencing the world and social relations.

Such creativity is distinctly possible in symptomology because it involves the interpretation, or reinterpretation, of signs and as such it allows

the extraction of its methodology from the medicinal field. As Deleuze (2004a: 132) explains:

Whereas etiology and therapeutics are integral parts of medicine, symptomology appeals to a kind of neutral point, a limit that is premedical or sub-medical, belonging as much to art as to medicine; it's all about drawing a "portrait." The work of art exhibits symptoms, as do the body or the soul, albeit in a very different way. In this sense, the artist or writer can be a great symptomologist, just like the best doctor.

Indications of symptomology's appeal to a neutral point can be found in the naming of syndromes. They are often named after the clinician who isolated the symptoms; occasionally they are named after indicative patients. Deleuze, however, is interested in those instances when the name reflects a literary influence.<sup>49</sup> We can think, for example, of Freud's use of Sophocles and Shakespeare in the creation of the Oedipal complex.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Deleuze was particularly interested in Kraft-Ebbing's isolation of the symptoms of Masochism and Sadism from the literary work of Leopold von Sacher-Masoch and the Marquis de Sade. Deleuze (1991) argues that Freud's conception of Sadomasochism is based on a premature etiology, in which a diagnosis is developed through speculation on causality. Returning to Kraft-Ebbing's symptomology Deleuze identifies 'the contract' as a key symptom of Masochism, disrupting Freud's conflation of the two perversions. The contract complicates the play of power in the Masochistic relationship by allowing the Masochist control over the transformation of another individual into a 'cold and cruel' figure. As such a Sadist would not want a Masochistic victim nor vice versa. So Freud's conflation of the two complexes must be seen as mistaken. Deleuze's approach here prefigures a more recent activist and practitioner led counter-symptomology which has led to the widespread adoption of the acronym 'b.d.s.m.' to variously incorporate the terms 'bondage-discipline' and 'dominance-submission' alongside 'sadism-masochism', this more accurately reflects the divergent practices while refusing their pathologisation.

<sup>50</sup> "From the perspective of Freud's genius, it is not the complex which provides us with information about Oedipus and Hamlet, but rather Oedipus and Hamlet who provide us with information about the complex." (Deleuze 2004b: 273). We can see from this that the theoretical approach of reading works of art, film and literature through the application of psychoanalytical concepts is in fact a reversal of the method Freud employs. "All too often

We should make clear that symptomology is “not just about identifying an illness, but about the world as symptom” (Deleuze 2004a: 132).<sup>51</sup> As Deleuze explains: “It’s not just a matter of diagnosis. Signs imply ways of living, possibilities of existence, they’re the symptoms of life gushing forth or draining away.” A symptomology is a method, which can “isolate a particular ‘possibility of life’, a certain way of being or mode of existence” (Smith, 1997: li). Nor should we limit symptomology to the textual or the medicinal. Guattari (1996: 137) for instance seeks to analyse institutions in this manner; a form of analysis that:

consists in marking the indicative elements, the experienced sequences of non-sense as a symptom, as institutional lapses which, instead of being pushed to the side, marginalized, will see themselves confer a field of expressions, a gamut of possibilities that they did not have before.

By extracting the symptomological methodology from the medical, the pathological and indeed the literary, we can place it within Deleuze and Guattari’s wider project of breaking with the hypostatisation of concepts into transcendent forms, including essentialist conceptions of the human. Their watchword here is the Spinozan notion that: Nobody knows what a body can do.<sup>52</sup> To avoid the unnecessary closure of potential, they advocate experimentation with a body’s affects, by which they mean a body’s capacities to act or be acted upon, that is to affect or be affected.<sup>53</sup> If we

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the writer is still considered as one more case added to clinical psychology, when the important thing is what the writer himself, as a creator, brings to clinical psychology” (Deleuze 2004a: 133).

<sup>51</sup> “The world can be treated as a symptom and searched for signs of disease, signs of life, signs of a cure, signs of health.” (Deleuze 2004a: 141).

<sup>52</sup> Of course the concept of a body operating here is not limited to that of an individual person, we can also think of it as a collective body; a body of people for example.

<sup>53</sup> “We know nothing about a body unless we know what it can do, in other words, what its affects are, how they can or cannot enter into composition with other affects, with the affects of another body, either to destroy that body or to be destroyed by it, either to exchange

seek to define bodies through their affective qualities we can create groupings that are very different from those, such as species or genera, that are deduced from their extensive qualities, such as height, width, number of legs, etc, which indicates a body's extension in time and space. For example, when grouping bodies through shared affects: "A racehorse is more different from a workhorse than a workhorse is from an ox" (Deleuze Guattari 1988: 257).<sup>54</sup>

A symptomology then can allow us to create a diagram of a possibility of life through an examination of heterogeneous situations that share similar affective qualities. We can treat experience of states of affairs not according to their extensive properties but by their intensive ones; that is, by the potential for change. A definition via intensive qualities seems appropriate when we are dealing with intensive situations, which involve "a splitting off from, or a breaking with causality" (Deleuze 2006: 233).<sup>55</sup> Zolberg's (1972: 183) article then can be read as the isolation of a certain possibility of life, as a symptomology of those "moments when human beings living in modern

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actions and passions with it or to join with it in composing a more powerful body" (Deleuze, Guattari 1988: 257).

<sup>54</sup> Deleuze and Guattari refer to this grouping by affect as the machinic phylum. We can see in this as a machinic ontology similar to that found in cybernetics but pushed beyond any residual humanism.

<sup>55</sup> "In historical phenomena such as the revolution of 1789, the Commune, the revolution of 1917, there is always one part of the *event* that is irreducible to any social determinism, or to causal chains. Historians are not very fond of this aspect: they restore causality after the fact. Yet the event is itself a splitting off from, or a breaking with causality; it is a bifurcation, a deviation with respect to laws, an unstable condition which opens up a new field of the possible" (Deleuze 2006: 233).

societies believe that 'all is possible'".<sup>56</sup> The advantage of this reading is that it allows us to position these events alongside other experiences containing similar affective qualities, a grouping that might escape us if we concentrated merely on extensive qualities and causality. Such groupings are not arbitrary of course but are determined by the problematic with which they are engaged. In the next section we want to use this symptomological methodology in order to group the experience of summit protests, and other intensive events within the alter-globalisation movement, alongside the more infrequent and sometimes much larger events that Zolberg describes as moments of madness. Our reading of Zolberg, then, is from within the problematics of the alter-globalisation movement.<sup>57</sup>

## The Affects of Excess

As Blaug (2000: 147) argues these sorts of moments, which he calls *Outbreaks of Democracy*, "have attracted... little serious scrutiny". The accounts that do exist, however show a remarkable degree of consistency.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Despite his occasional fall into etiology Zolberg (1972: 186) seems aware of the appropriateness of this approach when he says: "Indeed, we must rid ourselves temporarily of our compulsive concerns with causes and consequences to empathize properly with the phenomenon under consideration which itself is characterized by a suspension of these concerns."

<sup>57</sup> It should be mentioned that once again the resort to a symptomology is not purely the result of fidelity to a theoretical lineage. The notion of symptoms of excess also seems appropriate because it matches the powerful and visceral nature of the experiences with which we are concerned, which often feel not just excessive to our existing subjectivities but also to our corporeal bodies. There is much talk, for instance, of the need to 'come down' after such intensive political events.

<sup>58</sup> Blaug (2000: 148) presents us with an attractive notion of "democracy as an immediate and transgressive moment which occasionally erupts in our everyday lives." He talks of "democracy as something that happens to people, something immediate, something characterized not by a form for participation, nor by an institutional design, but precisely by a loss of form, and by a breach of design" (Blaug 2000: 148). In this aspect he is close to

Although accounts might disagree strongly about the appropriate conceptualisation of such moments, about their causality, or the assessment of their significance there is a large degree of overlap in the description of symptoms.<sup>59</sup> When Zolberg discusses May 68, for instance, he draws on two contemporary commentaries from either side of the political spectrum: Morin, who is sympathetic to the events, sees symptoms of ecstasy; Aron, who is hostile, sees symptoms of delirium. Despite divergent diagnoses, however, the symptoms coincide. As Zolberg summarises:

Ecstasy or delirium, the thing happened and it was unmistakably political. The recurrence of these moments over one hundred and twenty years, recognizably the same in spite of variations, gives the phenomenon a persuasive concreteness each event may not possess individually. The evidence contained in the purposely heterogeneous testimony gathered in this essay is remarkably consistent. Whatever the attitudes of the writers at the time of writing, they record intense moments of festive joy, when an immense outpouring of speech, sometimes verging on violence, coexists with an extraordinary peaceful disposition. Minds and bodies are liberated; human beings feel that they are in direct touch with one another as well as with their inner selves. The streets of the city, its objects, and even the weather take on harmonious qualities. Falsehood, ugliness, and evil give way to beauty, goodness, and truth. Factions and parties appear unreal while personal networks appear as strong as steel. The private merges into the public; government becomes a family affair, a familial affair. Simultaneously, there is

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Hardt and Negri's (1999) discussion of constituted and constituent power. The conceptualisation of these moments as *Outbreaks of Democracy* though doesn't quite capture our problematic. By using the word democracy we risk its misinterpretation as the extraction of a new universal mode of organisation, a new model of democracy. On the other hand, excess is always situational, positioned in relation to what it exceeds, while simultaneously attempting to flee it.

<sup>59</sup> In addition to Zolberg (1972) and Blaug (2000) we might add Lefebvre's writings of irruptions (Merrifield 2006), Chesters and Welsh (2006) on plateaus, Debord (2004) on situations, Bookchin (1986) on forms of freedom, Friemon (2002) on orgasms of history, and Bey (1991) on temporary autonomous zones.

a disposition to encounter the *déjà vu*; through the medium of collective memories recorded in sophisticated or demotic culture, from historical works or in folklore, human beings connect the moment with others. Liberated from the constraints of time and place, and circumstances, from history, men choose their parts from the available repertory or forge new ones in an act of creation. Dream's become possibilities (Zolberg 1972: 193).

In this section we will re-read these symptoms alongside their iterations within recent social movements and, most importantly, through recent movement problematics.

For Zolberg (1972: 183) the characterising symptom of such moments is the sense that for once “all is possible”. Such a perceived expansion of possibility, as we have mentioned previously, has also been central to the experience of recent movements, an importance that we might figure through the slogan *Another World is Possible*.<sup>60</sup> However this “abyss of possibility” (Bonefeld and Holloway 1995: 6) is intimately linked to other symptoms. Firstly we might point to the importance of the experience of collectivity. As this participant in a summit protest road blockade recalls: “[sic] remember looking back and seeing a sea of hundreds of us and it filled me with a sense of pride and of confidence, the feeling that we could achieve anything.” (Anonymous 2005: 361). As a supplement, however, we might point to the necessary condition that this collectivity is an active rather than passive affect.<sup>61</sup> At summit protests it is the attempts to disrupt the

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<sup>60</sup> The slogan *Another World is Possible* was actually popularised by its adoption by the World Social Forum. However, it reflects the more general affect created by the emergence of the movement and its widespread collective action.

<sup>61</sup> We could point, for example, to the huge anti-war demonstration in London on 15 February 2002. It was without a doubt politically significant – indeed the sheer size of the crowds together with the knowledge that simultaneous protests were occurring in many other countries provided the feeling that this was something out of the ordinary. However, at least as I experienced it, there were few of the other active affects discussed in this section. While there was a general feeling of seriousness and goodwill the crowd was more

summit that provide the focus for action, and the danger and uncertainty that this direct action involves plays an important role in increasing the level of intensity.<sup>62</sup> Just as important, though, is the political process of planning and coordinating in the run-up to and during the actions. The talking and in particular the intensity and nature of the talking are just as central to the affect of collective creativity as the doing. Indeed during these intensely political moments the oft-perceived tension between talking and doing tends to resolve.<sup>63</sup> As Solnit (2004: 268) says:

Unlike in society generally, we get a taste of what it would be like to participate democratically in decisions. This was seen quite powerfully in Seattle in the organization of the direct action: thousands of people got to taste thousands of people making decisions in an openly democratic way. Those experiences then translated into liberating the streets for a day. That taste of how things could be left a lot of people with a strong thirst for what they tasted.

All such events involve, as Zolberg (1972: 191) puts it, "a torrent of words". As Flaubert writes of the 1848 Parisian uprising: "Men possessed by a frenzied eloquence harangued the crowd on street corners" (cited in Zolberg 1972: 191). What is most remarkable about this conversational "torrent" is the sheer level of participation, as this testimony from May 68 makes clear:

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reminiscent of the passive, spectating crowds experienced at large sporting events. Perhaps we could figure this passivity in the prevalent adoption of the slogan *Not in My Name*.

<sup>62</sup> A Spanish activist Joan expresses similar sentiments in relation to a large march in Barcelona in 2002:

The mobilization was a success, but not an epic experience. There were epic moments, but not like in Prague, Genoa, or last year in Barcelona... The demonstration was a numerical success, and it produced an image that makes our critiques acceptable, but it wasn't a life-changing experience where you radically confront the system and live through dangerous situations full of adrenaline, at least not for me (cited in Juris 2008: 154).

<sup>63</sup> This is to say that such moments seem to undermine the usual denigration of theorising amongst both activist and the public.

Those who had never dared say anything suddenly felt their thoughts the most important thing in the world – and said so. The shy became communicative. The helpless and isolated sudden discovered that collective power lay in their hands. The traditionally apathetic suddenly realised the intensity of their involvement (Dark Star Collective 2001: 76).

This contagion of eloquence may well reflect a certain sense of responsibility provoked by an active participation in history, the “feeling that we are at the centre of what is rising, not at the fringe of what is dying” (Hughes 2001: 28).

It is an excess experienced not just intellectually but also *physically, corporeally*; indeed we can associate such events with a state of heightened sensory awareness and excitation. Participants readily recall this intensely embodied experience, where skin gets goosebumps and the hairs of the arms stand on end.<sup>64</sup> A Spanish activist recalls a Reclaim The Streets action in Barcelona: “It was a moment of incredible personal liberation, fantastic, total corporeal liberation; it was amazing!” (Pablo cited in Juris 2008: 148).

This accords with the analysis of a participant in a movement workshop: “Opening up, expanding possibilities is grounded in the body. It appears in riot situations, in street parties, it’s a physical thing with a change in consciousness, like through trance, yoga, drugs, etc.”<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> The strongly felt embodied nature of these experiences help account for the phenomenon of a sensory memory triggering the revisiting of the affects. Something as simple as a song, an odour, an image, a fleeting glimpse can transport veterans back into the moment. Ross (2002: 103), for instance, cites a militant being transported back to the events of ‘68 by the Proustian madeleine of the “odor of ink, of carbon paper, a particular odor, at once acidic and sweet, peppery and sugary, the odor of hours, days, nights passed mimeographing tracts.”

<sup>65</sup> The participant, Neil, was taking part in a workshop at the 2004 European Social Forum in London. The notion of the hairs of the arms standing on end is also drawn from a memorable contribution to this workshop. A transcript of the workshop is available at <http://www.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/agp/free/wsf/london2004/ds-excess.htm>

Indeed this corporeality also affects our experience of temporality. “When the effects of one’s actions infinitely supersedes one’s expectations, or when a local initiative is met with impromptu echoes from a hundred different places at once, space compresses and time goes faster” (Ross 2002: 102). This general affect of temporal acceleration undermines our habitual conceptions of the orderly progression of time. In this vein Dansette talks about the liberation of Paris from German occupation in 1944 as “a moment of communion” in which “the rhythms, habits, modes of thought and of feeling of daily life are engulfed in the intoxication of the present moment” (cited in Zolberg 1972: 185). Similarly De Angelis (2007: 249) talks of participation in the convergence camp at the Gleneagles G8 protests as being dominated by a praxis of “phase time”, which he defines – opposition to “linear time” and “circular time” – as “the time of sudden changes in social and experiential ‘phases’”. “We could sense the buzz of chaotic order, the vibes typical of a laboratory of social and relational experimentation. Entering the camp was to enter a collective phase time” (De Angelis 2007: 19).<sup>66</sup>

All of these symptoms contribute to what we might characterise as a meta-symptom, a high level of intensity. Take this testimony of the days leading up to the attempted disruption of the G8 summit opening in Gleneagles, Scotland, on 6 July 2005:

It’s the intensity of it that makes you feel so alive. ... [E]verywhere you looked there were groups of people gathered in intense and passionate discussion.

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<sup>66</sup> Indeed the passage on phase time is worth quoting further:

To clarify, by phase time I mean the time dimension peculiar to phase transitions. I borrow this from physics, which defines phase transitions in terms of sudden changes in one or more physical and organisational properties of matter. In my use, I intend to evoke the time of sudden changes in social and experiential ‘phases’ that are pervasive in human experience. A man or a woman falling in love, soldiers in the heat of battle, demonstrators reclaiming a square for a carnival under the watchful eye of powerless riot police, a car accident, a community of squatters preparing to resist eviction, or, at larger scales of social action, the sudden change in co-production of livelihood (De Angelis 2007: 249).

We could position this use of phase time alongside Deleuze and Guattari’s (1988: 262) discussion of “*Aeon*: the indefinite time of the event”, which they distinguish from “*Chronos*: the time of measure”.

Talking, thinking, planning, arguing, agreeing, cooperating. Intense communication permeated the whole [convergence centre] like an electric charge. It comes from that realisation that no one's in charge, that there's no secret committee with a secret plan who are going to come and save us. If this summit is going to be blockaded it's down to us, collectively. We were all moving so fast. One evening we emerged from one meeting at 11.30 and realised we needed to rush to grab something to eat as we had to be at another in half an hour. Who on earth arranges meetings at midnight? We had to, time was tight. It all made perfect sense. Meetings are normally painful exercises in frustration, but here it was different. There was such an intense concentration of effort, such focus, that creativity, wit, imagination, flexibility and good sense seemed to come naturally. You could stagger out of a meeting drunk on the sense of connection with the other people. Vibrating with it. It was that visceral. Then, on the Wednesday of the blockades, in the fields next to the road that intensity was ten-fold. Decisions were made so quickly you barely had time to think (Free Association, 2005b: 18).<sup>67</sup>

We might attribute this affect of intensity to a variety of factors including the time-limited nature of the event, the novel mixtures of participants and the very real dangers of arrest, injury or even death. In addition, however, this intensity is intimately linked to the reintroduction of politics back into life. People are forced to make ethical decisions from an incredibly open range of possibilities. The consequences of these decisions can have real importance and the collective fashion in which they are made can provoke affects of tremendous new capacities which can carry over into everyday life. As a

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<sup>67</sup> I should make clear that the Free Association, quoted here, is a collective writing project that I am involved with. This testimony, then, is partly my own. We can, however, find confirming testimony in other places. See, for instance, the similar sentiment of intensity in this account from the anti-WTO and IMF protests in Prague in 2000:

It's difficult to find words to describe my experience when I arrived at the convergence centre. It was fascinating, incredible – color, imagination, desire, work – people never stopped working. At first it was like a beehive, and you didn't understand what was happening, you had no idea where to go. But then you penetrated further and recognized the different movement currents; you began to see how affinity groups came together, combined, transformed, and interacted. There was mutual learning and exchange. (Pablo, cited in Juris 2008: 129)

Spanish activist says in relation to the Prague protests: "There are times when something surges up from inside, as if your body were saying, now you are living something truly important" (Nuria cited in Juris 2008: 132).

We might define such moments, then, as the exceeding of pre-existing subjectivity and indeed they are often powerfully experienced as this. As Adek says of his experiences of the Parisian May: "Everyone was living beyond their intellectual, emotional, and sensorial limits: each person existed above and beyond himself" (cited in Ross 2002: 101). This can be a joyous experience but it can also provoke a feeling of precariousness. With the shattering of the subjectivities relied on in the habitual world it can feel as though the ground has been cut from beneath your feet. Either way, though, there is a transformation in subjectivities or even the creation of new ones. Importantly these tend to be collective subjectivities, the historical significance of which is evoked by Jameson (1998: 10):

In the 1960s many people came to realize that in a truly revolutionary collective experience what comes into being is not a faceless or anonymous crowd or 'mass' but, rather, a new level of being... in which individuality is not effaced but completed by collectivity. It is an experience that has now slowly been forgotten, its traces systematically effaced by the return of desperate individualisms of all kinds.

These are then also moments of defetishisation, in which previously solid and eternalised subjectivities are revealed as socially specific and contingent. This defetishisation effect is produced as pre-existing subjectivities are found to be inadequate in the face of the new situation, prompting the collective invention of new roles and repertoires.<sup>68</sup> As Zolberg

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<sup>68</sup> We might examine this improvised invention of roles through reference to what Zolberg (1972: 192) calls "the theatrical qualities of it all". Flaubert in his account of 1848, fictionalised yet drawing on his own experience, has his hero feeling "as if he were watching a spectacle" (cited in Zolberg 1972: 192). Tocqueville remarks on the same spectacular qualities in his account of the same revolt. "Our French, especially in Paris, easily mix memories of literature and of theatre into their most serious demonstrations." This process "often lends support to the belief that the sentiments are false, while they are in reality

(2002: 206) points out “the ‘torrent of words’ involves a sort of intensive learning experience whereby new ideas, formulated initially in coterie, sects, etc., emerge as widely held beliefs among much larger publics.” This makes them moments of emergence: of new technology, new tactics, new modes of expression, and of new subjectivity.<sup>69</sup>

But if these are moments of intense, even excessive, productivity, they are also, in apparently contradictory fashion, moments of rupture. They undoubtedly contain a break with pre-existing sense and possibility, and they are often deeply conflictual, but they have a strange relationship to antagonism. While pre-existing and inherent antagonisms become clarified in these moments, the antagonisms also lose their motivating force. People become animated, instead, by the affect of increasing collective capacity. We can see this transformation occurring in testimony from the Argentinazo popular rebellion of the 19–20 December 2001:

People were coming down *en masse* from the buildings and making bonfires on street corners. What began angrily, with people coming out on the street in rage, quickly turned joyful. People smiled and mutually recognized that something had changed. Later came euphoria. It was a very intense feeling that I’ll never forget. (Sitrin 2006: 26).

Indeed the huge wave of strikes and workplace occupations that accompanied the 1936 election of the French Popular Front government are an example of a moment of excess sparked not by an immediate grievance

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merely awkwardly adorned... the imitation was so visible that the terrifying originality of the events was hidden by it” (cited in Zolberg 1972: 193). Perhaps this is where the theatrical metaphor breaks down, as people reach for whatever is at hand to help them cope with a moment that exceeds them. In Chapter Six we will follow this line of thought when we reconceptualise repertoires as refrains, as the snatches of song we whistle to make ourselves feel at home when we are abroad.

<sup>69</sup> In this sense, then, moments of excess are similar to what Ana Dinerstein (2004) would call “moments of subjectivity” or E.P. Thompson “moments of becoming” (Thompson 1978: 103).

but by a contagious optimism. History's biggest wave of workplace occupations began after the Popular Front was elected but before they took office. The mere prospect of change was enough to free up a previously rigid world (Mason 2007). As Simone Weil makes clear: "As soon as one felt the oppression weaken, immediately the suffering, the humiliation, the bitterness silently accumulated over the years became a force strong enough to loosen the bonds. That's the whole story of the strike: there is no other" (cited in Mason 2007: 260).<sup>70</sup> The collective action produced a wave of enthusiasm that overwhelmed the antagonism inherent in the situation, as Bertrand de Jouvenel's account confirms:

For three days I went from factory to factory... I didn't see a single case of brutality... of damage to a single machine. The 'sit-down strike' is a protracted picnic.

An effort must be made to remember that we are witnessing a battle. Who is the enemy? Where is the enemy? (cited in Zolberg 1972: 187).

Can't we understand this phenomenon as the production of an excess? As the engulfing of previous problems and antagonisms by more fundamental questions such as: What sort of life do we want to live?<sup>71</sup> The expansion of possibility makes previous problems seem less relevant. As John Thrasher, a participant in the 1937 Flint sit down strike, says: "Nothing

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<sup>70</sup> Weil links this affect to the reassertion of dignity: "After having always bowed, suffered everything, taken it all in silence for months and years, it is a matter of finally having the guts to stand up. To stand upright. To take one's turn to speak. To feel like men, for a few days" (cited in Zolberg 1972: 187). The Zapatista Subcommandante Marcos (2002: 12) seems to agree with Weil when he says, "It appears that dignity is contagious". Dignity is also an important concept for John Holloway (2002) who links it with the emergence of the alter-globalisation movement.

<sup>71</sup> Todd May (2005) proposes a similar question: How might one live? as the central problematic for Deleuze, and perhaps the whole post-Nietzschean tradition of continental philosophy. He contrasts this with the question: How should one live?, which he attributes to ancient philosophy, and Socrates in particular; and the question: How should one act?, which he attributes to modern philosophy following Kant and Bentham.

that happened before the strike began seemed to register in the mind anymore. It is as if time itself started with this strike” (cited in Mason 2007: 271). The things that seemed important before the event don't retain their purchase, for example, “amidst the general exaltation, money is no longer a thing of value” (Zolberg 1972: 185). Even movement demands, that had recently been so vital in mobilisation, quickly become superseded:

In those few hours we were in control of the situation – at least that's how it felt, and it seemed to me that everyone felt the same way. When the fall of De La Rua was announced, it was already irrelevant – at least where I was, people didn't rejoice, didn't erupt in joy. At this point it was an annoyance, a little thing that was not so important (Sitrin 2006: 27).

This superseding of old problematics might also account for the strangely harmonious nature of such events. As Blaug (2000: 150) explains, in such a moment “conflict *works*. It somehow generates cohesion, it causes people to re-evaluate their preferences and needs”. Simone de Beauvoir called the 1944 liberation of Paris a “moment of political harmony” amongst the normally fractious French political scene. “Gaullists, Communists, Catholics, Marxists, fraternized. A common thought was expressed in all the papers” (cited in Zolberg 1972: 186). Such an affect was also detectable at the Stirling convergence camp during the 2005 protests at the Gleneagles G8. The meetings on strategy in the days running up to protests were incredibly productive. Despite a wide range of participants with a wide range of political backgrounds there was a general fluidity of thought, and a genuine willingness to engage and find common ground. The most important decision to be made was where to focus the road blockades to disrupt the opening of the summit. Some wanted to focus on the M9, which was closer to the convergence camp; others wanted to focus on the A9, which was closer to the summit. After a long meeting involving several hundred people a broad consensus was reached to focus on the A9, which entailed leaving the camp the day before the protests and spending the night in the woods. This didn't stop those who stayed behind from organising a march to the M9. In the post-action briefing as reports of all the different dispersed actions

came in, there was a real sense of unity of purpose beyond any disagreements.<sup>72</sup> A similar affect was reported at the Prague demonstrations: “Although our networks were engaged in distinct protest performances, expressing contrasting political visions and goals, as I listened to the action report, I began to feel connected across our differences as we worked toward a common goal” (Juris 2008: 136).

Perhaps the difficulty of confronting new and fundamental problematics also accounts for one of the most unusual phenomena associated with moments of excess, the participants “awareness of affinities across time and space” (Zolberg, 1972: 183). In Zolberg’s article we might account for the awareness of affinities through reference to the particularities of French culture and history but the phenomenon seems more widespread. In a situation where suddenly everything seems possible, then normal reference points and habitual guides can seem no longer useful. In these circumstances it appears that people seek out antecedents, and contemporaries, who have confronted a similar problematic as reference points that can help orientate themselves.

We can see examples of this in the context of the alter-globalisation movement. In the build up to the Genoa protests of 2001, the activists and collective authors Wu Ming (2001) wrote a widely circulated text claiming an inheritance for the movement from, amongst others, the Diggers, Captain Swing and the sixteenth century peasant followers of Thomas Müntzer. They intended the piece as a mythic creation of antecedents that would help build

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<sup>72</sup> We can counterpoint these experiences with those on the day after the protests when, in the aftermath of the 7/7 bombings in London, the affect had changed. There was a general feeling that we should ‘take a position’ on the bombings and draw up a collective press release. In this task all the old ideological positions re-emerged, the meeting became interminable and common ground ungraspable.

‘Taking a position’ means standing still and losing the initiative. It also means that it’s hard to reconcile the different speeds and directions people are travelling in. After [the bombings] the mood, affect, feeling, buzz – call it what you like – was defensive and closed, compared to previous days: the desire had gone, and with it the energy (Free Association 2005b: 25).

the protests at Genoa. Interestingly they have since criticised this text for erecting a false historical analogy, which constructed the G8 as the princes within a castle and the movement as a horde of peasants laying siege. Following the horrendous state violence at Genoa, Wu Ming felt the wrong historical lesson was drawn. "Thomas Müntzer spoke to us, but we couldn't understand his words. It wasn't a blessing, but a warning" (Wu Ming 2010: xxxvi). Just as Müntzer lead his followers to be massacred at Frankenhäusen in 1525, so Wu Ming feel responsible for encouraging protesters into a massacre at Genoa. This is perhaps an overly harsh judgment but it does illustrate the dangers of fetishising past events. While we must carry the inheritance of past generations, we must do so in a way that allows each generation to create their own problematics.<sup>73</sup> In the next section we want to take up these questions and further explore this mode of repetition, and, in particular, the appropriate temporal orientation through which we should revisit such events.

## The Reprise

We might say this is all very well but we can still anticipate further objections to our approach. While we might recognise certain shared affects across these events isn't it still a mistake to group a major event such as May '68 together with what seem like minor protests, such as those against the G8 in Gleneagles? Shouldn't we make distinctions based on the level of an event's significance? Judgements about historical significance, however, have a different temporality to the one operative in our approach so far. Historical

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<sup>73</sup> This is of course the problem that we raised in the thesis introduction. To emphasise this connection lets repeat the quotation from Marx (1968a: 97) that we deployed there:

Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare upon the brains of the living. And just when they seem engaged in revolutionising themselves and things, in creating something that has never yet existed, precisely in such periods of revolutionary crisis they anxiously borrow from them names, battle cries and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in their time-honoured disguise and in this borrowed language.

significance can only really be attributed in retrospect; that is after the event. Any judgement on historical significance made from within an event can only be based on pre-existing social presuppositions. This can only be a pre-judgement made in denial of the opening-up of political possibility within the event. It is a denial of the eventness of the event. Indeed many major events can seem insignificant when they begin. The Parisian events, which came to a head in May 1968, began with seemingly insignificant struggles over visiting rights to the single sex dormitories then prevalent in French Universities (Cohn-Bendit, Cohn-Bendit 1968). Similarly one of the initial moments in the 1905 Russian Revolution was the 'Comma Strike', in which typesetters, who were paid piecemeal, began a dispute over payment for punctuation (Moorehead 1989).

Retrospective judgements on historical significance are equally problematic. The judgement on an event's significance is never closed. In the book *May '68 and its Afterlives* Ross (2002) explores how the event of May '68 has been continually reinterpreted to fit within contemporary social presuppositions. In the 1980s, for instance, commentators began to separate the general strike from the protests and occupations that accompanied it. The orientation towards worker struggles, widespread amongst leftist political militants of the time, was separated from "the festival of May". The former became framed through the abjection of the sad militant, as an "extreme example of a now obsolete way of life ('militancy')" (Ross 2002: 99). By contrast the latter "becomes the prefiguration of the possessive individualism of the 1980s, a purely ludic instance of self-expression – in the first case, politics, no pleasure and no self; in the second, festival, only pleasure and only self." (Ross 2002: 100).<sup>74</sup> Such re-interpretations affect judgments of historical significance, as the history of one event is recomposed by the events that follow it. Ross (2002: 19) quotes a respondent to a paper he had given on the subject: "But nothing happened in

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<sup>74</sup> On the important role that revisionist interpretations of '68 played in the transformation of the anti-totalitarian New Philosophers from libertarians to neoliberals see Lecourt (2000).

France in '68. Institutions didn't change, the university didn't change, conditions for the workers didn't change – nothing happened... '68 was really Prague, and Prague brought down the Berlin Wall.”

In response Ross returns to the testimonies, documents and footage of the time to show that the “public happiness”, associated with the sense of festival in which “each person existed above and beyond himself” (Ross 2002: 101), was in fact intensely political and collective. A central, and indeed structuring, point in the book is taken by Ross's discussion of two films. The first film, *La reprise du travail aux usines Wonder (The Return to Work at the Wonder Factory)* consists of ten minutes of raw footage from July 1968. It captures the moment when workers at the Parisian Wonder Battery Factory return to work at the end of the general strike. The central figure in the footage is a young, female worker who: “cries out that she won't 'go back into that prison' that she won't take up the rhythm of the line again, that the vote to end the strike has been rigged” (Ross 2002: 138). Union officials try to persuade her to go back to work while she tries to persuade the other workers to stay out.<sup>75</sup> “The woman continues her cries of refusal; other workers can be seen in the background, slowly filing into the factory entrance. What could she have possibly been dreaming of?” (Ross 2002: 138).

The woman's refusal is testimony to the political excess, the expanded sense of political possibility, which even seemingly economic struggles

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<sup>75</sup> An official from the CGT union tells her: “All your friends, your fellow workers have decided to go back in. Go back in with them.” To which she replies: “No. I'm not going back to get fucked again. I'm not going to work in there. I'm not walking back in that place. I'm not putting a foot back in that cell. You go back in, you can see what a shithole it is. It's disgusting, we're all black from it. The pretty boss is in the office. It's good for him...” (Clover 2008).

create. What was previously tolerable has become intolerable.<sup>76</sup> As Deleuze (2006: 233-4) says:

May '68 is more of the order of an event, free of all normal, or normative causality. Its history is a "series of amplified instabilities and fluctuations." There were a lot of agitations, gesticulations, slogans, idiocies, illusions in '68, but this is not what counts. What counts is what amounted to a visionary phenomenon, as if a society suddenly saw what was intolerable in it and also saw the possibility for something else. It is a collective phenomenon in the form of: "Give me the possible, or I'll suffocate..." The possible does not pre-exist, it is created by the event. It is a question of life. The event creates a new existence, it produces a new subjectivity.

The second film to which Ross (2002) refers is a 1995 documentary by Herve Le Roux which documents his attempts to track down and interview the participants in the 1968 Wonder factory footage.<sup>77</sup> The title of the film, *Reprise*, plays on its dual meaning. Reprise in French means both to return, as in the moment in which the world is returned to normality and, to reprise,

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<sup>76</sup> Interestingly in a review of the footage Joshua Clover (2008) notes a certain theatrical quality. "You will have noted that some time during this vehement exchange, the woman seems to have noticed the camera, ambiguously—and has perhaps inhabited her position more fully, more self-awarely. Perhaps from a certain point, she is playing 'the woman who cries 'No.'" She is a historical actor." He also notes that the woman's hair was styled like the contemporary pop star and actress Anna Karina. Despite these marks of a mediated life the shocking originality of the situation breaks through. As Clover concludes "we know from this footage, from Karina's iconic presence at the Wonder Factory, that styling yourself after a pop star does not bar you from a politics of greatest clarity." We might take this as confirmation of the argument about the theatricality of such moments made in a previous footnote.

<sup>77</sup> The punchline of the film is that Le Roux can trace all the participants of the original film except for the young woman. Ross talks about the second film as an enquete, which uses the structure of the detective novel, "the uncovering of what has been lost" (Ross 2002: 146). "The recent past, it seems, has been lost or concealed, perhaps even confiscated. The crime consists of that confiscation, the crime of excluding, or of having one group – the experts – to stand in for a mass movement." (Ross 2002: 146)

as in a reprisal of events. This conception of the reprise is central to the book. Ross's problematic is very close to that of Badiou; he is concerned with the creation of a reprise that would permit fidelity to the truth of May 68, its collective "public happiness".<sup>78</sup> The temporality and conceptual persona from which the problematic is drawn is that of the militant who must struggle to remain faithful to the truth experienced in an event, which has profoundly altered their subjectivity. It is a problematic informed by the long years of winter experienced by '60s militants through the 1980s and early 1990s as neoliberalism established itself and effaced the very notion that *Another World is Possible*.

The operative temporality of Ross's problematic is not the temporality of the event but that of the reprise. We can tease out this distinction through a discussion of Ross' (2002: 104) conception of the pleasure of the events as:

a multiform pleasure, one of physical and social transgression, of new friendships or complicities to be gained... The pleasure of overcoming social compartmentalisations... transmit a sense of the urgent, immediate transformation being lived not as future reward but at the very moment.

Such pleasure, however, is "not pursued as an end in itself not even necessarily conceptualised at the time as pleasure" (Ross 2002: 104). The temporality of Ross' (2002: 106) conception of the pleasure of the event is apparent here: "If the pleasure was experienced primarily *après coup*, or after the fact, if it was felt indirectly, laterally, and mostly at the painful moment of the reprise, the moment of re-integrating back into one's own habits or milieu, it was no less strong". For Deleuze (2006: 131), however, the pleasure recognised in retrospect during the reprise is caused by the interruption of the event:

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<sup>78</sup> Rather than deal directly with Badiou's complex view of the event, which would require a considerable amount of explication and would distract from the focus of our thesis, we will position our approach to the event through a discussion of Ross' operative temporality.

I cannot give any positive value to pleasure because pleasure seems to interrupt the immanent process of desire... Pleasure seems to me to be the only means for the person or subjects to orient themselves in a process that exceeds them. It is a re-territorialization. From my point of view, this is how desire is brought under the law of lacking and in line with the norm of pleasure.<sup>79</sup>

Deleuze's perspective on the event is not derived from the pleasure, pain or the subjectivity of fidelity that comes with an event's interruption. It is instead rooted in the excess of the event itself.<sup>80</sup> The eventness of an event

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<sup>79</sup> This quotation is actually drawn from a letter, addressed to Foucault, in which Deleuze (2006) lays out some points of agreement and divergence between their two philosophies. A central point of contention is the difference between Deleuze's concept of desire and Foucault's concept of pleasure. It has since been published as *Desire and Pleasure*.

<sup>80</sup> This may seem an arcane distinction but it has dramatic consequences for political analysis and practice. For Badiou the events of '68 were followed by a restoration, which re-imposed the old order and closed off the event's excess and problematics from all but those who maintained a subjectivity of disciplined fidelity to its truth. This fidelity has to be maintained according to a strict formula, in order to resist the corruptions of fatigue, confusion, and dogmatism (Badiou 2002). For Badiou the only traces of the event of '68 are those rare subjectivities of fidelity. Such a conception, however, effaces the event's effects beyond the moment of reprise and risks the dismissal of the truth of events to come. In relation to the alter-globalisation movement, for instance, Badiou (2003: 126) says:

All we've seen are very ordinary performances from well-worn repertoires of petit-bourgeois mass movements, noisily laying claim to the right to enjoy without doing anything, while taking special care to avoid any form of discipline. Whereas we know that discipline, in all fields, is the key to truths.

Doesn't this dismissal amount to Badiou pronouncing: *But nothing happened in Seattle in '99?*

Eric Alliez, on the other hand, strongly influenced by Deleuze and Guattari, refuses the conception of a restoration after the event of 68, preferring the concept of:

counterrevolution [as it] means there has been an on-going revolution, that 68 existed as an opening of new radical possibilities... the social mutations it embodied have been repressed as much as depotentialised in the process of their capture by an extended capitalistic valorization that did not put an end to the crisis. And the fact is that high and massive conflictuality reemerges in Europe in the mid-1990s, before inventing this new global political dynamic that crystallized at Seattle, and with the multiplication of World Social Forums that directly addressed the realities of transnational capitalism and the *post-68* organisational question of the 'movement of

exceeds the manner of its reprise and Deleuze is interested in the new potential for life shown in this excess:

Will all this be in vain because suffering is eternal and revolutions do not survive their victory? But the success of a revolution resides only in itself, precisely in the vibrations, clinches, and openings it gave to men and women at the moment of its making... The victory of a revolution is immanent and consists in the new bonds it installs between people even if those bonds last no longer than the revolution's fused material and quickly gives way to division and betrayal (Deleuze, Guattari 2001: 177).

We can see from this that the event is firstly a sense-event, the sensation that something is anomalous. As Williams (2003: 154) explains:

The event has to be individual, in the sense where a sensation within an individual is the sign of an ideal event. So the shift from one set of scientific laws to another is not the event, neither is the new species. The event is the first sign of mutation or the first sensation (in a scientist, a spectator, an actor, animal, plant or molecule).

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movements'... You can criticise, show that this anti-model reached its limits to explain its *reflux*, etc – but... it reveals that '68 never completely ended. (Alliez, et al 2010: 169-70).

More than this we might argue that Badiou's analysis denies the very conditions that allowed an increased interest in his work during the late 2000s, namely the expansion of interest in anti-capitalist theory sparked by the alter-globalisation movement. Indeed we might position the attractiveness of Badiou's theory to the seeming supercession of that movement by an attempted neo-conservative counter-revolution, whose violence appeared to close the space for the movement's continuation. During such *years of winter* Badiou's platonic conception of communism allowed some to gain a measure of orientation. With the economic crisis that began in 2007, however, the weaknesses of Badiou's analysis are fully exposed. Alliez's Deleuzian autonomism allows us to think through the connection between struggle and capitalist restructuring, allowing the collapse of 2007 to be seen as the latest instantiation of capital's inability to resolve the crisis of 68. Badiou's post-Maoist conceptualisation, however, closes off the continuing economic effects of '68 by raising the political above the economic: "I think what is Marxist, and also Leninist – and in any case *true* – is the idea that any viable campaign against capitalism can only be political. There can be no economic battle against the economy" (Badiou 2002: 105).

A symptomology seems a useful methodology for isolating a certain kind of sense-event, which we want to call a moment of excess. For Deleuze (2004b: 25), however, this would only hold true: “on the condition that the event is not confused with its spatio-temporal realization in a state of affairs.” There is an aspect of the event, a pure-event, in contrast to a sense event, that is not captured in any individual instantiation in a state of affairs or in lived experience. It is in this light that Deleuze (2004b: 64) says: “The mode of the event is the problematic.” As Patton (2006: 113) explains:

Specification is necessary for the production of particular solutions, but the pure problem-event is not thereby dissolved or exhausted since there always remains the possibility of other specifications and other solutions. We must distinguish between the empirical event, which is a particular determination of the problem, and the problem-event that, in its pure form, remains “immaterial, incorporeal, unliveable: pure reserve”.

The task of our symptomology then is “to extract the non-actualizable part of the pure event from symptoms” (Deleuze 2004b: 273). In this way we can reopen the event, to re-inhabit it, in order to extract its problematic, and allow a renewed experimentation with alternative solutions. The temporality and conceptual persona in operation here is not the post-reprise subjectivity of the militant but the revolutionary-becoming of the event itself, beyond the outcome of any specific revolution, or moment of excess. As Deleuze (1995: 175) explains:

May 68 was a demonstration, an irruption, of a becoming in its pure state. It's fashionable these days to condemn the horrors of revolution. It's nothing new; English Romanticism is permeated by reflections on Cromwell very similar to present-day reflections on Stalin. They say revolutions always turn out badly. But they're confusing two different things, the way revolutions turn out historically and people's revolutionary becoming; the only way of casting off their shame or responding to what is intolerable.

There is a reversal of temporal disposition here. Rather than the creation of a militant subjectivity based on fidelity to the truth of a past event, the task is to re-open the past event in order to remain faithful to the

possibility of events to come.<sup>81</sup> For Deleuze the ethical framework of judgement must be applicable both within an event and within quotidian experience. It must, therefore, also operate on a pre-subjective level. As such, Deleuze insists, rather than rooting ethical judgement in pleasure, it must be rooted in affect, in particular, the affect of joy that accompanies an increase in a body's capacities counterpointed with the affect of sadness that accompanies a decrease in capacities.<sup>82</sup>

This doesn't mean we escape the problem of the reprise but it does recompose the problem. The political problematic is now the construction of institutional forms that can operate during more quotidian times while remaining open to events to come.<sup>83</sup> Such a form of organisation would involve a relay between the affective judgement that takes place within the intensity of events and the analysis that is possible in more extensive conditions. In Chapter Six we seek to use this problematic to reconceptualise the repertoires that have been developed by social movement activity around summit mobilisations.

Before we reach that point, however, we need to move on from our symptomology of moments of excess. It might not, however, be appropriate to move directly from the grouping of symptoms to the next task of the clinical doctor, etiology or a concern with causes. We cannot continue to act in the manner of the clinician not least because what we are concerned with

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<sup>81</sup> Hardt and Negri (2009: 60-1) accord with this treatment of Badiou when they say: "A retrospective approach to the event in fact does not give us access to the rationality of insurrectional activity, which must strive within the historical process to create revolutionary events and break from the dominant subjectivities. Without the internal logic of making events, one can only affirm them from the outside as a matter of faith".

<sup>82</sup> We elaborate on this ethical framework in Chapter Five, through a discussion of the Spinozan concept of conatus.

<sup>83</sup> To return to Deleuze's (1991) discussion of Masochism, we might see the masochist's contract as an institutional form that allows the persistence of desire by warding off its interruption in a climax of pleasure. We seek institutional forms, then, that allow us to sustain the desires produced by moments of excess.

here involves “the rupture with causality that forces a rewriting of history on a level with the real, and produces this strangely polyvocal moment when everything is possible” (Deleuze, Guattari, 1984: 378). In their final collectively authored book *What is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guattari (1994) distinguish the concerns of Science, Art and Philosophy. Scientific endeavour “concerns itself only with states of affairs and their conditions.” As such “Science needs only propositions or functions” (Deleuze, Guattari 1994: 33). The role we have given to states of affairs in the thesis, so far, has been the not strictly scientific one of the abstraction of problematics from particular stages of actually existing social movements.

For Deleuze and Guattari (1994: 162-3) Art has a separate role. “Art preserves, and it is the only thing in the world that is preserved... What is preserved – the thing or the work of art – is *a bloc of sensations, that is to say, a compound of percepts and affects.*”<sup>84</sup> We might want to connect this artistic function with our symptomology of excess – remembering that for Deleuze (2004b: 273) “[t]here is always a great deal of art involved in the grouping of symptoms” and it was just such a grouping of affects we have been concerned with. Now, however, we must move from an artistic mode to a more properly philosophical one, so that we can trace the conceptual outlines of moments of excess and isolate the problems that the symptomology has raised.

For Deleuze and Guattari (1994: 2): “philosophy is the art of forming, inventing, and fabricating concepts.” We can see philosophy, then, as a creative task, which can help us move beyond experience, enable new

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<sup>84</sup> Percepts and affects are used as concepts here to counter our usual bias toward the individual as the privileged units of experience. As they go on to say:

percepts are no longer perceptions; they are independent of a state of those who experience them. Affects are no longer feelings or affections; they go beyond the strength of those who undergo them. Sensations, percepts, and affects are beings whose validity lies in themselves and exceeds any lived. They could be said to exist in the absence of man because man, as he is caught in stone, on the canvas, or by words, is himself a compound of percepts and affects. The work of art is a being of sensation and nothing else: it exists in itself. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 163).

possibilities for thought and call forth events to come.<sup>85</sup> Philosophical conceptualisation becomes necessary as we move from the isolation of a sense–event to the examination of a problem-event. As Deleuze and Guattari (1994: 16) explain: “All concepts are connected to problems without which they would have no meaning and which can themselves only be isolated and understood as their solution emerges.” Cesare Casarino, however, raises a pertinent critique of *What is Philosophy?*:

I would say that in it they do not emphasize nearly enough the fact that philosophy understood as the production of concepts is a necessary element intrinsic to any practice, or, put differently, that any practice involves something like a philosophical moment to the extent that it needs to produce its own concepts in order to function. (Casarino, Negri, 2008: 187).

To more accurately characterise the task in hand then, we should say that we wish to extract, and then intensify, concepts and problems that are already operative in social movements.

In the next chapter we seek a conceptualisation that brings out and intensifies the movement problematic of the relation between intensive moments of excess and the politics of everyday life. In doing so we broach the question posed by Blaug (2000: 153): “What use then are such extraordinary and ephemeral moments?” This is a difficult question to approach as putting such moments to *use* risks obscuring their full potential behind the fetish of a totalising notion of utility. If moments of excess bring about the opening up of political possibility, then how do we act without prematurely closing that possibility within a new instrumentality? We will seek a solution to this problem through Deleuze and Guattari’s concepts of antiproduction, the socius and the Body without Organs, which, we will argue, attempts to resolve Marx and Bataille; that is the everyday excess

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<sup>85</sup> “The concept is the contour, the configuration, the constellation of an event to come” (Deleuze, Guattari 1994: 33).

found in Marx's theory of surplus value and the unemployable, festive excess that can be found in Bataille's concept of expenditure.

The analytical problematic, then, is the relation of moments of excess to the false totalities and fetishisms of the socius of capital. The movement problematic is the relationship between moments of excess and wider change in habitual life. The question we might ask is: How do we analyse and act in the more extensive situations of everyday life while keeping open to events to come? Or to phrase it differently: "how do we take those new worlds that felt so possible during the week of protests and generalise them so that they make sense in the rest of our lives?" (Harvie, et al 2005b: 15).

## Chapter Four

### Moments of Excess

“And what is the phantom fuzz screaming from Chicago to Berlin, from Mexico City to Paris? ‘We are REAL REAL REAL!!! as this NIGHTSTICK!’ as they feel, in their dim animal way, that reality is slipping away from them...” William Burroughs (2003: 246), commenting on the police beating of protesters at the Democratic convention, Chicago 1968.

“Money is shit. And what does the money machine eat to shit it out? It eats youth, spontaneity, life, beauty and above all it eats creativity. It eats quality and shits out quantity... the more the machine eats the less remains... This process is escalating geometrically” (Burroughs 1984: 73-4).

### Introduction

On 15 June 2001 the Swedish police shot three unarmed demonstrators during protests against the summit of the EU heads of state in Gothenburg. One protester, shot through the stomach, was lucky to survive (Days of Dissent 2004). A few months later Carlo Giuliani was shot in the face and killed during the protests against the G8 in Genoa. This shooting took place in the context of a brutal police assault on the protests, with large-scale disturbances and widespread, indiscriminate beatings of protestors. On the night after the shooting the Italian police attacked the Diaz school, which had been hired by the Genoa Social Forum and was being used by some protesters as sleeping quarters and a media centre. During the raid scores of sleeping protesters were savagely beaten, with many hospitalised and three put into comas. Those arrested there, along with others arrested during the events, were taken to the Bolzaneto detention centre, where they were subjected to a regime of beatings and humiliations which was subsequently defined as torture by an Italian court (BBC News 2008). While we could argue that these incidents are exceptional and singular, reflecting their own

specific circumstances, the speed with which they followed one another seemed to indicate a trans-national hardening of attitudes in the policing of protests.<sup>86</sup>

In previous chapters we have argued that the episodic and evental nature of contemporary movements, including the prevalence of what we have called moments of excess, are symptomatic of the dominance of transcendental forms of power based on the conditioning of possible experience. However, the experiences of moments of excess during summit protests have been accompanied by displays of power based on a much more direct application of force. This is something that needs both accounting for and incorporating into movement strategy. While acknowledging that this shift has restricted the movement's space of operation, we will argue that this has not been the primary problematic faced by the movement. Instead the overarching problem, and the one that the movement has been unable to fully resolve, is the failure to generalise the expanded sense of political possibility produced in moments of excess into a society in which politics has been reduced to the concern of a technocratic elite and in which the very conception of collective political action has fallen into disrepute.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Although these levels of brutality weren't reached again there has been a generalised and trans-national militarisation of the policing of such events. Indeed following 9/11, and the neoconservative exploitation of that event, the militarisation of policing segued seamlessly into the War on Terror. As a consequence the alter-globalisation movement, particularly in US, found the political space within which it operated began to close up. This was due not just to the general atmosphere of intolerance of dissent, with, for example, the invention of the invidious category of domestic extremist, but also because the analytical focus of politics moved away from the concerns of the movement.

<sup>87</sup> Indeed we would argue that the need for the movement to deal with the problematic of sovereign violence has tended to exacerbate the gap between movement experiences and everyday life. As such it is only after we have worked through a conceptualisation of the relation of moments of excess to the transcendental forms of power operative under neoliberalism that we will return to the problematics of sovereign violence.

This problem has provoked much discussion amongst the movement's participants and fellow travellers. For many it has led to a critique of 'summit hopping', in which the movement's eventual form is cast as a distraction from a more direct engagement with the concerns of everyday life.<sup>88</sup> Yet despite this, summit protests, as well as other protests utilising their form and repertoire, have persisted. In addition, and perhaps even more importantly, many struggles not directly related to summit protests have continued to represent the affects and problematics of moments of excess.<sup>89</sup> Indeed, despite many original and productive attempts to reposition the movement onto the terrain of everyday life, overcoming the movement form has not proven easy.<sup>90</sup> What we propose in this thesis is not a rejection of the form

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<sup>88</sup> We can find such sentiments not just within the activist milieu but also within contemporary continental philosophy. See for example these comments by Simon Critchley (2004):

Perhaps it is at th[e] intensely situational, indeed local level that the atomising force of capitalist globalisation is to be met, contested and resisted. That is, it is not to be resisted by constructing a global anti-globalisation movement that, at its worst, is little more than a highly-colourful critical echo of the globalisation it contests. It is rather to be resisted by occupying and controlling the terrain upon which one stands, where one lives, works, acts and thinks... That is, politics begins right here, locally, practically and specifically, around a concrete issue and not by running off to protest at some meeting of the G8. You shouldn't meet your enemy on their ground, but on your own, on the ground that you have made your own. Also, think of the money and time you save on travel!

While we would agree with Critchley's ambition to control the terrain "where one lives, works, acts and thinks" it is precisely the difficulty of doing so that has spurred the form taken by alter-globalisation protests, and it is precisely through these protests that some ground has been made our own. While accepting the need to go beyond that ground we should not reject it but treat it, precisely, as some ground from which to experiment with new forms of politics. We should also make clear that the presupposition upon which Critchley (2004) draws his politics is that "for good or ill, let's say ill, we are stuck with the state, just as we are stuck with capitalism."

<sup>89</sup> We might think here of incidences as varied as the Cochabamba Water Wars in Bolivia in 2000, the Argentinazo of 2001, the uprising in Oaxaca, Mexico in 2006, the 2008 and 2010 Greek riots, as well as many other instances.

<sup>90</sup> The most interesting experiment in this direction has been the EuroMayday movement, which sought to use the concept of precarity to figure the affects of neoliberalism on our

of politics established by summit protests but a re-examination that may allow us to supersede them. We aim to reconceptualise these experiences in order to abstract concepts, technologies and problematics that we can use to gain collective traction on the terrain of the (re)production of everyday life. To allow us to do so we try, in this chapter, to conceptualise moments of excess in relation to the role they might play in political and social organisation. The chapter is split into five sections. In this first section we set up the problematic we are addressing through comparison with other conceptions of the political role played by social movements and moments of excess. In the second section we use the problematic of moments of excess as a prism to discuss the theory of George Bataille, whose concept of the expenditure of excess, and the central role that this expenditure plays in social organisation, allows us to consider moments of excess as ruptures in what is reasonable and productive. In the third section we examine Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of the Body without Organs, the full body and the socius. These concepts are developed in relation to the concept of antiproduction, which Deleuze and Guattari derive from Bataille's concept of expenditure but which they position within a non-teleological universal history. In the fourth section we develop a theory of the moment of excess in the light of the previous two chapters and in the final section we ask what is to be done with such moments.

To set up the problematic of the chapter, let's start with the image of the alter-globalisation movement provided by the Italian activist and theorist, Paolo Virno:

The global movement ever since Seattle resembles a half-functioning voltaic battery: it accumulates energy without rest but does not know how and where to discharge it. We face a marvelous hoarding to which no adequate investments correspond at this time... Every activist is aware of this: the

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everyday lives. Interestingly the primary form with which this movement has spread has been Mayday parades, which draw on many of the repertoire's developed during the alter-globalisation cycle of protests (on EuroMayday see Foti 2009).

global movement does not yet manage to have an effect—I mean, to have an effect with the grace of corrosive acid—on the current capitalist accumulation (Joseph, Virno 2005: 34-5).

By rendering the problematic in the form of an energetic circuit Virno raises the question of where and how the energy accumulated might be invested, or indeed discharged. The most orthodox answers declare that the energy of the movement must be displaced into the sphere of representation if it is not to be wasted. In such a schema the energy provided by social movements must be channelled and siphoned off to fuel more conventionally organised, and 'serious' representative politics. One version of this posits a vanguard political party as the necessary component to guide the spontaneous spark of revolt provided by the movement. Alex Callinicos (2002), for instance, has derided the failure to accept this as 'movementism'.<sup>91</sup> A different version of a similar schema is to be found in attempts to draw up a unified programme of demands for the movement, as a means of constructing a more coherent political subject. The most prominent of these efforts was the 2006 Bamako appeal, drawn up by a group of intellectuals close to the World Social Forum process, including the Egyptian economist Samir Amin (Waterman 2006). Of all the efforts to institutionalise the movement through representation it is, perhaps, only in Latin America with its Pink Tide of governments, that the movement has managed to inscribe itself in constituted politics.<sup>92</sup> The problem that haunts these experiences is how to prevent the process of institutionalisation from

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<sup>91</sup> We could, of course, add to this example the various attempts to construct the alter-globalisation movement as impetus for the construction of a new global social democratic compact (see for example, Held, McGrew, 2003).

<sup>92</sup> The story of the relation between the Latin American social movements and their governments is actually a varied and complex one. We can see the most direct transfer from movement to institutions in the election of Evo Morales, leader of the Cochabamba water wars, as president of Bolivia. In many countries the relationship has been more complex and less direct. Lula's presidency of Brazil, for instance, was preceded by the decline of the movements rather than their highpoint (Turbulence collective 2007).

demobilising the movements. Or to return to Virno's energetic metaphor, how can a movement take effect and institutionalise itself without the mobilising energy being spent in the process?

For others, such as Žižek, this failure to have an effect on current capitalist accumulation reveals the movement's real, though disavowed, desire.<sup>93</sup> Žižek constructs the alter-globalisation movement as the embodiment of what he calls the politics of 'resistance', which, for him, is founded on the impossibility of liberation and so the reduction of politics to a moralism. For Žižek the movement is a form of acting out, allowing the settling of consciences, and thus the smoother continuation of the system.

"[A]ll is needed is a slight shift in our perspective, and all the activity of 'resistance,' of bombarding those in power with impossible 'subversive' (ecological, feminist, antiracist, antiglobalist...) demands, looks like an internal process of feeding the machine of power, providing the material to keep it in motion." (Žižek 2006: 334).

To return to our energetic register, we can grasp Žižek's argument as a variation of his critique of carnivalesque moments, in which the world is turned upside down for a restricted period in order to release the excess energy and frustrations that might otherwise trigger less controlled explosions. In essence Žižek's approach reduces the alter-globalisation movement and "minoritarian politics to its failure and defines it as an ideological supplement to capitalism" (Diefenbach 2007).

The limits of Žižek's stance becomes apparent when he says:

Better to do nothing than to engage in localized acts whose ultimate function is to make the system run more smoothly... The threat today is not passivity but pseudo-activity, the urge to 'be active', to 'participate.' to mask the

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<sup>93</sup> We can loosely include Badiou in these dismissals of the alter-globalisation movement in its minoritarian aspects. His project however is subtler and more nuanced than Žižek's characteristically provocative overstatement. For Badiou the contemporary problem is that of separation from the politics of liberal democracy.

Nothingness of what goes on... Those in power often prefer even a 'critical' participation, a dialogue, to silence – just to engage us in a 'dialogue,' to make sure our ominous passivity is broken. (Zizek 2006: 334)

There is a strong temptation to dismiss such a statement as a weakened repetition of Baudrillard's (1983: 105) argument that: "The absence of response can be understood as a counter-strategy of the masses themselves in their encounter with power and no longer at all as a strategy of power." After thirty years of neoliberalism and the incredible redistribution of wealth from the poorest to the richest that has accompanied the collapse in political participation, we might say that passivity has proved a little ineffective as a counter-strategy.<sup>94</sup> The problematic that Zizek is attempting to address, however, does have more merit than this. We have already discussed the tendency to reduce social movements to feedback mechanisms for the contemporary socius. We have also discussed feedback as a primary means of incorporating populations within control societies. Indeed when Deleuze (1995: 175) discusses control societies in a well-known interview with Negri he makes a statement that seems close to Zizek's position: "The key thing may be to create vacuoles of noncommunication, circuit breakers, so we can elude control."

In our discussion of the social application of cybernetic feedback circuits, however, we discovered that although a feedback model allows the modulation of a system, it does not allow the fundamental transformation the system's overall orientation and structure. The creation of vacuoles of noncommunication, then, should not be construed as an injunction against acting or speaking. It is rather a warning against acting and speaking in ways that fail to break with the cybernetic circuits of communication, which set the ultimate boundaries of what it is possible to do and say. Following this could we look to moments of excess as examples of vacuoles of

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<sup>94</sup> Indeed if there has been a switch from the imposition of passivity by 'power' to the embrace of passivity as a counter-strategy by the 'masses' then neither the 'masses' nor 'power' seems to have noticed the reversal.

noncommunication when they break with contemporary sense and pose their own questions on their own terms.<sup>95</sup>

We have already seen that neoliberalism operates in a way that obscures its genesis. It constructs the sense that it is, in some way, natural and eternal. *There is No Alternative*. It is this that makes the expansion of the sense of political possibility found in moments of excess so politically significant. *Another World is Possible*. But how can this sense of possibility, and the political energy that it produces, interact with a common sense dominated by the neoliberal depotentialisation of life? To return to our energetic metaphor, how can we use this energy without short-circuiting its continued generation, that is, without bringing the movement to a halt? In the next section we reconceptualise these questions through reference to Bataille's theory of the expenditure of excess, in which nonproductive expenditure can be central to either the persistence of a system or its transformation. This use of nonproductive expenditure must in turn destabilise common sense assumptions about what constitutes rational action and so disrupt the colonisation of our lives by neoliberal conceptions of utility. It is only through breaking with such conceptions of common sense that we can begin to think of a political body that can incorporate a moment of excess in a manner that doesn't cut us off from new events and new problematics to come.

## **The Judgement of the Solar Anus**

George Bataille was a contemporary of the Surrealist movement and though he had a famously fractious relationship with central Surrealist orchestrator Andre Breton they shared a similar problematic (Kendall, 2007). Bataille, like the Surrealists, was concerned with the interplay between the 'rational' and

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<sup>95</sup> Indeed their rejection of passivity as a strategy becomes clear when Deleuze and Guattari (1994: 108) return to this problematic in a later work: "We do not lack communication. On the contrary, we have too much of it. We lack creation. *We lack resistance to the present.*"

the 'irrational' in creative and transformative events. In fact we could usefully trace this problematic further back to the proto-surrealist artistic movement Dada. The explosion of Dadaist 'irrational' behaviour at the Cabaret Voltaire in 1916 was spurred by the World War raging around it; the war was, after all, an unprecedented apocalyptic display of the irrational deployment of rationality. Set back in this context Dada appears as a hard realism, revealing the disavowed irrationality of contemporary society. Yet at the same time we can see a search for new and better forms of sociality in Dada's probing of the borders and thresholds of the existing regime of rationality.<sup>96</sup> Similarly the Surrealist movement, that followed Dada's collapse, was not the fantastical escapism to which popular culture has now reduced it. It was, rather, an attempt to create a super- or over-realism, a sur-realism that rose above the limited horizons of contemporary sense. Surrealist practices, such as the introduction of the element of chance into art, or the creation of pre-rational juxtapositions derived from a Freudian theory of the unconscious, were attempts to gain just such an overview by breaking with habitual connections and patterns of thought.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Punk rock, whose inheritance from Dada is traced by Greil Marcus (1997), also contained this realist strand, 'the word from the street', drawing out the nihilism of contemporary society. 'No Future' as diagnosis not program. This break with piety allows a renewed experimentation with more active forms of life: 'Do It Yourself'.

<sup>97</sup> To develop this point we might trace, in an admittedly reductionist manner, two lines of artistic development that follow from Dada and Surrealism. The first running from Surrealism, to Situationism, to Punk and beyond, involves what Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 123) call the "double turning away that draws the positive line of flight" in the passional regime of signs. To follow this argument we can construct the first turning away as a rupture with what exists; in artistic practice this often involves the use of shock, perhaps through revelation of the disavowed, to break with habitual patterns of thought. We might then think of the second turning away as the turning towards new thought, to new worlds and to new modes of sociality. The second line of artistic development might then be described as the failure to complete this double turning away. In this case the shock is followed by a turning back to existing society, to existing modes of thought. We could trace this second line of artistic development as moving through the advertising industry's incorporation of Surrealist

Bataille's writing, and indeed his organisational practice, involved similar attempts to escape the bounds of utilitarian rationality. He distinguished himself from the Surrealists, however, on the very possibility of an overview.<sup>98</sup> In his essay *The 'Old Mole' and the Prefix Sur in the Words Surhomme [superman] and Surrealist* Bataille (1985) critiques Sur-realism precisely on its prefix. Reading *sur* as *over*, he suggests it signifies an idealist desire to soar above the messiness of the world. This desire for total overview is likened to an imperialist 'super eagle', which is destined for an Icarus-like fall in the obscuring glare of the sun.<sup>99</sup> Bataille's preference was to grub like a mole amidst more base material, with all the restricted vision and discontinuous visibility that this implies.

Indeed Bataille's use of the phrase "old mole" also signals a certain position within a dispute over historicism. Bataille is referencing Marx's great text on historical repetition *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. Hegel, however, had preceded Marx in the use of this analogy. For Hegel (2010: 547) the 'old mole' symbolises the subterranean progression of reason, which he termed 'the spirit of world history', as it tunnelled dialectically but inexorably towards the light of the surface. This mole then is the inheritance of past generations of thought in its movement through the present. Its work is to push history onwards until it broaches the surface, brings reason's underlying unity into full consciousness, and achieves

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derived techniques of shock, Andy Warhol's turn to advertising and celebrity as artistic subject, and ultimately the Young British Artist's adoption of the relation between shock, sensation and the art market as the privileged subject of artistic enquiry.

<sup>98</sup> The utilitarian rationality mentioned here, does not necessarily refer to the philosophical system of utilitarianism associated with Bentham, Mill, etc but is used in a more general sense to indicate an instrumentalism based on a conception of an unproblematically universal notion of utility.

<sup>99</sup> For Bataille, as will become apparent, the sun is the figure of an irreducible excess which will ultimately bring any pretensions to total knowledge back down to the messy earth.

panoramic vision.<sup>100</sup> As finite individuals we are trapped amidst history and it is only the work of this mole that connects us to the whole:

[I]ndividuals are like blind men, who are driven forward by the indwelling spirit of the whole... We have to give ear to its urgency – when the mole that is within forces its way on – and we have to make it a reality... consciously to bring it from its natural condition, *i.e.* from its lifeless seclusion, into the light of day. (Hegel 2010: 553).

For Marx (1968a), of course, Hegel's mole is standing on its head. Marx puts it back on its feet by linking ideas to the material preconditions of their production. Marx's 'old mole' is revolution, burrowing its way to the surface of visibility during moments of open class conflict, submerging when that cycle of struggle is over, to continue burrowing out of view until it can emerge again. "Well grubbed old mole" (Marx 1968a: 170).<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Hegel's (2010: 553) 'old mole' makes its appearance in the conclusion of his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, a survey of the previous 2,500 years of philosophy. It is then, for Hegel, quite literally the inheritance of past generations of thought.

<sup>101</sup> In his *Postscript on Control Societies* Deleuze (1995: 180) seems to suggest that the metaphor of the old mole has lost its purchase. "If money's old moles are the animals of confinement, then control societies have their snakes." The reference is brief and its mention of "money's old mole" a little obscure – the English translator suggests that the passage makes reference to the European Union Exchange Rate Mechanism, commonly called the snake in the French press (in Deleuze 1995: 203). The overall suggestion, however, is that our relations with other people have been changed causing a change in the potential for struggle. "Disciplinary man produced energy in discrete amounts, while control man undulates, moving among a continuous range of different orbits" (Deleuze 1995: 180). Hardt and Negri (2000: 57) pick up this argument and remake it in more direct fashion: "[W]e suspect that Marx's old mole has finally died. It seems to us, in fact, that in the contemporary passage to Empire, the structured tunnels of the mole have been replaced by the undulations of the snake." They argue that postmodernity hasn't the depth for subterranean pathways and as such the horizontal communication that produces a cycle of struggles can no longer take place. This passage was written, however, before the emergence of the alter-globalisation movement, which bore all the hallmarks of a classic, mole-like, circulation of struggles. Indeed it was incubated in subterranean passage across

This dispute between moles provides some intellectual context to Bataille's problematic. He remained after all resolutely leftist while he struggled to escape the enormous influence of Alexandre Kojève's lectures on Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* over a generation of French thinkers.<sup>102</sup> Kojève's reading of Hegel was particularly systematising and teleological, leaving Bataille feeling "suffocated, crushed, shattered, killed ten times over" (Quoted in Noys 2000: 7). As Noys (2000: 7) suggests, Bataille's subsequent writings can be read "as a sustained and violent dialogue with the overwhelming force of Hegel."<sup>103</sup> For Bataille (1985: 52), "the Hegelian doctrine is above all an extraordinary and very perfect system of reduction". Bataille (1985: 51) maintains, however, that there remains something irreducible about the material world: "Base matter is external and foreign to ideal human aspirations, and it refuses to allow itself to be reduced to the great ontological machines resulting from these aspirations". Base matter is heterogeneous, it contains an excess that escapes all attempts to totalise and therefore master it. Any sense of totality, any totalisation effect, is reliant on mechanisms to incorporate that which exceeds it and for Bataille it is precisely these mechanisms that provide social meaning and value. Central to any form of social organisation is the expenditure of excess beyond the

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the world; encounters in the deep jungles of Chiapas were an important moment in its circulation, before exploding into view at Seattle. The argument about the snake and mole has subsequently disappeared from Hardt and Negri's conceptual armoury. From our post-movement position we can confidently say that the rumours of the moles death have been greatly exaggerated.

<sup>102</sup> The lectures, delivered between 1934 and 1939, were attended by, amongst others, Andre Breton, Jacques Lacan, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Raymond Aron, as well as Bataille (Kendall 2007).

<sup>103</sup> Another intellectual lineage we can trace from Kojève, leads to his friend and correspondent Leo Strauss, to Strauss' student Alan Bloom and through to Bloom's student Francis Fukuyama. Of course the argument to be made here is that the reliance of neoliberalism on transcendental dimensions of power opened it to Fukuyama's Kojèveian Hegelianism. It is in this context that we can see a renewed contemporary relevance to Bataille's attempts to break free from Kojève's systematisation.

need for reproduction or expansion. This excess, the accursed share, must be wasted if it is not to erupt in an uncontrolled manner. It is during the expenditure of excess, and in particular the effervescent eruptions of excess, that the borders of regimes of utilitarian rationality become most visible. So if Bataille turns to the "old mole" to portray a necessarily restricted field of vision he also retains a sense of the mole's discontinuous visibility.

This base materialism presents serious difficulties for analysis. In Bataille it leads to a difficult body of work – a discontinuous and anti-systematic theorisation that he himself admitted had escaped his attempts to capture it in writing (Bataille 1985). Indeed it also complicates our attempt to explicate Bataille's thought. As Noys (2000: 5) suggests: "The irruptive forces which are condensed in Bataille's works threaten to destroy any reading that imposes a sense on Bataille or tries to place him within limits, To do so is to destroy the thought of freedom that is central to Bataille's work." For us, however, this tension may prove productive, as it is precisely this problematic of the irruption of the new that we are looking for in Bataille. What we are looking for is an overlap between Bataille's problematic and our own problematic, which we can re-state with such questions as: How do we maintain that expansion of possibilities that we find in moments of excess after we have returned to habitual lives dominated by neoliberal sense? How can we build on the analytical and organisational experience of past movements, or generations, without over determining contemporary experience and effacing events to come?

Bataille's anti-systematic thought gains its most systematic exposition in arguably his most famous work *The Accursed Share* and it is here that the problematic nature of this analysis is most clearly exposed. Starting with an image of the sun as a 'solar anus', a promiscuous emitter of surplus energy, Bataille draws up a complex ontology of excess and limits. The circulation of excess solar energy, given without expectation of return, allows the proliferation of life on the limited space of the Earth. As this limited space becomes filled, the excess energy can no longer be expended on the self-reproduction and growth of a system and so must be expended non-

productively. One possible result of such nonproductive expenditure is difference, the emergence of new systems built around new utilisation of that excess energy. As Bataille (1989: 21) explains:

The living organism, in a situation determined by the play of energy on the surface of the globe, ordinarily receives more energy than is necessary for maintaining life; the excess energy (wealth) can be used for the growth of a system (e. g., an organism); if the system can no longer grow, or if the excess cannot be completely absorbed in its growth, it must necessarily be lost without profit; it must be spent, willingly or not, gloriously or catastrophically.

Such squandering of excess, as the precondition for differentiation, is the central activity of life itself. "The history of life on earth is mainly the effect of a wild exuberance; the dominant event is the development of luxury, the production of increasingly burdensome forms of life" (Bataille 1989: 33). At the summit of this differentiation, the most burdensome forms of life are the great predators, whose very existence represents an immense squandering of energy beyond simple reproduction.

William Blake asked the tiger: "In what distant deeps or skies, burned the fire of thine eyes?" What struck him in this way was the cruel pressure, at the limits of possibility, the tiger's immense power of consumption of life. In the general effervescence of life, the tiger is a point of extreme incandescence. And this incandescence did in fact burn first in the remote depths of the sky, in the sun's consumption (Bataille 1989: 34)

For Bataille, social organisation is part of, and therefore must be positioned within, the dynamics of these wider flows of energy. In a twist to the productivism to which Marxism is usually consigned it is the expenditure of this primal excess that provides the problem around which social organisation revolves.<sup>104</sup> Or, as Holland (1999: 62) puts it, "social

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<sup>104</sup> On this point we might think of Bataille as positioning Marx's critique within a more general economy of energy transformations and, in particular, a philosophical working-out of the consequences of the second law of thermo-dynamics.

organisation is always based on the expenditure of excess, and productive activity derives its meaning and purpose from such expenditure, not the other way around.” In the *Accursed Share* Bataille (1989) distinguishes between the ‘general economy’ of this circulation of excess and the limited, or restricted, economy of totalities and scarcity. While this produces an image of a cohesive general economy, within which there are many limited, partial economies, the exact status of the distinction is actually quite problematic. The limited economy can never be more than a fictional totality yet, as we’ve seen, there can be no access to an eagle-eyed view of the general economy. The only prisms through which we can glimpse the general economy are those discontinuous moments of the expenditure or the irruption of excess.

Adopting a Durkheimian vocabulary Bataille distinguishes between the sacred and the profane. The latter relates to the world of the limited economy, the world of utility where objects and subjects are separated from the flows of life and reified into discrete things. On the other hand, in the sacred, “we see a rupture opening to let out the ‘excess’ of an unmaintainable and thus delusive unity, whether that unity is consciousness, the body, a community, or even a nation” (Stoekl 1985: xxi). Bataille looks to moments of expenditure of excess to discover an experience of de-reification, where excess is expended in glorious waste that moves material and subjectivities out of the profane world of utility. The sacred emerges in discontinuous episodes, often ritualised into regularly occurring festivals of expenditure. Through these moments of destruction, waste and violence we glimpse what for Bataille is an unrecoverable intimacy beneath all things.

For examples of the sacred, and the glimpse they gives us of the general economy, Bataille draws on anthropological studies that allow us to step outside contemporary notions of utility. One such example is the study, by Durkheim’s nephew Marcel Mauss, of northwest Native American practices of potlatch. As Bataille (1989: 67-8) describes it:

Potlatch is, like commerce, a means of circulating wealth. But it excludes bargaining. More often than not it is the solemn giving of considerable riches,

offered by a chief to his rival for the purpose of humiliating, challenging and obligating him. The recipient has to erase the humiliation and take up the challenge; he must satisfy the obligation that was contracted by accepting. He can only pay a short time later, by means a new potlatch more generous than the first: He must pay back with interest.

The important point here is that excess is removed from utility in a ritualised festival that plays a vital role in tying society together through the construction of bonds of obligation. It could be argued that the gift is given in a straightforwardly utilitarian manner, based on the expectation of receiving more goods in return. However, the constant need to top the previous gift makes this a ruinous practice that defeats this utilitarian purpose. In fact “the ideal would be that a potlatch could not be repaid” (Bataille 1989: 71). This, of course, doesn’t entirely escape a utilitarian logic as the ritual has other homeostatic functions. Firstly it aims to (re)create a socius by, “prevent[ing] the direct and hence anti-social appropriation of life” (Holland 1999: 740). Secondly, destroying the excess, or removing it from profane use, prevents the accumulation of stores of surpluses that could trigger other potential modes of social organisation.<sup>105</sup>

Yet while we can understand the potlatch from within a utilitarian world-view it also contains another logic or sense. A transformation takes place from the profane worlds of goods and objects to the more intimate level of status or rank. It is the show of contempt for worldly goods, a display of the ability to escape the profane, that confers status. A surplus of perishable goods is converted into the less perishable realm of the social. Yet while status and hierarchy won’t perish as fast as surplus crops they certainly aren’t static or secure. The social needs continual renewing and each repetition of the intimacy of the sacred raises a potential denaturalisation of the contemporary socius and its attendant conceptions of utility.

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<sup>105</sup> This is in essence the thesis of Pierre Clastres (1990) book *Society against the State*, an anthropological study, which argues that the rituals of certain ‘primitive’ societies are aimed at warding off the development of the state and capital.

We can better understand the importance of intimacy by looking at another of Bataille's examples, the centrality of sacrifice in Aztec society. In the Aztec creation myth the sun was created through a sacrificial act of self-immolation. Human sacrifice, which was intended to feed the sun, represented a reconnection to this primal realm.

Sacrifice restores to the sacred world that which servile use has degraded, rendered profane. Servile use has made a thing (an object) of that which, in a deep sense, is of the same nature as the subject, is in a relation of intimate participation with the subject (Bataille: 1989: 55).

It is through this notion of intimacy that moments of expenditure of excess are linked to experiences of de-reification.<sup>106</sup> This affect is deepened when we consider its temporal aspect. De-reification involves more than the revelation that social relations or processes lie behind objects and commodities; it also implies an escape from our own status as things or commodities. In doing so we escape from our contemporary inhabitation of the perspective of the commodity and thus from utility's effacement of the present under the demands of the future.

What we come into, freed from slavish dependence upon things beyond utility, is the fullness of each moment of our lives. It is our life, fully here, in this moment, not deferred to the interests of production, accumulation, and consumption – this moment, voided of things (Lamarche 2007: 66).

This state, which Bataille also calls sovereignty, returns us to the problematic of historicism. The affect of sovereignty found in certain forms of expenditure of excess can be understood as a potential rupture with historicist determination. If the profane world is the postponement of life for future utility then sovereignty opens the possibility of the re-potentialisation of life. We can think of this re-potentialisation as the revelation of an unemployed excess. But of course any new social forms consequently

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<sup>106</sup> We can see here some overlap with our symptomology of excess in which we found an affect of (re)connection not just with co-present participants but also with the wider world.

created from that excess will necessarily involve a de-potentialisation. In this sense we can see an overlap between unemployed excess and the problematic of the event. The state of sovereignty is an excess to pre-existing conceptions of causality, to pre-existing assumptions and pre-existing expectations. Bataille's problematic then is to think through the relation between the sacred and the profane, between the general economy and the limited economy. And of course we want to put this problematic to use in thinking through the relation between the movement experiences of moments of excess and the subsequent return to de-potentialised habitual lives.

Bataille is very clear that the relationship between the sacred and the profane is one of radical otherness. "The world of intimacy is as antithetical to the real world as immoderation is to moderation, madness to reason, drunkenness to lucidity" (Bataille 1989: 58). It is, however, a strange form of radical otherness in which the sacred is fundamental to the organisation of the profane. To illustrate this Bataille calls attention to the layout of the traditional French village with the sacred space of the church and graveyard at its centre. Meaning is provided to life through sacred communion, the effervescence of religious festival and the otherness of self-loss through death. The expenditure of excess gives meaning to the profane yet the profane persists. Given this it is difficult to see how the radical otherness of the sacred can be maintained, or, to use Bataille's other concepts, how the general economy can escape reduction to a limited economy.

As we have already made clear, Bataille's engagement with this question took place through his struggle with Kojève's reading of Hegel. Bataille's solution in this context is to valorise the moment of transgression. Bataille attempts to escape the Hegelian dialectic, to refuse the synthesis and resolution of the pair profane/sacred, through a valorisation of the negative moment. This would involve pushing the negative moment beyond any hope of positive resolution, the creation of an unemployable negativity. We might ask, however, whether this use of transgression can really escape the Hegelian dialectic. Doesn't transgression keep what is transgressed as

the central point of reference?<sup>107</sup> Indeed isn't this what is at stake in the centrality of the sacred to the profane? When expenditure gives meaning to production it finds itself back in thrall to utility. As Hardt (2002: 80) explains:

Transgression always functions in relation to (or in complicity with) a norm or taboo, neglecting the dictates of the norm and yet paradoxically re-enforcing the norm's effects. The transgressive act does not simply refuse the norm, but rather negates it, transcends it, and completes it. It exceeds a limit, but in its excess verifies the limit itself. Transgression always operates through a dialectic of negations. If the norm were destroyed, the transgression itself would lose all value.

This is certainly the problematic with which Bataille is grappling and we can agree with Hardt on the strategic dangers of the valorisation of transgression. But doesn't Hardt also inadvertently reveal the point that Bataille is reaching for? Isn't a transgression that loses all value precisely what Bataille means by unemployed negativity? This is the radicality of Bataille's position, pushing the negative beyond any notion of utility. This once again, however, seems to leave a radical, uncrossable gap between the sacred and the profane. We seem stuck in an impasse between, on the one hand, a new utilitarianism with its attendant teleology and, on the other hand, a resigned acceptance of the impossibility of radical change and transformation; in effect another end of history.

Indeed at certain points in Bataille's work the expenditure of excess does seem to be no more than a homeostatic mechanism, the release of excess pressure through the safety valve of ritual. There are moments, particularly in *The Accursed Share*, where Bataille's project appears to be

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<sup>107</sup> For an expansion of this point we could refer to Nietzsche's (2008) argument, in *On the Genealogy of Morals*, on atheism's relation to Christianity. Belief in God is central to the Christian identity and disbelief in God is central to the atheist identity, God, however, remains the central problematic of both belief systems. Atheism, far from breaking with Christianity, is reduced to a mere evolutionary stage in the development of the Christian problematic.

simply the avoidance of the kinds of catastrophic and uncontrolled expenditure of excess that he had witnessed in the great depression and the two world wars.<sup>108</sup> At other times, however, Bataille's project seems much more radical. In his essay *The Notion of Expenditure* Bataille (1985: 121) links the expenditure of excess to proletarian revolution:

Since power is exercised by the classes that expend, poverty was excluded from all social activity. And the poor have no other way of re-entering the circle of power than through the revolutionary destruction of the classes occupying that circle – in other words, through a bloody and in no way limited social expenditure.

We could, of course, relate this divergence to the different historical circumstances in which these texts were written. The former is a product of the post-war period, while the latter was written during the period of political ferment that culminated in the wave of factory occupations that swept France after the 1936 election of the Popular Front. It might be more accurate, however, to say that the differing historical situations brought out different aspects of a more general and unresolved tension in Bataille's work.

While it is true that in *The Accursed Share* Bataille is sometimes drawn into an overly sociological problematic we can also find what we could think of as a proto-post-structuralist problematic that might rescue the sacred from its position trapped between utilitarianism and mysticism. As Noys (2000: 115) puts it:

In his desire to *prove* the existence of the accursed share Bataille has reduced the accursed share to a perception from a restricted economy. But his writing also offers a different account of general economy as emerging through difference, the difference that the restricted economies cannot control.

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<sup>108</sup> His examination of the post-war Marshall plan as an expenditure without expectation of return seems a particularly naïve analysis of geopolitics.

Pursuing this argument Noys identifies what for him is the key passage in *The Accursed Share*, in which Bataille (1989: 25) declares that: "Changing from the perspectives of *restrictive* economy to those of *general* economy actually accomplishes a Copernican transformation: a reversal of thinking – and of ethics." This could be interpreted as a desire to move from one form of economy to another but as Bataille (1989: 12) makes clear, "[r]eal life, composed of all sorts of expenditure, knows nothing of pure productive expenditure; in actuality, it knows nothing of purely nonproductive expenditure either." On this reading then "[g]eneral economy would no longer be a place outside of restricted economy but a fleeting and effervescent effect of this swirling turbulence of energy flows that constantly puncture limits, create openings and new limits" (Noys 2000; 115).

If we return to the image of sun as the symbol of the general economy, we can see that this is not a place that we can occupy; indeed we cannot gaze directly upon it without risking damage to our vision. We can, however, still incorporate, and indeed valorise, the perspective of the general economy in our forms of analysis. This would involve the creation of forms of thought, or indeed what Deleuze would call an 'image of thought', that presupposes an excess to each restricted economy within which we find ourselves. What this would give us is an open, contingent form of analysis that we could, perhaps, name the perspective of excess. A form of organisation based on this perspective would have to allow for moments of nonproductive expenditure from which new problematics could emerge. This, in turn would require a certain amount of humility in the face of activities that seem unproductive when viewed from within standing conceptions of what it is most useful to do. It is only nonproductive expenditure that can generate radical difference, while purely productive expenditure must tend to generate self-similarity. Nonproductive expenditure can bring about transformations in the conception and measure of utility; this would in turn bring about transformations in what is reasonable. This stands in real contrast to conceptions of communism, socialism or indeed social democracy, which seek the simple transformation of our economy into a more rational one, especially if this transformation would be accomplished through the

elimination of instances of waste. The elimination of *all* nonproductive expenditure really would constitute a Kojevian end of history.<sup>109</sup>

To think this through we can return to our discussion of subterranean historicism. Hegel's (2010: 547) use of the phrase 'old mole' is actually a Shakespearian reference. We should read Marx's old mole, then, in reference to both Hegel and Shakespeare (Stallybrass 1998). In Act 1, Scene v, Hamlet speaks the phrase "well said old mole" (Shakespeare 2007: 1941) to his father's ghost, who has returned beneath the earth after a brief spell above ground but who continues to speak and guide Hamlet from his now obscured position.<sup>110</sup> We can see why Hegel would find this suggestive of the obscured inheritance of past generations of philosophy guiding the present towards its own ends; the end of history. The Marx of *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* also discusses the role that historical antecedents play within the present. There comes a point, however, when Marx (1968a: 99) wants to "let the dead bury the dead." While each new generation will use the figures and traditions of past events to orient themselves, they must do so in a way that will allow them to break with "the tradition of past generations" which "weigh like a nightmare upon the brains of the living" (Marx 1968a: 97); only this will allow the new generation to face up to the challenge of the present and pose their own

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<sup>109</sup> This is not to say that we shouldn't seek to eliminate the forms of waste and nonproductive expenditure associated with capital. Environmental considerations assure us that this is an essential task. But as Stoekl (2007: 274) makes clear:

If... we dissociate the "tendency to expend" characterizing humanity from the selfish consumption of huge amounts of fossil-fuel based energy... we can then continue to affirm excess, but excess, the destruction of the thing, as a movement of intimacy. Energy now will be wasted on an intimate level, that of the human body, against the imperious demands of the self. The expenditure analyzed by Bataille is always on the level of corporeality: the arousal of sexual organs, the movement of muscles, the distortions of words spewing from mouths.

<sup>110</sup> *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, which contains Marx's (1968a: 170) most famous use of the phrase "old mole" is read by Stallybrass (1998) as, in part, a re-writing of Hamlet. Both texts are, after all, treaties on the problematic inheritance of past generations. Stallybrass (1998) reveals that Marx was reading Shakespeare intensively during the period of his study of French politics.

questions on their own terms. Marx, as Derrida (2004) has indicated, has a specific role for ghosts and spectres in his philosophy; they symbolise unrealised potentials that haunt and problematise the present and which may have, in fact, been revealed in past events.<sup>111</sup> We should also note that while both Shakespeare's and Hegel's moles speak, Marx's mole grubs. It's an iconoclastic mole, which burrows beneath the fetishisms of the present subverting and toppling them.<sup>112</sup> The communism of this mole is not "a state of affairs which is to be established, an ideal to which reality will have to adjust itself" (Marx 1987: 21). It is instead in the real movement of the mole that we find its communism.<sup>113</sup>

## The Body Without Organs

At this point we can move our problematic back within the conceptual apparatus of Deleuze and Guattari, who make direct use of Bataille's conception of the expenditure of excess, transforming it into the concept of antiproduction. On the broadest level we can characterise antiproduction as "the conversion of a portion of the superabundant forces of production into a

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<sup>111</sup> The most famous spectre, of course, is the one that opens *The Communist Manifesto*: "A spectre is haunting Europe – the spectre of Communism" (Marx 1968b: 35). Such a hauntology can also help us think through the unstable relation between the general and limited economy, each one haunts the other, as nonproductive activity becomes productive and productive activity becomes nonproductive through transformations in the measure of utility.

<sup>112</sup> As Stallybrass (1998: 11) explains: "The modern German for subversive activity – *Maulwurfsarbeit* – means literally the work of the mole."

<sup>113</sup> The full reference reads: "Communism is not for us a state of affairs which is to be established, an ideal to which reality will have to adjust itself. We call communism the real movement which abolishes the present state of things. The conditions of this movement result from the premises now in existence." (Marx 1987: 21). We should make clear that this is not the only possible reading of Marx's communism. It is what Deleuze and Guattari would call a minor reading of Marx; orthodox Marxism by contrast has tended towards a major reading, in which classically, the industrial working class necessarily embodies universality.

counter-force" (Holland 1999: 64). As we have seen, Bataille's notion of expenditure has both psychological and social dimensions. For Deleuze and Guattari, however, it is important to distinguish between how antiproduction operates in social production and how it operates in desiring production.<sup>114</sup> The relations between the two take different forms in different regimes of production and, as we shall see, the resonance or dissonance of the function of antiproduction between the spheres of social production and the spheres of desiring production plays an important role in their construction of a non-teleological universal history.

In *Anti-Oedipus* Deleuze and Guattari posit three social forms – the Primitive or Savage socius, the Despotic or Barbarian socius and the Civilised or Capitalist socius – each of which have their own regime of production and antiproduction. We can distinguish this from a teleological universal history in a number of ways. Firstly, the three socius that they describe should not be thought of as evolutionary stages, or indeed as distinct historical epochs, but rather as poles of potential social forms that intermingle in actual social assemblages.<sup>115</sup> Secondly, it must be understood that history is contingent and not the unfolding of a preordained destiny:

[U]niversal history is the history of contingencies, and not the history of necessity. Ruptures and limits, and not continuity. For great accidents were necessary, and amazing encounters that could have happened elsewhere, or before, or might never have happened (Deleuze Guattari 1984: 140).

Thirdly, and consequently this universal history can only be constructed in retrospect. Indeed Deleuze and Guattari are quite clear that it is the formal qualities of the capitalist socius that allow a universal history to be

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<sup>114</sup> Deleuze and Guattari talk of the unconscious in terms of desiring production in order to emphasise its relation to social production. The intention is to escape a naturalisation of the contemporary structuring of desire. Desire is produced, machined, as an element in the production of subjectivity.

<sup>115</sup> It is also important to note that these three socius don't exhaust the range of social forms that could be described.

constructed. We shall examine this in more detail but for the time being we can say that “capitalism is indeed the limit of all societies, insofar as it brings about the decoding of the flows that all other social formations coded and overcoded” (Deleuze Guattari 1984: 246). This allows Deleuze and Guattari (1984: 140) to say: “Hence it is correct to retrospectively understand all history in the light of capitalism, provided that the rules formulated by Marx are followed exactly.”

Deleuze and Guattari’s use of Marx here is guided by two problematics: the first is the genesis of social forms, in particular the genesis of capitalism, which leads to the second problematic which is unusual in the history of Marxism – the production of subjectivity. By tracing the role of antiproduction in the genesis of different regimes of the structuring of experience we approach Deleuze and Guattari in this section through positioning Bataille’s conception of the expenditure of excess within their non-teleological universal history. The focus on the genesis of social form will allow us to escape the functionalist trap that Bataille occasionally falls into and bypass the absolute distinction between productive and nonproductive expenditure that gets Bataille into so much difficulty. This will allow us not only a better understanding of the specificities of capital’s structuring of experience but also suggest the role that irruptions of excess could play in helping us to break with the capitalist socius.

Deleuze shares with Bataille the perceived need to escape the overwhelming influence of Kojève’s Hegelianism, as well as the teleological determinism of more orthodox Marxism. Rather than a philosophy of radical negativity, however, Deleuze is a philosopher of radical immanence. Setting up an ontology of immanence, reverses the question of how to escape from a totality into the question of how it is that we come to fall into transcendental illusions at all. As Foucault (1979: 1) says: “in political thought and analysis, we still have not cut the head off the king.” But in fact perhaps the most fundamental political question is: “How is it possible that his headless body

often behaves as if it indeed had a head?" (Dean 1994: 156).<sup>116</sup> Approaching the problem of totality from the perspective of an immanent ontology allows us to ask questions such as: How does a body act like a totality by preventing change?<sup>117</sup> How does it develop its totalisation effect? How is the potential for difference incorporated within the body as excess? From these analytical problems we can move to the political problem of how this irreducible excess is made visible and then incorporated into the body in a manner that expands the field of potential.

Whereas Bataille tries to push through Hegel to escape him, Deleuze draws up an alternative intellectual lineage to what he calls the dogmatic image of thought. Fundamental to this is the influence of Spinoza and his univocal conception of being as a plane of immanence, which excludes the notion of a transcendent realm that organises being, whether a divine, supernatural realm or the realm of platonic forms. Reality, for Deleuze, consists of the self-organising flows of matter/energy. This ontology has at least two consequences for politics. Firstly, compared to a hylomorphic world of essences, there is a greatly increased potential for transformation. Secondly, because there can be no recourse to a transcendent realm, we must reject pretensions to an eagle-eyed view of this potential for transformation. Unlike Hegel's mole, we can't breach the surface of full consciousness and we have no access to the realm of total freedom. We are buried within actual bodies, organic and inorganic, corporeal and social. As such our immediate realm of freedom is restricted to the range of affects of which those bodies are capable; what a body can do and what can be done to it. From this perspective a body is defined not by its essence – as, for

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<sup>116</sup> In fact this is a philosophical rendering of what Deleuze and Guattari (1984: 29), channelling Spinoza and Wilhelm Reich, believe is the essential political problematic: "Why do men fight *for* their own servitude as stubbornly as though it were their Salvation?"

<sup>117</sup> Once again it's important to bear in mind the idea of a body of people as well as an individual body. Indeed a body on one level of scale can be a component or organ of a body at another level of scale.

instance, determined by its extensive properties such as length and width – but by its capacities, its degrees of freedom, its realms of potential.<sup>118</sup> Bodies, then, should be understood as multiplicities rather than discrete entities.<sup>119</sup> The Body without Organs (BwO) is one of the conceptual tools that Deleuze and Guattari develop to help determine the limits of what a body can do, its phase space of possibilities, and therefore the point at which a body transforms into a different body, with a new phase space of potential.<sup>120</sup>

Deleuze and Guattari take the Phrase “Body without Organs” from Antonin Artaud’s radio play: *To be Done with the Judgement of God*. Artaud was concerned with the schizophrenic experience, in which meanings and functions are in continual transformation, where one thing slips continuously into another. Deleuze and Guattari use this symptomology of schizophrenia to help conceptualise the unconscious while also associating the symptoms with the experiences produced by capitalism: “All that is solid melts into air” (Marx 1968b: 38).<sup>121</sup> In the context of our corporeal bodies, Artaud wonders how the functions of our organs might be made to differ from our habitual

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<sup>118</sup> We will examine the ethical consequences that follow from this in the next chapter.

<sup>119</sup> Analysis of a body from within the orthodox image of thought involves the fiction of stopping time in order to isolate the body from its becomings. Deleuze, influenced by Bergson, rejects a discontinuous conception of time that would allow its slicing into segments. Instead his philosophy involves a rigorous thinking through of the consequences of time as continuous duration. A multiplicity is a designation of a phase space “the space of possible states which a physical system can have” (Delanda 2002: 13).

<sup>120</sup> As Manuel Delanda (1997: 263) puts it: “The concept of the BwO was created in an effort to conceive the genesis of form (in geological, biological, and cultural structures) as related exclusively to *immanent* capabilities of the flows of matter-energy information and not to any *transcendent* factors, whether platonic or divine.”

<sup>121</sup> As we shall see later in Deleuze and Guattari’s non-teleological universal history the recognition of the underlying schizophrenic nature of the unconscious only becomes visible under capitalism.

conception of them.<sup>122</sup> As a step towards this he conjures up the image of the Body without Organs. This phrase, however, can be misleading as “[t]he BwO is not at all the opposite of the organs. The organs are not its enemies. The enemy is the organism. The BwO is opposed not to the organs but to that organization of the organs called the organism” (Deleuze, Guattari 1988: 158).

When a body approaches its BwO it has broken from its habitual patterns of organisation, entering a far from equilibrium crisis state. “The BwO is what remains when you take everything away” (Deleuze, Guattari 1988: 151). The BwO then is better thought of as the limit point of disorganisation of a body. It is the limit to which a body can be disorganised, or deterritorialised, before it transforms into either a different body or entropic disorganisation. As such it’s a threshold that defines a body and sets the boundaries to its potential. A BwO however doesn’t just function as a borderline; it exerts forces onto the body, the forces of antiproduction. The BwO, then, is a way to conceptualise the relationship between a body and what exceeds it. Antiproduction manages excess by tying it to the BwO; in doing so it creates what Deleuze and Guattari call the full body or *socius*. A *socius* is a folding back over of excess forces, an incorporation of the forces of the outside, which then appear to emanate from within the body and creates the effect of a totality. It is the operation of an inclusive exclusion of the outside or what Deleuze and Guattari would call an inclusive disjunction.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> William Burroughs (1966: 8, 133) imagines just such a corporeal deterritorialisation in a passage from his novel *Naked Lunch*:

No organ is constant as regards either function or position... sex organs sprout everywhere... rectums open, defecate, and close... the entire organism changes color and consistency in split-second adjustments... The human body is scandalously inefficient. Instead of a mouth and an anus to get out of order why not have one all-purpose hole to eat and eliminate? We could seal up nose and mouth, fill in the stomach, make an air hole direct into the lungs where it should have been in the first place (Cited in Smith 1997: xxxviii).

<sup>123</sup> It is through these mechanisms that Deleuze can account for the appearance of distinct and discrete bodies within an immanent ontology of flows. We can understand a *socius* as

The BwO is one of Deleuze and Guattari's most notoriously difficult concepts; this is partly because it is drawn at an abstract enough level to apply to both organic and inorganic systems, including human psychological and social systems.<sup>124</sup> Deleuze and Guattari add to the difficulty, however, by changing the concept through the course of their work as their problematics develop. In *Anti-Oedipus* their focus is diagnostic, while in *A Thousand Plateaus* the BwO is more of a technique or a practice. In this chapter we focus more on diagnostic, turning in later chapters to the BwO as one element in a practice of freedom.<sup>125</sup> As such we begin by unpacking Deleuze and Guattari's (1984: 10) initial description of the BwO in *Anti-Oedipus*:

If we wish to have some idea of the forces that the body without organs exerts later on in the uninterrupted process, we must first establish a parallel between desiring-production and social production... (both) involve an unengendered nonproductive attitude, an element of antiproduction coupled with the process, a full body that functions as a socius. This socius may be the body of the earth, that of the tyrant, or capital. This is the body that Marx is referring to when he says that it is not the product of labor, but rather

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an organism on the level of the social, which is created through the mechanisms of antiproduction. An organism is "that which life sets against itself in order to limit itself" (Deleuze, Guattari 1988: 503).

<sup>124</sup> Deleuze and Guattari talk about organic, inorganic and alloplastic strata. The latter referring to: "That register where the creative production of signs constructs territories. It is not limited to the human or the social, but extends to territorial animals" (Bonta, Protevi 2004: 51). However the alloplastic can also be split into related psychological and social levels, or, as Deleuze and Guattari put it desiring production and social production.

<sup>125</sup> Deleuze and Guattari cause more confusion by using the phrase 'the full BwO' differently in *Anti-Oedipus* to the way it is used in *A Thousand Plateaus*, and annoyingly they do so without commenting on the change. In the former the full body is used to refer to the socius, as the obscuring of social genesis. In the latter the full BwO is used in counterpoint to with the empty BwO by which they mean a black hole of subjectivity containing little intensity and therefore little capacity for change. William Burroughs' descriptions of the junkie are the model for the empty BwO.

appears as its natural or divine presupposition. In fact, it does not restrict itself merely to opposing productive forces in and of themselves. It falls back on all production, constituting a surface over which the forces and agents of production are distributed, thereby appropriating for itself all surplus and arrogating to itself the whole and the parts of the process, now seem to emanate from it as a quasi cause. Forces and agents come to represent a miraculous form of its own power: they appear to be 'miraculated' by it.

The opening of this passage, establishes a parallel between desiring production and social production.<sup>126</sup> However, we are more immediately concerned with the notion of the full body or *socius* as presupposition. This passage allows us to trace the emergence of the full body out of the different functions of the BwO. Firstly the BwO comes into being by breaking and channelling productive flows through the forces of antiproduction. The body incorporates as presupposition that which is in excess of it. But then it 'falls back on' its presuppositions, obscuring its origins. There is an inversion of cause and effect, where the effect of an activity appears as its cause and acts as a quasi-cause.

This might become clearer when we think of capital as "the body without organs of the capitalist or rather of capitalist being" (Deleuze, Guattari 1984: 10).<sup>127</sup> Firstly the BwO acts as a recording surface upon which all production must be realised. Anti-production stops production and brings it back to the BwO. The accumulation and realisation of capital is the basis of all production, it is the bottom line; if a productive effort doesn't

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<sup>126</sup> We can think of the BwO as, in part, an intervention into Marxist debates over ideology and the relation of base and superstructure. The Spinoza-inspired parallelism indicated here accepts the entanglement of material and intellectual but rejects notions of crude determination. We examine Spinoza's parallelism in Chapter Five.

<sup>127</sup> We should remember here that we are talking about capital as a social relation rather than a specific embodiment in plant or stock. "Capital is not a *thing*, anymore than money is a *thing*. In capital, as in money, certain *specific social relations of production between people* appear as *relations of things to people*, or else certain social relations appear as *the natural properties of things in society*" (Marx 1982: 1005).

realise capital, then no matter how 'useful' that activity it cannot continue. As such the BwO acts as "a surface over which the forces and agents of production are distributed" (Deleuze, Guattari 1984: 10). This inevitably has a mystifying effect as "(p)roduction is not recorded in the same way it is produced" (Deleuze, Guattari 1984: 12). So secondly the BwO acts as a miraculating machine as capital takes upon itself the productive power of cooperative labour and so appears to miraculate both value and therefore itself out of thin air as though possessed of divine powers. As Marx (1982: 757) puts it: "All the powers of labour project themselves as the power of capital."

The reference to Marx in the long passage from *Anti-Oedipus* above is drawn from a section of the *Grundrisse* entitled *Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations* which states: "The real appropriation through the labor process happens under these presuppositions, which are not themselves the product of labor, but appear as its natural or divine presuppositions" (Marx 1977: 472). In this piece of writing Marx takes the unusual approach of defining modes of production from the basis of their historical preconditions. In this way, as Read (2003: 39) makes clear, Marx is presented with the:

theoretical problem of thinking the mode of production from its presuppositions that is, thinking it from that paradoxical instance of formation that is exterior to a particular mode of production, since it is constituted by other forces and relations and the dissolution of another mode of production, and, at the same time, interior to a particular mode of production, since it is the reproduction of these presuppositions that sets the terms and relations for the continuity and survival of the mode of production.

If we approach capitalism from its preconditions we can see how a socius forms. Capital, as a mode of production, is triggered by the contingent encounter of two flows: "On the one side, the deterritorialized worker who has become free and naked, having to sell his labour capacity; and on the other, decoded money, that has become capital and is capable of buying this labour capacity" (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 225). Both of these flows had to be produced but their production can't be seen from within the socius of

capital. As a result they appear as divine or natural presuppositions. As Read (2003: 40) explains:

The presuppositions of any mode of production are the conditions that constitute a mode of production but are not produced from it. Their original appearances are unimaginable or unexplainable according to the particular protocols and practices of that mode of production.

For instance the primitive accumulation that produced these flows involved great violence. The worker is freed from the indentured nature of serfdom and the beliefs that upheld it but also freed from (as in, separated from), the means of production.<sup>128</sup> As Marx says:

(T)he historical movement which changes the producers into wage-labourers appears, on the one hand, as their emancipation from serfdom and from the fetters of the guilds, and it is this aspect of the movement which alone exists for our bourgeois historians. But, on the other hand, these newly freed men became sellers of themselves only after they had been robbed of all their own means of production, and all the guarantees of existence afforded by the old feudal arrangements. And this history, the history of their expropriation, is written in the annals of mankind in letters of blood and fire (Marx 1982: 875).

Indeed the other precondition, the store of liquid, deterritorialised capital, also “comes dripping from head to toe, with blood and dirt” (Marx 1982: 926) – not least from the exploits of colonialism as “(t)he treasures captured outside Europe by undisguised looting, enslavement and murder flowed back to the mother-country and were turned into capital there” (Marx 1982: 918).<sup>129</sup> However, the violence of this process becomes disassociated

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<sup>128</sup> Marx (1982: 897) calls this condition “vogelfrei” – bird-free, free from indenture but also free of any legal rights or protection or inclusion in the political community. As such the vogelfrei could be thought of as an example of what Agamben (1997) would call ‘bare life’.

<sup>129</sup> “Thus were the agricultural folk first forcibly expropriated from the soil, driven from their homes, turned into vagabonds, and then whipped, branded and tortured by grotesquely terroristic laws into accepting the discipline necessary for the system of wage-labour.” (Marx 1982: 899). Indeed the “grotesquely terroristic” anti-vagabondage laws detailed by Marx are

from capital because, despite its role in constituting capital, it appears as a precondition and not a product. Capital's socius buries this violence making it appear a pre-accomplished or naturally occurring phenomenon.<sup>130</sup> We can see the persistence of this mechanism in the way capital absolves itself of responsibility for the horrific violence that accompanies primitive accumulation around the world today<sup>131</sup>. As De Angelis (2007) has shown, primitive accumulation is not a historical period but an ongoing process of enclosure of the commons. Indeed Harvey (2003) has gone so far as to suggest that primitive accumulation, which he renames accumulation by dispossession, is the predominant contemporary form of accumulation.

The presuppositions of capital, rather than being natural or divine, are the result of great violence and effort. Indeed the disciplinary mechanisms outlined by Foucault (1977) show the immense effort needed to force humanity to accord with the presuppositions of capital. However capital not only incorporates its presuppositions but also falls back on them, or folds them, to become the surface upon which production is distributed. Capital itself is the product of past labour. "Capital is dead labour which, vampire-like, lives only by sucking living labour, and lives more, the more labour it sucks" (Marx 1982: 342). This fact quickly becomes obscured as capital appears to miraculate itself out of thin air.

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reminiscent of the horrific branding and amputation that accompanied the colonial project in, for instance, the Belgian Congo. As Conrad might have said: 'capital; the horror, the horror'.

<sup>130</sup> "Hence the very particular character of state violence: it is very difficult to pinpoint this violence because it always presents itself as pre-accomplished... From a standpoint within the capitalist mode of production it is very difficult to say who is the thief and who is the victim, or even where the violence resides." (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 447)

<sup>131</sup> Using the example of the massive increase in African poverty over the last thirty years we might think of the discussion that surrounded the 'Make Poverty History' campaign at the 2005 Gleneagles G8 meeting. In this discourse the poverty appeared as either the result of natural processes or the product of other modes of production. Africans are either unlucky to suffer from continuous 'natural' disasters, are endemically corrupt, or retain the rigidities of tribalism or perhaps state socialism (Hewson 2005).

As Marx observes, in the beginning capitalists are necessarily conscious of the opposition between capital and labor, and of the use of capital as a means of extorting surplus labor. But a perverted, bewitched world quickly comes into being, as capital increasingly plays the role of a recording surface that falls back on all of production. (Furnishing or realizing surplus value is the right of recording) (Deleuze, Guattari 1984: 11).

We have already noted how living labour contains an excess of creativity and cooperation that is irreducible to capital. Now, however, we can see how this excess is subsumed within capital's full body. Marx provides an example of this mechanism in the chapter on cooperation in *Capital: Volume One*. Cooperative production is an emergent property; it is more than the sum of its parts. A number of people working cooperatively will produce more than the same number of people working individually. However, in capitalism, predicated as it is on the presupposition of the separation of labour from the means of production:

[workers] co-operation only begins with the labour process, but by then they have ceased to belong to themselves. On entering the labour process they are incorporated into capital. As co-operators, as members of a working organism, they merely form a particular mode of existence of capital. Hence the productive power developed by the worker socially is the productive power of capital. The socially productive power of labour develops as a free gift to capital whenever the workers are placed under certain conditions, and it is capital which places them under these conditions. Because this power costs capital nothing, while on the other hand it is not developed by the worker until his labour itself belongs to capital, it appears as a power which capital possesses by its nature – a productive power inherent in capital (Marx 1982: 451).

With these miraculating powers of capital in mind we might now revisit the Bataillian idea that productive activity derives its meaning from expenditure. Antiproduction, as a force of the BwO, acts on excess forces, bringing them within the body and hence expending them in that body's animation. When we think of regimes of rationality and utility we can see that it is antiproduction that polices the borders of those regimes. The BwO

functions as the limit of sense of a body, it is the presuppositions that determine what makes sense. What is in excess of a body must be brought within the sense of the body. Deleuze and Guattari (1984: 236) also talk about antiproduction as a “flow of stupidity”. We might then characterise the BwO as the point of stupidity of an organised body. Capitalism, for instance, is organised in an entirely rational way. The only irrational thing about it is the whole thing: capital itself, which exists only to increase its own value. The bottom line for the whole system is the realisation of capital, the expansion of zeros on an accounting sheet. It is from that point of madness that a delirium sweeps through the whole of society and throws our lives out of control.

Capital, however, has a specific relationship to the production of meaning. It does not rely on any particular belief, so even the revelation of its moment of stupidity does not prove fatal for it. In pre-capitalist forms antiproduction is a means of turning what is in excess of those societies into meaning; it codes, or overcodes the flows, giving meaning to production. Within capitalism production is essentially meaningless. “(M)oney, as a general equivalent, represents an abstract quantity that is indifferent to the qualified nature of the flows” (Deleuze, Guattari 1984: 248). Rather than coding Deleuze and Guattari call this ‘axiomatisation’; we might think of this as “a kind of accounting” (Deleuze 2004a: 270).

[W]hat sets it apart from other social forms is that capitalist axioms conjoin completely undetermined flows of matter/energy, flows which become determinate – take on content, quality, even meaning – only after they have been conjoined... Capitalist axiomatization is essentially a meaningless calculus (Holland: 1998: 70).

Capital takes the position of the sovereign but it doesn’t overcode productive flows. As Holland (1998: 66) puts it, capital “sits mute on the deposed sovereign’s throne”.

Anti-production involves separation from other potential modes of production, just as primitive accumulation, and acceptance of capital as right, frees labour from the means of production. It is this separation from potential

that inculcates lack into desire and it is lack that ties productive organs to the BwO.<sup>132</sup> Anti-production in the primitive socius creates mobile blocks of, in principle, acquittable debts. Indeed the destruction of excess and its removal from utility – in for instance, sacrifice or potlatch – represents the acquittal of that debt. The barbarian or despotic socius, on the other hand, owes an infinite debt to the body of the sovereign. “The infinite creditor and infinite credit have replaced the blocks of mobile and finite debts. There is always a monotheism on the horizon of despotism: the debt becomes a *debt of existence*, a debt of the existence of the subjects themselves” (Deleuze, Guattari 1984: 197). Here antiproduction takes the form of glorious expenditure such as the Palais d’Versailles, the Pyramids or the Great Wall of China. These are symbols of a paranoid relationship that channels all meaning through the body of the despot.<sup>133</sup>

Capital as it takes over from despotism is also owed an infinite debt. This debt, however, takes a different form as it arises from the specificities of capital’s full body. As capital appears to miraculate itself – as Read (2003: 43) puts it, “capital seems prior to and independent of labour” – then capital appears to provide labour with the means of life. From this we appear to owe an infinite debt to capital but what is owed is not our life but our work. No matter how long or hard we work, the debt is never paid off and we never regain access to the means of production.<sup>134</sup> Capital is the boundless imposition of work.

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<sup>132</sup> Antiproduction “alone is capable of realizing capitalism’s supreme goal, which is to produce lack in the large aggregates, to introduce lack where there is always too much, by effecting the absorption of overabundant resources” (Deleuze, Guattari 1984: 235-6).

<sup>133</sup> “All the coded flows of the primitive machine are now forced into a bottleneck where the despotic machine overcodes them” (Deleuze, Guattari 1984: 199). As such desire is displaced onto the full body, the socius, which in this case is the body of the despot. As Holland (1999: 77) explains: “Desire no longer desires objects, but desires another’s desire; desire has become the desire of the despot’s desire.”

<sup>134</sup> This position is only strengthened as we move from disciplinary to control societies. “Man is no longer a man confined but a man in debt” (Deleuze 1995: 181). Debt is a

Antiproduction under capital does not function to produce stable meaning as it is not a static socius. Instead antiproduction imposes lack as a stimulus to ever-increasing production for its own sake. Capital does away with distinct festivals of antiproduction, spreading it instead across the whole of life. "Capital becomes, as it were, its own instance of antiproduction" (Holland 1999: 68). As such:

The apparatuses of anti production is no longer a transcendent instance that opposes production, limits it, or checks it; on the contrary, it insinuates itself everywhere in the productive machine and becomes firmly wedded in order to regulate its productivity and realize surplus value (Deleuze, Guattari 1984: 235).

If antiproduction in static societies constitutes negative feedback mechanisms then in capital, with antiproduction subsumed by production, it acts as a positive feedback mechanism and one that runs out of control. When capital encounters limits to its expansion it displaces them, pushing the consequences of its moment of stupidity onto an ever-greater scale. As Marx (1981: 358) puts it: "Capitalist production seeks continually to overcome these immanent barriers, but overcomes them only by means which again place these barriers in its way and on a more formidable scale. The *true barrier* of capitalist production is *capital itself*."

Capital deals in abstract quantities, just as its foundational encounter is the conjunction of two deterritorialised flows. It is not interested in specific labour but abstract labour.<sup>135</sup> The development of capital's BwO out of its foundational encounter means capital gives primacy to deterritorialisation. When capital reterritorialises it does so not on codes or beliefs but on an axiomatic of undetermined quantities. As Holland (1998: 70) explains:

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privileged mechanism of control with credit ratings and profiles functioning as checkpoints that we have to pass if we wish to circulate freely in society.

<sup>135</sup> If, for instance, unionisation increases the cost of labour in the UK capital can quite happily employ Indian labour.

[T]he belief in any general meaning under these conditions is 'paranoid'. If it weren't for the inconvenience of workers and consumers, capitalism would do very nicely without meaning altogether. What temporary, local meanings capitalism does provide are derivatives of whatever axioms happen to be in place.

Capital is a deterritorialising mode of production; everything changes yet everything stays the same. The limit that capital can't overcome is its own BwO, its need to increase. The potential differentiation of immanent production is trapped into a runaway monomania. "Accumulate, accumulate! That is Moses and the prophets!" (Marx, 1982: 742).

From this conception of capital we can understand the critical and ironic nature of Deleuze and Guattari's universal history. All previous societies have a dread of uncoded flows, flows that aren't given social meaning; as such they have attempted to ward them off. "In a sense capitalism has haunted all forms of society, but it haunts them as their terrifying nightmare, it is the dread they feel of a flow that would elude their flows" (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 140). This leads Deleuze and Guattari (1984: 153) to argue: "If capitalism is the universal truth, it is so in the sense that makes capitalism the negative of all social formations."<sup>136</sup> Capitalism, however, is not an absolute limit, it is a relative limit whose universality comes from its proximity to the absolute limit of schizophrenia. As Deleuze and Guattari (1984: 246) explain:

Capitalism... is the *relative limit* of every society; it effects *relative* breaks, because it substitutes for the codes an extremely rigorous axiomatic that maintains the energy of the flows in a bound state on the body of capital as a socius that is deterritorialized, but also a socius that is even more pitiless than any other. Schizophrenia, on the contrary, is indeed the *absolute* limit that

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<sup>136</sup> It is in this light that we can understand Clastres's (1990) argument that primitive societies had revolved around warding off the state and capital. Not that these societies had an understanding of the state and capital before their emergence but that they had a fear of decoded flows and paranoid investments of desire.

causes the flows to travel in a free state on a desocialized body without organs. Hence one can say that schizophrenia is the *exterior* limit of capitalism itself or the conclusion of its deepest tendency, but that capitalism functions on the condition that it inhibit this tendency, or that it push it back or displace this limit, by substituting for its own *immanent* relative limits, which it continually reproduces on a widened scale. It axiomatises with one hand what it decodes with the other.

If there is a universality attached to capitalism then, it is due the proximity of its mode of operation to the schizophrenic *absolute* limit of all societies. This is a strangely nuanced universality that can only be grasped in retrospect. It is capital's schizophrenic tendency that provides it with its universality, yet capital's perseverance, its mechanisms of antiproduction, rely on counteracting this tendency. From this diagram we can raise the prospect of overcoming capital's fetishisms and constructing a diagram of an auto-critical organisational form.<sup>137</sup>

## The Moment of Excess

So what is the solution? Which is the revolutionary path?... To withdraw from the world market?... Or might it be to go in the opposite direction? To go still further, that is, in the movement of the market, of decoding, and deterritorialisation? For perhaps the flows are not deterritorialised enough, from the viewpoint of a theory and a practice of a highly schizophrenic character. Not to withdraw from the process, but to go further, to 'accelerate the process,' as Nietzsche put it: in this matter, the truth is that we haven't seen anything yet (Deleuze, Guattari 1984: 239-40).

Capital's regime of antiproduction, the mechanisms with which it incorporates excess, constitutes a positive feedback loop that is trapped in the monomania of its self-expansion. Capital, for all its self-revolutionising,

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<sup>137</sup> To follow though on this idea we could reverse the notion that communism is a potential that is haunting capitalism and declare capitalism as a diagram of mechanisms of expenditure that wards off communism.

cannot produce real difference. Its positive feedback loop cannot change direction and it is this that makes it so destructive. But as Deleuze and Guattari ask above: "What is the solution?" Is it to bring capital under control by using antiproduction as a mechanism of negative feedback? Isn't Keynesianism an attempt to do just that? The post-war boom, however, is an example of capital displacing its limits and its antagonisms and indeed using this displacement as the grounds for new rounds of accumulation.<sup>138</sup> In the section of *Anti-Oedipus* quoted above Deleuze and Guattari suggest a different strategy to escape this fate, one that would accelerate capital's deterritorialising tendencies until capital's monomania is broken with. To do so would involve pushing through the relative limit of capital to the absolute limit of schizophrenia.

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<sup>138</sup> Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 462) conceptualise Keynesianism as the introduction of new axioms into capital's axiomatic calculations, "Keynesian economics and the New Deal were axiom laboratories". This, however, doesn't alter capital's overall orientation to the self-expansion of value. Nor does it prevent the stripping away of axioms during periods such as neoliberalism. It is perhaps Negri (1988, 1991) who produces the most thorough analysis of Keynesianism as a strategy that recomposes capital to harness its own inherent antagonisms, which it then uses as the grounds for a new round of accumulation. Following the post-war settlement, the struggles of labour became channelled into demands for increased wages; these in turn became tied to agreements on rising productivity. In this way capital could place limits on the inter-war revolutionary wave while also apparently solving the problem of effective demand. Such a settlement relied on an organised working class with stable institutions, in the form of trade unions and social democratic parties, which could act as mediators between labour and capital. In this analysis the post-war settlement was broken during the 1960s and 1970s by the struggles of sectors excluded from that settlement, women, blacks, the colonial countries, etc, which began to resonate with the struggles of the included sectors who raised demands that began to push beyond capital's ability to deliver, struggles that became increasingly autonomous from the mediating institutions. The combination of these struggles caused a profitability crisis for capital during the 1970s, which in turn provoked the neoliberal backlash. Negri was involved in an important moment in this trajectory through the Italian *Autonomia* movement of the 1970s. The excessive demands of the time were epitomised by the striking workers of the Mirafiori Fiat plant who raised the slogan: *Vogliamo Tutto!* (*We Want Everything!*).

Noys (2010) calls this strategy, in which the tendencies of capitalism are pushed to an apocalyptic conclusion, accelerationism.<sup>139</sup> The problem with this strategy, according to Noys, is that it fails to break with capital's formal qualities; as a consequence that which is proposed as resistance ends up a "mirror of capital". Zizek (2003: 184) takes this argument further, arguing that, as capital has itself undergone a process of acceleration, Deleuze has become "the ideologist of late capitalism". While Zizek's position is a deliberately provocative overstatement, we should concede that there is a strain of accelerationism running through *Anti-Oedipus*, and that some of the Anglo-American (and Antipodean) reception of Deleuze has veered towards a de-politicised reading that has side-stepped the problematic of anti-capitalism and so has indeed risked a complicity with neoliberalism. Our thesis, however, suggests that by paying attention to Deleuze and Guattari's conception of universal history we can find in their work not only resources for alternative strategies but also a political problematic in which a certain form of accelerationism can fit into a coherent anti-capitalist project.

The creation of an apparent totality relies on the channelling of excess and the siphoning of the surplus into the self-reproduction of a system. If such an expenditure is successfully warded off, then this excess can be maintained immanently causing intensity to rise. This can, in turn, cause a positive feedback loop of increasing excess and increasing intensity. Such a moment of sustained excess can lead to a change in habitual behaviour, "an excess of self-catalyzing desire" (Holmes 2009). Such a strategy raises the prospect of a positive feedback loop that escapes monomania and produces difference. Expenditure can then function as an interruption of the expected,

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<sup>139</sup> Noys (2010) sees this as a persistent theme in post-structuralism, although it is taken to its extreme conclusions by moments in both Lyotard and Baudrillard.

as the dispersal of fate. The excess is expended in the creation of a moment of transvaluation.<sup>140</sup>

We can think of this as a move from a model of a closed, equilibrium seeking, dynamical system to a model of an open, nonlinear, dynamical system. A closed dynamical system – a steam engine for example – needs a negative feedback mechanism, such as a governor or a safety valve, to let off excess pressure and maintain homeostasis.<sup>141</sup> In nonlinear dynamical systems the pushing of a body into a far from equilibrium, intensive crisis state opens it to the possibility of a break with the patterns and thresholds of that particular body, the reaching of a bifurcation point and the entry into a new semi-stable system of patterns and thresholds, based around new attractors (Bonta, Protevi 2004). Capital is an unstable combination of a closed equilibrium model conjoined with a positive feedback loop; this results in the self-expansion of the system beyond any apparent limits.

If we return to Bataille's problematic we can see that the concept of the BwO provides a new perspective on utility. Put simply, a notion of utility is always tied to a body's presuppositions, its point of stupidity. The bottom line for capital's conception of utility is simply its own self-expansion. It is exchange value that counts, not use value. However, as Derrida (1994) warns us, we cannot look to use value as though it contains an a-historical purity from which we could rescue an un-alienated form.<sup>142</sup> We can't look to

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<sup>140</sup> In the next chapter we examine Deleuze's Nietzschean inspired critique of Kant on the basis of his inability to account for the genesis of values. We might see this critique as a conceptualisation that overlaps with the concept of the BwO as the genesis of a socius, with its own conceptions of utility and value.

<sup>141</sup> Many nineteenth century social and psychological theories follow this model – Freud's libidinal energetic system, for example but also classical liberal economics (Nadeau 2008).

<sup>142</sup> "But whence came this certainty concerning the previous phase, that of this supposed use-value purified of everything that makes for exchange value and the commodity form?" (Derrida 1994: 159). Derrida actually looks at use value as an example of Marx's misplaced reliance on ontology. He compares it to the 'hauntology' of exchange value, arguing that the concept of use value contains a harking back to some prelapsarian idyll. While certain

the elimination of exchange value to find a universal utilitarianism in use value and we can't seek to eliminate antiproduction to be left with a pure production. Both use value and exchange value, both production and antiproduction are arranged on the surface of capital's BwO. This suggests that what we experience in the de-mystificatory affects of a moment of excess isn't the revelation of some essential nature that lurks behind the world of appearances. It is instead the revelation of capital's BwO; but gaining this perspective, that is stepping beyond capital's presuppositions, involves the creation of a new body or else the risk of catatonic schizophrenia. In turn this new body would have its own BwO with its own point of stupidity upon which is built its own regime of rationality.

If Deleuze and Guattari talk about singular BwOs they do also conceptualise a virtual realm that contains all possible BwOs, the abstract diagrams of all possible bodies. This is THE BwO of all individual BwOs, which they also called the plane of consistency. It is, however, a virtual limit that can only ever be approached and not reached. When we reach the BwO of a body, through disrupting the habitual organisation of its organs and leading it into a far from equilibrium crisis state, then we approach THE BwO, the plane of consistency. It is this that provides the affect of rupture but also what Deleuze and Guattari call a moment of schiz that "produces this strangely polyvocal moment when everything is possible" (Deleuze, Guattari, 1984: 378). If we think then of a moment of schiz as a component of a moment of excess we can begin to make sense of our symptomology of excess, which contained the seemingly contradictory affects of both rupture and intense productivity. Isn't it this sense of possibility that breaks with the cramped subjectivities produced by capital?

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Marxist conceptions of use value could benefit from the warning – nationalising the factories and planning production certainly didn't eliminate fetishism and alienation – I don't, however, think that this exhausts the concept. We can also construct a minor Marx, whose use of use value recognises its social determined nature.

THE BwO, the plane of consistency, is however, a limit state; it can be approached but not reached. It is in this way similar to Batailles's concept of the general economy symbolised by the sun. It is not a position upon which we can exist and even to gaze upon it carries its own risks. As capital's exterior limit is schizophrenia there is always a danger of a fall into catatonia, the inability to act, but such a risk is multiplied as we approach the plane of consistency.<sup>143</sup> Of course we can only exist in actual bodies of some kind and this inevitably involves the closing-off of certain possibilities, indeed the creation of impossibilities, under a BwO's presuppositions. Not all bodies are alike, however, as Bonta and Protevi (2004: 65) make clear:

Since all actual bodies must make choices, the key ethical choice is to construct a body in which patterning is flexible, that is to stay in sustainable intensive 'crisis' situations, where the BwO or the virtual can more easily be reached, so that any one exclusive disjunction can be undone and alternate patterning accessed.

Deleuze and Guattari call these kinds of flexible bodies consistencies or war machines, which they contrast to more rigid strata.<sup>144</sup>

If there is an accelerationism at play here, it is a quite precise one in which struggles push beyond capital into a moment of schiz. But importantly this is not the end of the story. The moment of schiz must be incorporated into a new body; it must be the basis from which some consistency is found. To fail to do so is to risk catatonic schizophrenia, or alternatively a rebound into a hard reterritorialisation from which it is even more difficult to escape.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> We can of course interpret this as a political catatonia – the inability to cohere around a common project – but we could also think of both Artaud and Nietzsche as examples of the heavy psychological price to be paid for staring too long into the abyss.

<sup>144</sup> This distinction shouldn't be thought of as an exclusive binary. In fact these possibilities would be better thought of as poles on a continuum of degrees of rigidity or stratification. We examine this distinction in more detail below.

<sup>145</sup> An example of what Deleuze and Guattari have in mind here, following the warnings of William Burroughs, is the junkie as a black hole of the subjectivity, a desire for

This accelerationism aims to push capital's deterritorialising tendencies to breaking point, to the moment of schiz, when all seems possible. But, as we have seen, capital can only continue to exist because its regime of antiproduction acts as a counter tendency to its schizophrenic drive. To push through capital means to break with its regime of antiproduction. To push through capitalism involves the constitution of a new regime of antiproduction, the creation of a consistency that is not trapped in monomania.

In such bodies antiproduction operates in social production much as it does in desiring production. War machines then operate by:

Enabling social connections and investments to be made, un-made, and re-made in accordance with the movements of molecular desiring-production itself. And this would require cancelling the debt to capital, and hence making molar reterritorialization and recoding subordinate to molecular deterritorialization and decoding, rather than the other way round (Holland 1999: 97).<sup>146</sup>

Antiproduction becomes not the mechanism of limitation but the means of widening the sphere of freedom. In this regime, antiproduction functions by breaking the repetition of connections that constitute production. This inclusive disjunction allows new connections to develop. It is the breaking of monomania and the production of differentiation. If we consider the alter-

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deterritorialisation producing the fall into a subjectivity containing just one parameter – get junk. It is, in part, these considerations that make Deleuze and Guattari change the concept of the BwO when they come to write *A Thousand Plateaus* so that the empty BwO becomes unproductive stasis.

<sup>146</sup> Here we can see the consequences of Deleuze and Guattari's universal history. It is only from the socius of capital, with its proximity to the absolute limit of schizophrenia, that we can easily recognise the schizophrenic nature of the unconscious. This recognition allows us to use the resonance, or dissonance, between regimes of antiproduction in desiring production and regimes of antiproduction in social production as ethical criteria from which to judge a socius. Capital's schizophrenic socius raises the prospect of an auto-critical socius.

globalisation movement as a consistency or war machine, then moments of excess could operate as distinct moments of antiproduction, breaking a movement from the repetitions, repertoires and frames of sense that sustain it, rendering new areas problematic and thus providing the opportunity for new sense, new subjectivities and in turn new repetitions. At the end of *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 500) remind us that:

Of course, smooth spaces are not themselves liberatory. But the struggle is changed or displaced in them, and life reconstitutes its stakes, confronts new obstacles, invents new paces, switches adversaries. Never believe that a smooth space will suffice to save us.

## **What is to be Done With Moments of Excess?**

During a discussion with Foucault in 1972 the Maoist leader Pierre Victor outlined his view of a revolution carried out in stages:<sup>147</sup>

At the first stage of the ideological revolution I'm in favour of looting, I'm in favour of 'excesses'. The stick must be bent in the other direction, and the world cannot be turned upside down without breaking eggs... At the first stage there can be an act of retribution against a boss which is an act of popular justice... Even if things go too far, if he gets three months in hospital when he really only deserved two, it is still an act of popular justice. But when all these actions take the form of a movement... then you have the setting up of regulations, of a revolutionary state apparatus (Foucault 1980: 32).

Isn't this a moment of excess seen from the perspective of sovereignty? A period in which there might be some excesses, when participants might get a little carried away and go too far? In Victor's schema such excesses can be excused as the consequence of the rigidities and injustices of the previous system, which has acted as a limit to the realisation

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<sup>147</sup> Pierre Victor was actually the pseudonym for Benny Levy, editor of the influential Maoist newspaper *La Cause du Peuple*. He became Sartre's personal secretary in 1974 (Lecourt 2001).

of people's desires. Frustrations build up and then burst forth, sweeping people along into actions they might not otherwise commit. Beyond the sense of atavism, however, we can find a notion of an irruption of irreducible excess, which, at least potentially exceeds all juridical forms.<sup>148</sup> This excess is given a moment in the sun during the period of rupture, but for Victor the task of the revolutionary in the second stage of revolution, or indeed the development of a movement, is to capture this excess with a new state apparatus.<sup>149</sup> This of course mirrors the previously discussed conception of

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<sup>148</sup> Negri (1999) draws a similar ontological distinction when he differentiates between constituent power and constituted power, with the former animating the later. Once again the exceeding of juridical forms and the subjectivities of habitual life is the foundation for innovation in the sphere of representation. Yet both this conceptualisation and the concept of sovereignty attempt to recognise the animating force through the movements of the apparatus of capture. They are ways of conceptualising moments of excess through its effects on constituted power. Underlying both concepts is the idea that "the source of the political is always outside conceptualisation and codification... the foundation is always open and indeterminable" (Jameson 2005: 161).

<sup>149</sup> Ross (2002: 148) discusses a 1988 French TV programme set up as a mock trial of May '68. One section of the programme, called *The Excesses of May*, contained repentant ex-militants attacking the 'excesses' of the events of 68, to which they attributed the disorganisation of the universities, ultrafeminism and 'violence'. Isn't there a line of continuity here between Victor the Maoist, who would allow a period that contains some excesses, and the repentant ex-Maoists who recant their past precisely on the basis of those excesses? The failure to subsequently impose a new state apparatus removes the anticipated, retrospective justification for the moment of excess. Indeed if a militant converts to a liberalism in which fundamental transformation is no longer possible or desirable then any disruption must become tendentially excessive, or even extremist. Of course, this is a reactionary trope with a long history, leading back at least to conservative interpretations of the French Revolution. Indeed for the 'ex-Maoist', 'anti-totalitarian' New Philosophers of the 1970s, it is the French Revolution itself that leads inevitably to the gulag. This penitent recanting by former contemporaries provides the context for Badiou's problematic. How can he adapt to the contemporary situation while distinguishing himself from those of his former comrades who have fallen into liberalism? It is from within this problematic that Badiou seeks criteria with which to remain faithful to the excess of the event of '68. We might ask, though, whether there are other ways to incorporate this excess that could mediate the risk of rebounding into reaction. As Deleuze and Guattari might conceptualise the problem, too

social movements as providing the initial energy for political change, which must then be captured and moved into the sphere of representation if it is to be effective. What is additionally interesting about Victor's comments is that they reveal a conception of the initial stages of a movement, of the moment of excesses, as a period of exception.

In recent years Giorgio Agamben has extracted a model of sovereignty based on the state of exception from the right wing German legal theorist Carl Schmitt.<sup>150</sup> For Agamben (1995: 15) "the paradox of sovereignty consists in the fact the sovereign is, at the same time, outside and inside the juridical order." Sovereignty rests with whoever can make the decision to suspend the constitution or the operation of law and right. "[T]he sovereign, having the legal power to suspend the validity of the law, legally places himself outside the law" (Agamben 1998: 15). The state of exception is the means by which sovereignty captures what is outside it via an "inclusive exclusion" (Agamben 1998: 21).<sup>151</sup> This is, of course, a critique of the notion

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fast a deterritorialisation risks a retreat into a hard reterritorialisation from which it is subsequently impossible to escape.

<sup>150</sup> Schmitt was a member of the Nazi party and we should bear in mind the context of Hitler's rule by the emergency powers of the Enabling Act passed in the light of the Reichstag fire.

<sup>151</sup> If we apply this schema to Victor's comments above, then some confusion arises as to the exact location of the period of exception. While the moment of excess is a period seemingly exempted from a juridical apparatus, which is subsequently re-imposed in the second stage of revolution, we could also see the juridical apparatus itself as a state of exception, a necessary transitional period which will lead back to a stateless society. Indeed we could understand Agamben's (1998: 12) conception of sovereignty as, in part, a warning against a transitional recourse to sovereignty.

The weaknesses of anarchist and Marxian critiques of the State was precisely to have not caught sight of this structure... as if it had no substance outside the simulacra and the ideologies invoked to justify it. But one ends up identifying with an enemy whose structure one does not understand, and the theory of the state (and in particular of the state of exception, which is to say, of the dictatorship of the proletariat as the transitional phase leading to the stateless society) is the reef on which the revolutions of our century have been shipwrecked.

of sovereignty that underlies the various social contract theories of liberalism. In the social contract tradition sovereignty ultimately lies with the rational, autonomous individuals that are presupposed by liberal theory. The contract is the mechanism by which this sovereignty is handed over to a sovereign. Schmitt critiques such theories by showing that, far from arising from contractual agreement, sovereign power resides outside that contract and is indeed based on the ability to suspend the contract, to suspend the operation of law. Indeed Agamben, following Benjamin, argues that in contemporary society the state of exception, far from being a temporary occurrence, has become the predominant form of the operation of power.

The prominence gained by Agamben's model of sovereignty over the last decade can be attributed to its explanatory power in the face of the seemingly paradoxical structure of neoconservative thought. The Bush Presidency's post-9/11 War on Terror ostensibly sought the universal application of liberal democracy and its associated regime of rights. The means by which this end was pursued, however, involved the suspension of those rights. Indeed in later texts Agamben explicitly linked the state of exception to the War on Terror.<sup>152</sup> However the application of sovereign violence and the suspension of the normal operation of law around summit protests, for instance, also seemed to give this model of sovereignty explanatory power in the context of the increased militarisation of the

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Agamben might argue that the confusion as to the precise location of the period of exception arises because the sovereign decision is located precisely at the point of indistinction between constituent and constituted power.

<sup>152</sup> Talking about the 2001 US patriot act Agamben (2005: 3) says:

What is new about President Bush's order is that it radically erases any legal status of the individual, thus producing a legally unnamable and unclassifiable being. Not only do the Taliban captured in Afghanistan not enjoy the status of POWs as defined by the Geneva Convention, they do not even have the status of persons charged with a crime according to American laws. Neither prisoners nor persons accused, but simply 'detainees,' they are the object of a pure de facto rule, of a detention not only in the temporal sense but in its very nature as well, since it is entirely removed from the law and from judicial oversight... at Guantanamo, bare life reaches its maximum indeterminacy.

policing of protests.<sup>153</sup> With the collapse of the neoconservative project and the economic crisis of 2007 we might ask whether sovereignty is really primary in the contemporary operation of power. In our discussion of the BwO we argued that it was not the direct application of violence that was primary under capital but the displaced force and violence obscured by the socius. Sovereign violence is, at best, a supplement to the transcendental operation of power. We therefore need to conceptualise moments of excess in their relation to both sovereign violence and capital's transcendental conditioning of experience.

In his discussion with the Maoists mentioned above, Foucault (1980: 34) responds to Victor by arguing against "taking the place of the juridical system", against the re-imposition of a state apparatus. But is the alternative to merely trust in the spontaneous development of liberated desire? In a later interview Guattari comments on Foucault and Victor's discussion, saying that he believes: "Not in a definitive end to history, and not in provisional excess" (Deleuze 2004b: 266). This appears to present the same impasse in which Bataille was caught, but as we have seen, Deleuze and Guattari address this problem by constructing a non-teleological universal history. However if Guattari wants to escape teleology he goes on to say that "[t]he moments of excess, the celebrations are hardly more reassuring" (Deleuze 2004b: 266).<sup>154</sup> We can take this statement as recognition that isolated moments of excess are not enough to save us; that transformation must be generalised. In part this is an argument against a faith in spontaneity that would see no need for ongoing organisation, no need for an inheritance from historical experience. However it is also an argument against an acceptance of

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<sup>153</sup> For an analysis in this mode see Scrimshire (2005).

<sup>154</sup> This seems to be the only place that either Deleuze or Guattari use the phrase "moment of excess", however, the concept seems latent in many of their conceptualisations of this time. It is for this reason that we pick it up and try to develop it as a conception of a certain type of political event.

seriality, in which successive revolts, movements and lines of flight would remain separate from each other.<sup>155</sup> As Guattari goes on to say:

The revolution clearly needs a war-machine, but that's not a State apparatus. It also needs an analytic force, an analyzer of the desires of the masses, absolutely – but not an external mechanism of synthesis... as long as we stick to the alternative between the impotent spontaneity of anarchy and the hierarchical and bureaucratic encoding of a party-organisation, there can be no liberation of desire. (Deleuze 2004b: 267).

When Guattari considers moments of excess he finds an organisational problematic, which we could summarise thus: how do we build lasting forms of political organisation where the lessons of previous events and generations provide the grounds for continuing innovation?

We will take this problematic as marking a juncture in the structure of our thesis. From this point we move from a symptomological and analytical register to the problem of composition. So far, as we have examined the political problematic of the alter-globalisation movement, we have concentrated on the analysis of the moment of excess in its relation to more quotidian periods of struggle. For the rest of the thesis, however, we will follow Guattari's schema and attempt to construct a diagram of an analytical war machine adequate to the problem of the moment of excess. We will suggest that this is the rhythm of a Deleuze/Guattarian politics, with a relay between the high intensity of moments of excess and lower intensity periods of analysis. In the next chapter we will examine the form of analysis, and ultimately ethics, that can apply in the face of moments when the very

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<sup>155</sup> As Deleuze (2004b: 278) says:

A system like capitalism escapes in every direction; it escapes, and then capitalism fills in the gaps, it ties knots, it establishes links to prevent the escapes from becoming too numerous... what can we do so that these escapes may no longer be individual attempts or small communities, but may instead constitute a revolutionary machine?

We will return to the concept of seriality in Chapter Six when we consider Deleuze and Guattari's theory of groups in its inheritance from Sartre.

assumptions and presuppositions of the analysis are themselves subject to transformation. Before that, however, we will attempt to unpack the distinction, contained in Guattari's prescription, between a war-machine and a State apparatus. As with many of Deleuze and Guattari's neologisms it can be the cause of some confusion.

Firstly we should distinguish their concept of a war machine from more everyday usage of the term. It does not, for instance, refer to the idea of a military/industrial complex, neither is it necessarily a machine that produces war – indeed Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 417) explicitly state that “the war machine does not necessarily have war as its object.” They use the term rather to describe a form of organisation whose aim is to produce “a particular way of occupying, taking up, space-time, or inventing new space-times” (Deleuze 1995: 172). As we have seen through reference to regimes of antiproduction, it is a mode of organisation and an accompanying image of thought that is distinguished from the State by its orientation to the outside.

The State-form, as a form of interiority, has a tendency to reproduce itself, remaining identical to itself across its variations and easily recognizable within the limits of its poles... But the war machine's form of exteriority is such that it exists only in its own metamorphoses. (Deleuze, Guattari, 1988: 360).<sup>156</sup>

In *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze and Guattari (1988) attribute the invention of the war machine to the nomads of the steppes and desert. We might think of the primary aim of the war machine, what they call “its sole and veritable positive object”, as producing or extending the forms of occupying space-time that you find in the smooth spaces of the desert or the steppe, “and the corresponding composition of people” (Deleuze, Guattari

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<sup>156</sup> When Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 360) say “sovereignty only rules over what it is capable of internalizing” they come close to Agamben's (1998: 21) conception of sovereignty as an “inclusive exclusion”. The State and the war machine then can be thought of as different modes of relating to excess, one through mechanisms of internalisation and the other through machines of externalisation.

1988: 417). It is this that they see as the aim of the great Mongol war machines of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. War then is not the primary object of the war machine but only a potential supplement that arises “because the war machine collides with States and cities, as forces (of striation) opposing its primary object... it is at this point that the war machine becomes war” (Deleuze, Guattari 1988: 417). The real danger for the war machine is appropriation by the State apparatus. “It is precisely after the war machine has been appropriated by the State in this way that it tends to take war for its direct and primary object, for its ‘analytic’ object (and that war tends to take battle for its object)” (Deleuze, Guattari 1988: 418).<sup>157</sup>

To unpack this conception in relation to social movements, let's examine the tension between the war machine and its appropriation by the state apparatus, between mutation and war, through a discussion of the development of the Black Bloc. The tactic has its roots in the experience of the German *Autonomen* movement of the 1980s. The movement was a relatively large, although marginal movement with a fairly cohesive culture, including spaces for internal debate and analysis. In 1980 a police crackdown on the squatting and anti-nuclear movements, in particular the violent police attack on thousands of non-violent, sit down protestors at the Gorleben nuclear waste plant, sparked a classic cycle of militancy which transformed the culture of the movement. As participants were radicalised by the experience of police violence, more militant and confrontational tactics began to be adopted. Protesters took to wearing similar black clothing and sometimes masks and crash helmets on protests in order to make police surveillance more difficult (Katsiaficas 1997).<sup>158</sup> We might interpret this initial

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<sup>157</sup> It should be clear from this that for Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 417-18) war does not arise directly from the State. The State's domination is initially “based on other agencies (comprising, rather, the police and prisons).”

<sup>158</sup> This rendering of the story makes the adoption of black dress appear more intentional than it might well have been. The similarity of dress also arose from the clothes that the *Autonomen* wore, for practical and stylistic reasons, when not on demonstrations.

tactic as an attempt to present a smooth surface that would thwart surveillance and prevent the subsequent striation of the movement into individual subjects with individualised responsibility. In response to this phenomena the German media invented the name *der Schwarze Bloc* (the Black Bloc), a term which gradually became adopted, although at first ironically, as a term of self-description by sections of the *Autonomen* scene. This form of entanglement with media representation, however, has a flattening and reductive effect on a movement's institutionalisation. New participants are attracted to the movement on the basis of the flattened and un-nuanced conception that they gain from the media. This can be followed by a subsequent tendency to behave in accordance with these expectations.<sup>159</sup>

Raunig (2010) suggests the Black Bloc as an example of a war machine appropriated by a State apparatus, which in this case takes the form of the police and the media. He also suggests that this process has been repeated in an intensified manner since the Seattle protests, when a small Black Bloc gained much attention and came to represent, for some, the model of militancy. A reductive Black Bloc can lose its focus on metamorphosis and instead take war as its primary object. The result can be a tactical inflexibility that seeks to impose battle in any circumstances and on any terrain. We can think of the automatic resort to 'militant tactics' as a consequence of the Black Bloc repertoire losing the space for analysis and mutation that existed in its German origins. The reductive Black Bloc operates as a failed war machine. As Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 230) explain, "war is like the fall or failure of the war machine, the only object left

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<sup>159</sup> Thoburn (2008) outlines the important role that the militant image or icon plays in constructing a self-referential militant subjectivity, which closes itself off from its outside. As an illustration of a movement attempting to reverse this tendency he cites the anecdote that an important moment of transformation in the 1970s Italian *Autonomia* movement was marked by the replacement of pictures of Mao and Che Guevara on the bedroom walls of activists by diagrams of the Mirafiori FIAT factory, which was a centre of struggle at the time.

for the war machine after it has lost its power to change.” At its worst the wearing of black clothes on demonstrations can become a statement of militancy, accompanied by a sneering dismissal of any other tactic or approach. In an ironic reversal the Black Bloc, which began as an anti-identitarian tactic, becomes an overt identity that its participants adopt but are unable to transform.<sup>160</sup>

Yet doesn't this analysis place too much blame on the Black Bloc, or other confrontational tactics, for turning protest into war? It is an all too common reaction for 'peaceful protesters' beaten by the police to condemn more militant protesters for the provocation of the violence. This reaction, however, remains trapped in the logic of sovereignty, which sees the excesses of the movement as the provocation of the state of exception. Rather than blaming the excessive behaviour of the Black Bloc for provoking reaction, couldn't we rather say that it is the mutational and compositional affects of the moment of excess, a creation in excess of contemporary sense, which provokes a sovereign crisis and hence sovereign violence? We could even say that moments of excess provoke sovereign violence because of the existential crises they create for all concerned. Isn't this what William Burroughs (2003: 246) grasped as he witnessed the Chicago police beating protesters at the 1968 Democratic convention?<sup>161</sup> During moments of excess social movements engage in the process of worlding, they create new worlds. Such moments are necessarily worlds in conflict; if the moment of excess stands then the world that produced the policemen falls. It is this intuition, "that reality is slipping away from them", that provokes the cry, "We are REAL REAL REAL!!! as this NIGHTSTICK!"<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> I should make clear that while what I am describing is a tendency within certain movement scenes, there still remain examples of the use of the Black Bloc repertoire in a tactically astute, controlled and flexible manner.

<sup>161</sup> I refer to the quotation that begins this chapter.

<sup>162</sup> Again this is not to say that there aren't strategic decisions made to repress movements but it seems that shifts in the level of repression, the hardening of attitudes, involve more

Liberalism, with its threat of sovereign violence, presents a double bind for social movements.<sup>163</sup> Protest as much as you like, it says, as long as the protests have no effect; the moment they are effective and interrupt the homeostatic functioning of the society then they shall be cast as extremist and subjected to exceptional violence. The diagram of this double bind is captured by the invention of the 'Designated Protest Zone'. At events in which protests are expected there has been a growing tendency for the police to delimit a certain area in which the protests can take place. These are often a long way from the object of protest, are separated from the 'general public', are often out of bounds for media organisations and are surrounded by fencing or other means of control.<sup>164</sup> Those that protest elsewhere are removed to the zone or subject to arrest and/or assault. As Skrimshire (2005: 286) explains: "The routine ascription of 'Designated

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than just conscious intention. Like moments of excess, they too must surely involve an unthought crystallisation of desire on the part of the State apparatus. Isn't it this that makes it difficult for juridical inquiries into events such as Bloody Sunday, or the Kent State Massacre to establish chains of decision-making that could account for the events? As Guattari says, "power is much more repressive when it senses that its means of control are dissolving – perhaps first and above all on the level of the social unconscious" (Guattari 2009: 62).

<sup>163</sup> The term double bind, created by Gregory Bateson, is described by Deleuze and Guattari (1984: 79) as "the simultaneous transmission of two kinds of messages, one of which contradicts the other, as for example the father who says to his son: go ahead criticize me, but strongly hints that all effective criticism – at least a certain type of criticism – will be very unwelcome." Bateson suggests this provokes a schizophrenic response.

<sup>164</sup> Perhaps the paradigmatic example of a 'Designated Protest Zone' occurred at the 2004 Democratic Convention in Boston where it "resembled an outdoor prison... set up for protesters two blocks from the convention. The area was demarcated by concrete barricades, two walls of fencing topped with razor wire, and overhead netting." The protestors responded with a strategy of ironic over-identification, which linked the zone to other symbols of the state of exception. "The morning the convention began, one hundred people suited up to resemble the detainees at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay—black hoods and orange jumpsuits—and knelt in front of the zone with their hands tied behind their backs for almost an hour" (Maguire 2006).

Protest Zones' is now assimilated within a logic of pre-emptive strike, since the *threat* alone of protest outside the space designated to it has become, in the eyes of the state, intolerable."

What is required in these circumstances is a war machine that takes neither war, nor the refusal of war, as its positive object but instead maintains the problematic of generalised metamorphosis as its analytical focus and objective.<sup>165</sup> This is of course no easy task but in Chapter Six we will examine some of the repertoires of the alter-globalisation movement in the light of this problematic.

The task is made even more complicated by transformations that have taken place in the relationship between the State and war machines during the process of neoliberal globalisation. "We could say that the appropriation

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<sup>165</sup> Couldn't we also analyse the neoconservative project as the attempted imposition of sovereign violence and war as the primary analytical object of politics? To do so would be to cast neoconservatism as a populist supplement to the neoliberal socius, with the War on Terror as a Straussian inspired motivational myth in which war is the means by which values are injected into the socius, allowing the mobilisation of an otherwise nihilistically cynical public. The fatal paradox for neoconservatism, however, is that the values it inculcates are undone by the very operation of neoliberal capital that the supplement intended to protect. To follow this line of thought we could certainly say that as the alter-globalisation movement took war as its analytical object during the build-up to the invasion of Iraq, it lost its original analytical focus on the affects of neoliberal globalisation. In retrospect the acceptance of a terrain in which the military are the ones who hold the initiative appears as a strategic error. With an issue that seems separated from questions of how we live our lives, the most obvious stance is an ethical one that, as Žižek (2006) argues, seeks not to intervene in the situation but to inoculate oneself against feelings of responsibility. The predominant slogan of the time was, after all, *Not in My Name*. It is no coincidence that those who most fully embraced the shift in the movement were the more traditional left organisations that felt more comfortable on a territory that fitted with an anti-imperialist analysis and contained a familiar repertoire. It should be remembered that the massive marches of 15 Feb were proposed by an alter-globalisation movement space, the European Social Forum. The decision, however, came with a high price; the ineffectiveness of the marches led not just to the quick collapse of the anti-war movement but to a huge loss of faith in political action of all kinds.

has changed direction, or rather that the States tend to unleash, reconstitute, an immense war machine of which they are no longer anything more than the opposable or apposed parts” (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 421). In this transformation States become “not at all the transcendent paradigms of an overcoding but immanent models of realisation for an axiomatic of decoded flows” (Deleuze, Guattari 1988: 455). This “worldwide axiomatic” (Deleuze, Guattari 1988: 472) operates in the manner of a war machine by smoothing the terrain for flows of capital and subordinating national policies beneath the need to attract foreign direct investment. Such a process has been accompanied by a shift towards societies of control, which as we have already seen, appear to smooth the striations of disciplinary institutions.<sup>166</sup> This, along with neoliberal rhetorical attacks on big government, complicates any easy opposition between States and war machines and should undermine any naive accelerationism in which the solution is to always to move in the direction of deterritorialisation. There is I’m afraid no panacea to prescribe – our therapy consists in interminable analysis,<sup>167</sup> the form of which we examine in the next chapter. Yet as we shall see, this process need not be a miserable one, it should be guided rather by an ethics of joy.

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<sup>166</sup> We should be careful not to overstate this analysis and fall into neoliberal hyperbole about a flat and frictionless world. The huge and rising death toll from illegal border crossings should stand as a marker of the very real striations that accompany neoliberalism. And as Hardt and Negri (2000: 190) remind us, a control society may “appear to be free of the binary divisions or striation of modern boundaries, but really it is crisscrossed by so many fault lines that it only appears as a continuous, uniform space.”

<sup>167</sup> This quote from Guattari (1984: 202) explains the role that analysis can play in keeping a politics processual:

From this point of view, the analysis is never-ending, which is what makes it different from any self-enclosed programme. Not ‘permanent revolution’, perhaps, but ‘permanent analysis’! The political concept is continually being re-examined by the analytical operation, and continually having to be worked out again from scratch; the work of analysis takes it back again to its beginnings, while always withholding total agreement.

## **Chapter Five**

### **A Processual Passion.**

“What is it that separates the left from the right? Upon what does this essential ethico-political polarity rest? Fundamentally, it is nothing but a processual calling, a processual passion” (Guattari 1996: 260).

“[T]his movement is PRECISELY and primarily about process” (Alex cited in Maeckelbergh 2009: 75)

### **Introduction**

In the previous chapter we sought to conceptualise moments of excess and their relation to more everyday experience and struggles. We also raise the problem of the forms of ongoing political organisation that could incorporate such moments. Any such politics would be marked by breaks and ruptures, in which the existing sense of the movement or organisation would be disrupted by, for example, the introduction of new problematics. The present chapter consists of five sections, each of which is marked by this problem. In the first section we discuss the alter-globalisation movement’s focus on organisational process and the importance attached to the concept of prefiguration, the accordance of ends and means. This raises the question of how such a focus can be reconciled with a movement form that includes ruptures and discontinuities that alter both practice and expected ends. In doing so we seek to resolve the two concepts of process contained in the epigraphs above – the concept of movement process and Guattari’s concept of the processual. When we return to this problem in the chapter conclusion we will ask what role, for instance, concepts like equality and justice can play in such a politics. In the second section we reconceptualise this problem of process and the relation of ends and means, through reference to another literature that deals with periods of rupture, the literature on revolutionary

transition. It is our approach of constructing a symptomology of excess in Chapter Three that allows us to apply this literature to the problem of the relation between moments of excess and ongoing political organisation. In the previous chapter we also made clear that the problems facing social movements in relation to moments of excess weren't limited to the need to avoid appropriation by the state apparatus but also the need to escape from transcendental forms of power, in particular the full body of capital, which in some aspects functions more like a war machine than a state. We approached this problem with a conceptualisation focused on revealing the unthought element of the situation, which we conceptualised as the full body or *socius*. Our approach in this chapter is to construct an analytical process that involves the critique of established values. Section three, then, begins with a recreation of Deleuze's Nietzschean inspired critique of Kant on the basis, precisely, of his failure to include established values within the scope of his critique. In section four we put this analysis to work in relation to the domination of our contemporary *socius* by economic value and, in particular, neoliberalism's project of extending the competitive, utility-maximising reasoning of economic value throughout the whole of society. In the final section we will return to a reading of process and the processual in terms of an ethical practice that can operate across the creation of new values, though periods of transvaluation. We derive such an ethics from Spinoza's conception of affect and immanent evaluation. We don't, however, want to merely draw up an abstract diagram of an analytical war machine; we want to think this political form through reference to the practice of the anti-globalisation movement. And it is this that draws us back to a focus on resolving the two concepts of process in the epigraphs above; indeed we now turn to task of unpacking these epigraphs.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> What we are doing here is extracting concepts and problematics from the movement, in this case about process and the relationship between ends and means, and then intensifying these problematics through philosophy. This is we, suggested at the end of Chapter Three, precisely the role of philosophy in relation to practice.

## Procedures or Process

The question of what the alter-globalisation movement is against and what it should be for has been much discussed but remains unresolved. When participants discuss the distinctive characteristics of the movement they are more likely to turn to the more pragmatic question of what they do, or even how they do it. Indeed some have answered the question: what are you for? by replying, we are for what we are already doing.<sup>169</sup> Within the movement such discussions are usually couched in the language of process. To illustrate this Maeckelbergh (2009: 75) cites an illuminating email exchange that took place in 2003. Alex Callinicos, a leading member of the Socialist Workers' Party, wrote: "I've been reading the debate about the London Social Forum with some bemusement. Most of the discussions by focussing on process rather than substance, miss the point. The important question is: What is the politics of the London Social Forum?" In response a member of the London Social Forum replied: "What Alex doesn't seem to understand is that for many people, this movement is **PRECISELY** and primarily about process. The movement towards another world must be democratic, transparent and accessible, lest we become what we are fighting against."<sup>170</sup>

In a similar vein, but in an American context, Graeber (2007: 378) says:

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<sup>169</sup> "Journalists, leftists, politicians frequently ask, 'Okay, so you're against the G8 [or the World Bank, or the...]. But what are you for?' What an absurd question! **WE ARE FOR THIS!** This openness, this way of organising, this way of living, of being, of producing life!" (Leeds May Day Group 2005).

<sup>170</sup> This is not to argue that political parties such as the Socialist Workers Party, have not been part of the alter-globalisation movement however during their participation in that movement they have been forced to position and interpret their pre-existing modes of acting in relation to the conception of process operative in the movement. Indeed different political parties, as well as other more institutionally orientated actors, have been contaminated, to greater or lesser extent, by movement practice. Maeckelbergh details the results of one of the more fractious of these collisions around the 2005 European Social Forum in London.

When members of the Direct Action Network or similar groups are considering whether to work with some other group, the first question that is likely to be asked is 'what sort of process do they use?' – that is: Do they practice internal democracy? Do they vote or use consensus? Is there a formal leadership? Such questions are usually considered of much more importance than questions of ideology.<sup>171</sup>

The movement has, in particular, built up a specific process based around consensus decision-making. As Sitrin (2004: 271) explains:

Most groups and individuals working together in the global justice movements strive toward various forms of consensus. Consensus is usually defined as a group attempt to reach a decision by working together towards a synthesis of ideas, rather than by virtue of the strongest and most vocal opinion winning an argument. For consensus to be effective, all those participating must be actively involved in the discussion process.<sup>172</sup>

This concern with movement practice has, in part, a pragmatic and material basis. Changes in material and technological circumstances have made more horizontal, network forms of organising increasingly feasible and attractive.<sup>173</sup> The operation of networks relies on the protocol that governs interaction between the nodes of the network and is less concerned with the specific content of those nodes (Galloway 2004).<sup>174</sup> Similarly within political networks the process by which groups interact tends to gain more

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<sup>171</sup> The Direct Action Network played a key role in organising the direct action at the 1999 Seattle protests.

<sup>172</sup> We will examine the genealogy and operation of this consensus decision-making process, and other movement processes, in a little more detail in Chapter Six. Before we get to that, however, we wish to identify and develop the political problematic to which it is responding.

<sup>173</sup> See, for example, (Castells 1996) or (Hardt, Negri 2004).

<sup>174</sup> The Internet, which is perhaps the dominant organisational metaphor for our times, is primarily a set of shared protocols, called HTTP, which remain indifferent to content. The Internet has an end-to-end structure (Galloway 2004).

importance than those groups' ultimate aims. However this doesn't mean that process, or protocol, is politically neutral. Juris (2008: 17), for instance, suggests that ideas become hardwired into the architecture of a network, which, he says "helps to explain why ideological debates are often coded as conflicts over organisational process and form." The political content of movement process has been discussed in many different ways, but perhaps the most prominent means of conceptualising it from within the movement has been through the concept of prefigurative politics.

This is, for example how Maeckelbergh (2009: 67) discusses her exploration of movement process: "Prefiguration is a practice through which movement actors create a conflation of their ends with their means. It is an enactment of the ultimate values of an ideal society within the very means of struggle for that society." Franks (2006) distinguishes prefigurative politics from what he calls consequentialism, that is, a concern purely with ends or consequences. Graeber (2007: 378) provides a similar definition when he says: "There is a name for all this: 'prefigurative politics.' Direct action is a form of resistance which in its structure, is meant to prefigure the genuinely free society one wishes to create."

The focus on process certainly contains a concern with the relationship between means and ends. The concept of prefiguration, however, doesn't quite capture the potentially radical rethinking of that relationship suggested by movement practice. Prefiguration, in a weak sense, might simply gesture to the longstanding anarchist trope that *means* condition *ends*. When we look at Graeber's and Maeckelbergh's definitions, however, we see prefiguration used in a stronger sense. There is a closer teleological identification between means and ends, with the suggestion that desired aims should work backwards to determine means. The danger here lies in the closing-off of ends, which simultaneously means the idealisation, and elevation beyond history, of present means.

Applying movement processes beyond their social and material preconditions must be done carefully if we are to avoid the erection of an

ideal model.<sup>175</sup> At its limit this becomes the temptation to abstract a new model of democracy based on the universal adoption of these procedures – perhaps a new model of deliberative democracy, to replace the Athenian model, or the model of workers councils derived from earlier periods of struggle. Although some may think of this as an optimistic or utopian move, by removing practices from the specificity of their material circumstances and idealising them beyond the problems they face, we set ourselves up for preordained failure. If the model is placed beyond problematisation then the inevitable failure to match the ideal becomes entangled with different strategies that tend towards quietism. One reaction is to begin a never-ending search for the betrayers of the model.<sup>176</sup> Another is to conclude that failure to achieve the model makes all horizontal process pointless. More immediately the concept of prefiguration risks the solidification of what Nunes (2005: 314) has called linear accumulation politics, where “the point is to expand, bring more people into the cause, until there are enough of them to storm the winter palace.” An obvious target here is the project of party building but we can also apply it to the kind of activist politics whose aim is the creation of more activists, and the universal adoption of their model of the world or their organisational process.<sup>177</sup>

In practice there is often a considerable degree of flexibility in the process and level of organisation that is applied in movement spaces

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<sup>175</sup> It is precisely this that we have tried to avoid in this thesis. Instead we have aimed at the abstraction of problematics, which by definition refuse closure but instead produce more problems leading us to an open conceptualisation of practice.

<sup>176</sup> Perhaps the contemporary version of this is the critique of those who become a supernode, the group or individual who has more connections than any others and so in a network has more power. Barabasi (2002) shows that most networks follow a power law distribution of connections, with a few nodes automatically developing many more connections than others. The point, however, is to treat the horizontal network as an open problematic rather than as an idealised end.

<sup>177</sup> For a movement critique of such conceptions of activism see the seminal article *Give Up Activism* (Andrew X 1999).

(Maeckelbergh 2009). However this hasn't stopped many a meeting being made interminable by over-zealous application of process. Nor has it led to knowledge of process being used as a means of exclusion. In the Dissent! Network mobilisation against the 2005 Gleneagles G8 summit there was even a grouping of people who self-deprecatingly referred to themselves the 'bureaucracy bloc'. This was in part because they handled the bureaucratic tasks for which there was a lack of volunteers, but it was also because they wanted to ensure that correct process was being followed (Harvie, et al 2005). In subsequent mobilisations, including the UK Climate Camps there have been 'facilitation working groups' that have taken on this task.

In the epigraph that starts this chapter Guattari (1996: 260) defines the left as "a processual passion". Does he mean by this a passion for certain procedures? In *Anti-Oedipus* Deleuze and Guattari (1984: 293) explain the idea "that sexuality is everywhere" using the example of "the way a bureaucrat fondles his records". Are we to interpret a processual passion with the image of the bureaucracy bloc fondling their facilitation handbooks or becoming aroused by the hand-waving that indicates a meeting approaching consensus?<sup>178</sup> In fact Guattari has a different concept of process in mind, which might help us reconceptualise the connection between means and ends. In this chapter we intend to run these two ideas of process together.

Guattari's (1996: 260) enigmatic definition of the left as "a processual calling, a processual passion" does seem on the face of it a very strange definition to give. As an everyday rule of thumb we might position someone on the left or right through reference to the issues they are concerned with and the positions they take; in this sense the left is a contextual term. Yet the position of the centre, in relation to issues and attitudes, is subject to change over time and Guattari (1996: 260) is arguing precisely against those who

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<sup>178</sup> In movement practice it is normal to show agreement through waving hands in the air rather than shouting out. This aim of this is to provide clearer visual indications of the extent of agreement.

“see nothing in the left-right polarity than what may distinguish them momentarily under specific circumstances.”<sup>179</sup> Writing in the context of nominally leftist governments implementing neoliberal policies, he is seeking a more trans-historical definition of the left.<sup>180</sup> Of course the origins of the terms of this division in the political spectrum are historically specific, dating to the seating arrangements at the parliament of the French Revolution. Yet just as we bring the terms forward into our own contexts we might apply them retrospectively much further back into history. Alain Badiou (2008), for instance, writing from the same historical conjuncture, invokes a “communist invariant”, by which he means the recurrence throughout history of the hypothesis of non-domination. Such invariance is exemplified by the proto-communist slogan raised by Thomas Müntzer during the sixteenth-century German peasant revolts: *Omnia Sunt Communia – Let Everything be in Common*. How can such a substantive historical recurrence be encompassed by Guattari’s definition of the left as “a processual calling”?<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> Indeed he goes further saying: “There is no Manichaeism in this division, because it does not involve the niceties of cut and dried sociological distinctions. (There does exist a deep-rooted conservatism in the soil of the left, and sometimes a progressivism in that of the right.)” (Guattari 1996: 260).

<sup>180</sup> Indeed we can be more specific about this context. In 1981 the Mitterrand government abandoned its left-wing manifesto just six months after its election. Franco Berardi (2009a: 10) points to this as a key moment in the realisation that power was moving far more resolutely into a transcendental position and as a consequence the old distinctions between left and right were losing their purchase. For the wider context of this remark, however, we might point to the impact on French thought of neoliberalism and the New Right. Both Ross (2002) and Lecourt (2001) chart the rise of the New Philosophers and their movement from libertarian to neoliberal, through the medium of anti-totalitarianism.

<sup>181</sup> We should make clear that Badiou’s positing of a communist invariant is a response to a similar context as Guattari’s positing of processual politics. Badiou’s project, however, is to use the positing of a communist invariant as a basis from which to look for a concept of universal egalitarianism – a task made more complicated by the trajectory of the New Philosophers who followed their renunciation of Maoism with the embrace of a liberal version of universalism in the guise of human rights. When we try to resolve a processual

Rather than interpret Guattari's definition as an a-historical fetish for procedure we can get a very different sense of the processual if we examine it through an anti-capitalist problematic. More specifically we can think of it in reference to a Marxist politics of de-fetishisation, which, after all, seeks to discover the process behind the object. In the famous section on commodity fetishism at the end of the opening chapter of *Capital*, Marx (1982: 164) explains how "the commodity reflects the social characteristics of men's own labour as objective characteristics of the products themselves, as the socio-natural properties of these things." Commodity fetishism, however, is just one, historically specific, form of fetish. In the last chapter we saw how "every social machine, produces a seemingly a-historical instance, a socius, which appears to be the precondition and not the result of production." (Read 2003: 178). Indeed this is not just true of social forms; key to Deleuze and Guattari's ontology is the tendency, in all bodies, for their extensive forms to obscure the intensive processes that produce them.

It would be a mistake, then, to focus solely on commodity fetishism or to think of de-fetishisation as a one-time deal, as something that could be over and done with. It is not a case of penetrating the smoke and mirrors of capitalist ideology to reveal an un-alienated, static, human essence. Instead the task of de-fetishisation, of discovering the process behind the object, must itself be a continuous and open-ended process.<sup>182</sup> Indeed Guattari (2006: 420) defines process as: "[a c]ontinuous series of facts or operations that can lead to other series of facts and operations. A process implies the idea of a permanent rupture in established equilibria... it echoes what Ilya Prigogine and Isabelle Stengers call 'dissipative processes.'" What Guattari is seeking then is a definition of the left that would be distinguished not only

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politics with the communist invariant, then, we are also asking the question: What role can concepts like equality, or even liberty play in a left defined by a processual passion?

<sup>182</sup> As John Holloway (2002) reminds us rather than talking about fetishism we should talk about fetishisation. Fetishism itself is never a done deal but must be continually produced through processes of fetishisation.

from any specific, historically contingent programme but also from any conception of teleology. A telos would, of course, represent a stopping point for process, quite literally an end to process.

The immediate political engagements that follow from such a processual calling return us to more familiar ground for a definition of the left. As Guattari (1996: 260) says: "At issue here is the collective recapturing of those dynamics that can destratify the moribund structures and reorganise life and society in accordance with other forms of equilibrium, other worlds." Privileging the processual is to assert that, while politics must start from a critical engagement with the present, we can't know in advance exactly where we are heading. We can't determine beforehand what these other forms of equilibrium, these other worlds will be. Following this we might ask how such uncertainty can be resolved with the phenomenon of communist invariance?

## **The Time of Jefferson's Liberation**

We can reframe this problem through reference to the literature on revolutionary transition. Perhaps unusually we will approach this literature through Thomas Jefferson and in particular Michael Hardt's (2007) introduction to a collection of Jefferson's writing.<sup>183</sup> Hardt's project in this essay is to reignite the revolutionary event of Jefferson's ideas; it is, in effect, a jail break, a bid to liberate him from his long capture by the state apparatus. To do so Hardt extracts Jefferson from the canonical embrace of liberalism and reinserts him into an alternative lineage of revolutionary theorists. Liberal theory seeks to deny the revolutionary event, segregating its problematics from the normal functioning of society by categorising it as a foundational exception. Hardt's approach allows him to find in Jefferson an

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<sup>183</sup> Our symptomology of excess in Chapter Three allows us to link the problem of revolutionary transition to the more common problematic of the relationship between collective events and non-evental quotidian political organisation, such as the relation of summit protests to the struggles of everyday life.

original contribution to a problematic common to all theorists of revolutionary events, the problem of transition.

Like all great revolutionary thinkers, Jefferson understands well that the revolutionary event, the rupture with the past and the destruction of the old regime, is not the end of the revolution but really only the beginning. The event opens a period of transition that aims at realizing the goals of the revolution (Hardt 2007: viii).

As an explanatory counterpoint to Jefferson's conception of transition Hardt uses Lenin's *State and Revolution*, which, Hardt (2007: ix) suggests, "poses the role of transition with the greatest clarity and realism." Lenin (1987) positions himself between, on the one hand, the Social Democrats who deny the need for any form of rupture and, on the other hand, the anarchists whom he accuses of being spontaneists, and so denying the need for any period of transition. "For the anarchists... the revolutionary event is punctual and absolute, assuming everything can change overnight" (Hardt 2007: x).<sup>184</sup>

For Lenin, although the ultimate goal is to do away with the state along with its separation of ruler and ruled, this cannot be achieved "with human nature as it is now, with human nature that cannot do without subordination, control and 'managers'" (Lenin 1987: 307). Lenin's solution is the concept of revolutionary transition as "a period of education and training in which the multitude learns how to rule itself, in which democracy becomes an ingrained habit" (Hardt 2007: xi). However, this period of transition can only be accomplished through the establishment of a transcendent entity, a ruler in the form of a party that can guide and educate the masses towards the goal of self-rule.

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<sup>184</sup> We shall leave to one side whether this is a fair characterisation of anarchist theories of revolutionary transformation but point out that the notion of prefigurative struggles is, in part, drawn from the longstanding anarchist concern with the compatibility of means and ends.

There are a number of weaknesses with this conceptualisation but all revolve around the separation of ends and means. Firstly, rule by a transcendent entity “does not teach people anything about self-rule; it only reinforces their habits of subservience and passivity” (Hardt 2007: xx). Indeed, secondly, we might extend this argument to say that, as the process of direct transformation is interrupted, then the potential for future transformation becomes hidden. We re-encounter here the problem of fetishism. The transformative potential comes to *appear* to reside in the transcendent entity – the party or leader – rather than in the wider field of relations from which the ruler has become separated.<sup>185</sup> Fundamentally, as Hardt (2007: xx) summarises: “How could democracy, after all, result from its opposite?”

There is a return here to the temporal sequence asserted by the Maoist activist Victor in his discussion with Foucault (1980),<sup>186</sup> during which excesses may be tolerated during the first stage of struggle but must then be reined in by the erection of a new state apparatus.<sup>187</sup> Or, as Hardt (2007: xii) re-casts this conception, “rebellion is necessary to overthrow the old regime, but when it falls and the new government is formed, rebellion must cease.” It is in the refusal of this temporal sequence that Hardt finds Jefferson’s contribution to the problematic of transition.

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<sup>185</sup> To situate this within the conceptual apparatus developed in the previous chapter we could say that the body of the ruler, or the party, falls back on the wider field of relations becoming the full body or the *socius*, and obscuring the intensive processes that have produced it. This would locate it in what Deleuze and Guattari (1984) would call the barbarian or despotic *socius* and what Foucault (1977) would describe as the *dispositif* of Sovereignty.

<sup>186</sup> This text is discussed in the previous chapter in the section *Excess and Power*, where we identify it with sovereign capture.

<sup>187</sup> As teleological commitments condition the present we might see the party form as the state form in embryo.

Jefferson values rebellion as a good in its own right, independent of its justness or timing.<sup>188</sup> Indeed Jefferson (2007: 35) suggests a very different revolutionary temporality when he remarks, “God forbid that we should ever be 20 years without such a rebellion.” This valorisation of rebellion indicates the need for the periodic reopening of the revolutionary event. In fact Jefferson goes further saying:

(N)o society can make a perpetual constitution, or even a perpetual law. The earth belongs always to the living generation... Every constitution, then, and every law, naturally expires at the end of 19 years. If it be enforced longer, it is an act of force and not of right. (Jefferson 2007: 56-7).<sup>189</sup>

Although he doesn't use the term, Jefferson also seems to deal with the problem of fetishism when he says: “Some men look at constitutions with sanctimonious reverence, and deem them like the arc of the covenant, too sacred to be touched. They ascribe to the men of a preceding age a wisdom more than human, and suppose what they did to be beyond amendment” (Jefferson 2007: 73). Just as Marx reached for religious analogies to describe commodity fetishism, Jefferson does the same when describing the fetishisation of institutional forms. As long as constitutions are acknowledged as the work of mere men they can always be remade, but as they come to appear to be the work of “a wisdom more than human” so they become

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<sup>188</sup> “The spirit of resistance to government is so valuable on certain occasions, that I wish it to be always kept alive. It will often be exercised when wrong, but better so than not to be exercised at all. I like a little rebellion now and then. It is like a storm in the atmosphere” (Jefferson 2007: 30).

<sup>189</sup> In a letter to Madison, sent from revolutionary France, Jefferson (2007: 53) writes: “The question Whether [sic] one generation of men has a right to bind another, seems never to have been started either on this or our side of the water. Yet it is a question of such consequences as not only to merit decision, but place also, among the fundamental principles of every government.” We can see here an extension of the reasoning of the American Revolution. Just as one country can't be bound by the laws of another, neither can a new generation be bound by the laws of its antecedents.

untouchable. Once again the product of social relations comes to appear as their precondition.

Jefferson's solution then is rebellion; he is not, however, advocating continuous rebellion but, rather, a periodic one. As Hardt (2007: xxi) puts it: "The only way to be faithful to the revolution... is to repeat it. The temporal figure of the revolutionary event, therefore, is the eternal return – not of the same, of course, but the return of the different, that is, the difference marked by each generation".<sup>190</sup> Transition, then, doesn't proceed at an even pace or in a linear direction. As Hardt (2007: xxii) says "even when a democratic process moves forward it reaches thresholds that cannot be crossed without the rupture provided by rebellion." Those moments of rupture can also allow the breaking with one problematic and the positing of a new one. As the problematics of the revolution develop, and new forms of domination and fetishism are discovered, then the event, as rupture, must be revisited. Transition is continual but it is not continuous.

Of course there are many criticisms we could make of Jefferson. Firstly, the critique of constitutional fetishism must be widened to include other fetishisms of established values, in particular, the fetishisms tied to property rights. Indeed Hardt and Negri (2009: 9) point to "the inviolability of the rights of private property, which excludes or subordinates those without property", as the point at which the republican revolutionary process becomes interrupted. This point is illustrated by the implacable hostility that most republicans displayed towards the Haitian revolution of 1791-1804, "the only successful slave revolt in history" (James 1989: vi). Hardt and Negri (2009: 13) argue that this revolution "was unthinkable because it violated the rule of property."<sup>191</sup> The slave-owning Jefferson found it impossible to

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<sup>190</sup> This is a conception of difference and repetition with which Deleuze (2001: 76) accords when he says: "Difference inhabits repetition".

<sup>191</sup> By freeing themselves the Haitian slaves violated the rights of property. As Hardt and Negri (2009: 13) go on to say: "A simple syllogism is at work here: the republic must protect private property; slaves are property; therefore republicanism must oppose the freeing of the

address not only the elevation of the rights of property above the rights of man but also the related racial fetishism that underscored slavery in the United States, and indeed still haunts it today. Slavery, of course, is just one form of property relations; we have already talked about the fetishism tied to commodity production.<sup>192</sup>

The second point of critique of Jefferson's schema is that the temporality of the eternal return can't be set in advance into a twenty-year cycle. Indeed it seems that Jefferson's argument here needs to be reversed. In reality births don't occur in twenty-year bursts, they happen continuously; as such, the concept of a *generation* only makes sense if we say they are formed in relation to certain significant shared experiences. From this perspective we can say that it is events that form generations and not the other way around. It is the temporality of the event that Jefferson is mistaking for the cycle of a generation.

To return to our original Guattarian vocabulary, what Hardt finds in Jefferson, although he doesn't use the term, is a processual transition, in which new forms of fetishisation can be overcome and new problematics can

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slaves." As Louis Sala-Molins says "European Enlightenment philosophers railed against slavery, *except where it literally existed*" (cited in Zizek 2009: 111).

<sup>192</sup> We should, however, point to some interesting aspects of Jefferson's attitude to property in its relation to democracy. Jefferson proposed a ward system of democracy, which, as Arendt (1963) notes, has some similarities with, for instance, the democratic structures of the 1871 Paris Commune. We might think of Jefferson's proposed system as a kind of yeoman's democracy, based on a bedrock of rural smallholders, the material substratum for which was the perception of plentiful land for all. This perception was made possible by the dramatic increase in the size of the United States during the period of Jefferson's presidency, principally through the Indian wars and the Louisiana Purchase. We could make an interesting parallel between the sudden disappearance of land scarcity during that period and the disruptions in the concept of property rights that have occurred in the last two decades as the low, in fact approaching zero, cost of digital reproduction have made immaterial goods inherently non-rivalrous.

emerge.<sup>193</sup> In this schema means and ends aren't in contradiction, instead they collapse into one another as they are subsumed into transition as process. Transition becomes, not a distinct and separable period but a periodic repetition, not a movement from one fixed state to another but "a process of infinite becoming" (Hardt 2007: xx). From this perspective it makes no sense to consider democracy, self-rule or communism as an endpoint. Democracy can only be this very process of continued transition. It must be an experimental process of learning by doing, a self-training, which includes a process of collective self-analysis and self-correction, including, when necessary, recurrent events of rupture.<sup>194</sup>

It might be objected that this collapse of means and ends in a processual politics would once again remove it from a more substantive definition of left-wing politics. We might ask: how can we *now* account for the recurrence of the communist invariant? However, the problem takes on a different sense if we think of this invariance as the periodic recurrence of a starting point, rather than a nascent end point. After all, the hypothesis of non-domination is sparked by the experience of domination, or perhaps we might more accurately say, it is sparked by the experience of moments of excess that occur in struggle against domination. We should be careful not

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<sup>193</sup> It should be made clear that Hardt doesn't use the concepts of fetishism or the processual in this essay. So just as Hardt could be accused of ventriloquising Jefferson we could be accused of ventriloquising Hardt. However the question of what a writer really means is rarely the most interesting or useful one to ask. We are following here the methodology of symptomatic reading set out in Chapter Three, in which we seek problematics that are absent yet inherent to the text. In this way rather than being read definitively, texts can be revisited as new problematics are raised.

<sup>194</sup> It should go without saying that this temporality also problematises any conception of a transcendent guide sitting above the process of transition. Indeed a familiar critique of the stageist conception of revolution is that the transitional stage never ends; instead party rule solidifies into dictatorship and democracy is indefinitely postponed. In fact our argument is that transition doesn't and shouldn't end, the point being, however, that under the Leninist formula, transition is subsumed under a transcendent script, which, in effect elides the event and prevents its re-emergence.

to mistake the communist invariant for “a state of affairs which is to be established, an ideal to which reality will have to adjust itself.”<sup>195</sup> We could even say that Badiou strikes a Jeffersonian note when he says of the communist invariant: “When all is said and done, everything boils down to the maxim: we must dare to struggle, we must dare to revolt,” (cited in Hallward 2003: 37).<sup>196</sup> The recurrence of the communist invariant is a conceptualisation of phenomena we have previously described as symptoms of excess.<sup>197</sup> There are problematics common to all rupturing events, yet they are a repetition of difference as each repetition is immersed in a new context. When we reopen such problematics we experience a temporality of both ruptures and loops. Seen in this light the temporality of the communist invariant is also that of eternal return and neither that of telos nor of continuous duration.<sup>198</sup>

This processual temporality undermines any strategy that distinguishes political priorities in the period before a revolutionary event from those in the period after it. That form of politics usually designates certain struggles as hegemonic and others as strategically marginal. The temporality of this strategy means that ‘marginal’ struggles must be subsumed beneath the hegemonic ones at present so they can be dealt with later.<sup>199</sup> This political

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<sup>195</sup> Of course, we refer, once again, to Marx (1987: 21): “Communism is not for us a state of affairs which is to be established, an ideal to which reality will have to adjust itself. We call communism the real movement which abolishes the present state of things”

<sup>196</sup> As will be made clear later we can read this as a rejoinder to “Aude Sapere” – Dare to Know, the maxim of Kant’s essay *What is Enlightenment?*

<sup>197</sup> We should make clear the violence we are doing to Badiou’s conceptual framework here. Badiou’s platonic notion of communism would be in serious tension with any notion of the processual, his political strategy is in reality far more Jacobin than Jeffersonian.

<sup>198</sup> This is, once again, in accord with Deleuze’s (2001: 126) interpretation of the eternal return when he says: “The subject of the eternal return is not the same but the different, not the similar but the dissimilar, not the one but the many, not necessity but chance.”

<sup>199</sup> Perhaps the classic content for this political form is the subsumption of feminist, gay or black struggles beneath those of the industrial working class. However the same temporality

configuration is always asking us to be patient. However the problems and struggles which arise in the here and now can only be dealt with here and now because the problems and struggles we face after an event will, by definition, be different and can only be faced then. A processual answer must be “first the impatience and then the patience (and not the other way around, as in traditional revolutionary theory). Revolution can only be now: the idea of a future revolution is a contradiction in terms” (Holloway 2009).

Indeed a processual politics of continual transition means that, *contra* liberal theory, the problematics of revolutionary events can no longer be confined to ‘exceptional periods’. Revolutionary theory can be abstracted to apply to events of a much smaller scale than the major revolutions associated with Lenin and Jefferson. In Chapter Three we saw the importance of the event in the formation of social movements both in the form of a rupture with the prevailing social consensus but also in accounting for their creativity. The structure of the alter-globalisation movement is punctual and rhythmic, moving from event to event. We thus have a situation in which the movement only fully exists during events, and finds it difficult to actualise itself in habitual life. This sets up a two-fold problematic. Firstly, what is the relation of such events to habitual life? And secondly, what is to be done with these events, that is, how can we act in the face of events? To answer the first question we have (re)conceptualised these events as moments of excess; this (re)conceptualisation was developed in the previous chapter. We have now turned our attention towards the second question.

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is evident in reformist and social democratic politics, which urges that struggles be subsumed beneath the effort to gain power, at which later date the problems that gave rise to those struggles will be dealt with. The classic rejoinder to this proposition can be found in the words of Frederick Douglass (1985: 204):

Let me give you a word on the philosophy of reform. The whole history of the progress of human liberty shows that all concessions yet made to her august claims, have been born of earnest struggle... If there is no struggle there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom and yet depreciate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground, they want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters.

As we have seen in previous chapters the problematic of the event isn't limited to any narrowly drawn conception of politics; it runs, rather, right through life and thought. We can identify it, in the guise of the bifurcation point, as the constitutive focus of the revolution in the sciences that has come to be known as complexity theory, or the theory of non-linear dynamics (Prigogine, Stengers 1984). We also saw how this question defines a certain lineage in twentieth century art. Indeed the art critic Brian Holmes (2008) finds a notion of process in this latter context that runs parallel to the one found in the political context. This is a concept:

[w]hose roots lie in the chance philosophy of John Cage, in the relation of prop and performance sought by Fluxus, in the interplay of score and interpretation developed in concrete poetry and vanguard dance, in the orchestrated chaos of the happenings, the improvisational work of the Living Theatre or the insurgence of Provo and Situationist interventions (Holmes 2008: 178-9).

Indeed this artistic context can help bring out the constituent elements of processual practice. As Holmes (2008: 179) summarises: "In these approaches process can be defined as the generative matrix constituted by the meeting of catalytic artefacts, more-or-less conscious group interactions, and the dimension of singular chance inherent to the event."

In the previous chapter we saw Guattari refuse the forced choice between spontaneity and the State apparatus.<sup>200</sup> Deleuze (2004: 199), in an introduction to a collection of Guattari's work, says:

From the start we have to be more centralist than the centralists. Clearly, a revolutionary machine cannot remain satisfied with local and occasional struggles: it has to be at the same time super-centralized and super-desiring. The problem, therefore, concerns the nature of unification, which must function in a transversal way, through multiplicity, and not in a vertical way, so

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<sup>200</sup> For Deleuze and Guattari (1984) such a forced choice is an example of the paralogism of exclusive disjunction, one of the three illegitimate syntheses of desiring production.

apt to crush the multiplicity proper to desire. In the first place this means that any unification must be *the unification of a war machine and not a State apparatus...* In the second place, this means that unification must occur through *analysis*, that it must play *the role of an analyzer* with respect to the desire of the group and the masses, and not the role of a synthesizer operating through rationalization, totalization, exclusion, etc.

Our focus has changed to making sense of this proposal for an analytical war machine, which we will then place in relation to contemporary social movement practice. As we come to do so we should bear in mind the constituent elements of processual practice in the artistic context. In the next chapter we will proceed by examining the conceptual development of the analytical war machine through reference to Deleuze and, in particular, Guattari's theory and practice of group interactions. These are by no means peripheral or formal elements of the political, somehow separable and subordinate to content.<sup>201</sup> Indeed we will argue that such group experiences can provide some of the passion that Guattari links to the processual. We can agree with Holmes (2008: 179) when he says that: "Group processes of self-understanding and decision-making (are) one of the ways that adherence to a political project is developed and sustained over time."<sup>202</sup>

As we examine Deleuze and, particularly, Guattari's theory of groups in the next chapter we will find that the fetishised role of the analyst is displaced up an ever-increasing level of scale until they conclude that conditions of analysis must be established in the mass itself. Following this problematic leads Deleuze and Guattari to move away from their group theory in their later work, replacing it with theories of territory. We will follow

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<sup>201</sup> As Guattari says:

It's always the same old trick: a big ideological debate in the general assembly, and the questions of organization are reserved for special committees. These look secondary, having been determined by political options. Whereas, in fact, the real problems are precisely the problems of organization, never made explicit or rationalized, recast after the fact in ideological terms. (Deleuze 2004a: 264).

<sup>202</sup> One of the examples that Holmes has in mind here is the foundational role that consciousness-raising groups had for the second wave feminist movement.

them in this in the subsequent chapter that examines some of the institutions and technologies used by contemporary social movements in terms of Deleuze and Guattari's key territorial concept of the refrain.

Before we get to that point, however, we need to clarify the analytical problems with which we are faced. To do so let's return to the context in which Guattari made his processual definition of the left: the rise of neoliberalism. As we discussed in the previous chapter this complicates a post-68 valorisation of the unification of the war machine over the synthesis of the state apparatus. The analysis of the war machine must be distinguished from the transcendental operation of capitalist value. Any adequate criteria for analysis cannot be rooted in a transcendent position of judgement; it must be a project of immanent analysis. Yet if punctual struggles are not enough to save us, then the criteria must transcend the experience of any specific state of affairs. We need a processual analysis but to be adequate to contemporary circumstances we must think this analysis in relation to a critique of established values. It is precisely on this point that Deleuze, following Nietzsche, critiques Kant and it is for this reason that we will begin the next section with an exploration of this critique.<sup>203</sup>

## **Kant's Compromised Event**

As Deleuze (2006a: 85) explains: "Kant's genius, in the Critique of Pure Reason, was to conceive of an immanent critique." For Kant we must distinguish between those concepts that are immanent to the domain of experience and those that are transcendent to it. The three classic transcendent concepts identified by Kant are God, the World and the Soul. These are thinkable but not knowable – they lie outside the limits of

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<sup>203</sup> We should point out that the conceptions of synthesis and analysis Deleuze refers to above are not the same as Kant's conceptions of those terms or indeed the distinction he makes between them. The post-Kantian traditions of analytical philosophy, such as logical positivism, are not the major point of reference for Deleuze here.

knowledge because they lie outside the domain of possible experience. It is not possible that we could experience the World in its totality, for example. Such concepts refer to a problem not an object. To treat them as objects, that is to pose questions based upon their perceived status as objects, is to pose a false problem, to fall prey to transcendent illusions (Smith 2007). They cannot, therefore, provide the criteria for immanent critique.

Instead, Kant seeks such criteria in concepts, which he calls the categories, deduced through thinking the conditions of possible experience. For example, "Causality is a category for Kant since we cannot conceive of an object of our possible experience that has not been caused by something else" (Smith 2007: 4). Immanent critique then implies a project of total critique. Not only our experience but also the conditions of our experience must be subject to critique. Kant is a critical philosopher because he wants to go beyond given, surface experience. Our experience must be transcended to establish their conditions of possibility. It is for this reason that Kant calls critique using immanent criteria, transcendental critique.

Deleuze (2006a), following Nietzsche, argues that Kant fails in his project of immanent critique and that the roots of this failure lie in the very form of Kant's transcendental method.<sup>204</sup> Kant seeks ideal, universal principles against which the real and material must be judged. He seeks knowledge of the noumenal, things-in-themselves, by deducing from the conditions of *possible* experience. However, by basing critique in this domain, established values are protected from criticism. A critique of capital in terms of possible experience, for instance, could not identify its fetishisms, its transcendent illusions. As Nietzsche (1979: 55) says of the noumenal: "knowledge of it would be the most useless of all knowledge: more useless even than knowledge of the chemical composition of water must be to a sailor in danger of shipwreck." A critique of established values must be based on the genesis of *real* experience, its preconditions and

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<sup>204</sup> As Deleuze (2006: 85) says, it is "primarily a Nietzschean idea to say that Kant's critique failed."

presuppositions. This materialist critique can contain only specific and perspectival concepts. As Deleuze (2006a: 83-4) puts it:

Kant merely pushed a very old form of critique to the limit, a conception which saw critique as a force which should be brought to bear on all claims to knowledge and truth but not on knowledge and truth themselves, a force which should be brought to bear on all claims to morality, but not on morality itself.

Kant then is “the perfect incarnation of false critique” (Deleuze 2004: 139), contenting himself with “producing inventories of existing values or criticising in the name of established values” (Deleuze 2004: 138). Kant sets up the philosopher in the persona of a judge, adjudicating on false applications of ideal principles. This is what Deleuze and Guattari (1998: 367) call a “State-form inspired... image of thought.”<sup>205</sup> Indeed Kant’s failed immanence only sets the stage for a fetishised repression. “When we stop obeying God, the State, our parents, reason appears and persuades us to continue being docile because it says to us: it is you who are giving the orders” (Deleuze 2006a: 86).

Kant’s critique fails, as Nietzsche informs us, because he is unable to pose the critique in terms of values.<sup>206</sup> It is the failure to think the event, that is to think the transformation of values, or in Nietzschean terms trans-valuation, that turns “total critique... into a politics of compromise” (Deleuze 2006a: 85). As Deleuze (2004: 138) says: “As long as we’re content with criticizing the ‘false’ we’re not bothering anyone (true critique is the criticism of true forms, not false

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<sup>205</sup> “It is not at all surprising that the philosopher has become a public professor or State functionary. It was all over the moment the State-form inspired an image of thought” (Deleuze & Guattari 1988: 367).

<sup>206</sup> “One of the principal motifs of Nietzsche’s work is that Kant had not carried out a true critique because he was not able to pose the problem of critique in terms of values” (Deleuze 2005: 1).

contents. You don't criticize capitalism or imperialism by denouncing their 'mistakes')."

We can say then that Deleuze seeks to complete Kant's project of immanent critique by establishing the preconditions and presuppositions of established notions of morality, truth and reason.<sup>207</sup> Such total critique, however, is "strictly inseparable... from a creation no less radical: Nietzsche's trans-valuation, and Marx's revolutionary action" (Deleuze 2004: 136).<sup>208</sup> It is precisely the event of trans-valuation that demands an immanent analysis rather than the mere application of established values. The position of the judge should not be distinct from that of the legislator, and as Deleuze (2006a: 85) explains, "to legislate is to create values".<sup>209</sup> If

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<sup>207</sup> As we shall see later Deleuze's project is to eliminate transcendent presuppositions and so create a conceptual apparatus that presupposes only a plane of immanence. An analysis that does not rest on a transcendent illusion, or fetish, opens up the field of potential, allowing a joyful politics of potentially infinite experimentation to increase the capacities of the social body. It is in this sense that we can understand a Deleuzian philosophy, and politics, as a practice of freedom.

<sup>208</sup> This passage is worth quoting in full: "For Nietzsche, as well as for Marx, the notion of value is strictly inseparable 1) from a radical and total critique of society and the world (look at the theme of the "fetish" in Marx, or the theme of "idols" in Nietzsche), and 2) from a creation no less radical: Nietzsche's trans-valuation, and Marx's revolutionary action" (Deleuze 2004: 136). Deleuze here is highlighting the role of the fetish in hiding established values from critique. Such values are not ideal and transcendental but are themselves the product of determinate social relations. But this identification of the genesis of values is inseparable from the creation of new values. The process of defetishisation requires revolutionary action.

<sup>209</sup> "The point is... that the philosopher, as philosopher, *is not* a sage, that the philosopher, as philosopher, ceases to obey, that he replaces the old wisdom by command, that he destroys the old values and creates new ones, that the whole of his science is legislative in this sense" (Deleuze 2006a: 86). Or as Marx (1968: 30) would say, "The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it."

we wish to follow the maxims *Dare to Know* we must also follow the maxim *Dare to Struggle, Dare to Revolt* and, more than this, *Dare to Create*.<sup>210</sup>

When we recall that Kant's critiques date from the same period as Jefferson's we can see the centrality of the problematics of revolutionary events to the philosophy of the period. Indeed we can link these events together and consider them as a single international revolutionary wave, including not only the American and French revolutions but also the Haitian revolution and the substantial republican agitation in many other countries. It is fair to say that Jefferson (2006) saw the fates of the American and French revolutions as connected, while the Haitian revolution was inspired in part by the proclamations of revolutionary France.<sup>211</sup> In this light we could see Deleuze's project here as the attempt to re-open the revolutionary event obscured behind Kant's politics of compromise.<sup>212</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> For Hardt and Negri (2009: 17) something approaching these maxims is necessarily implicit in Kant, who "opens the possibility of reading the Enlightenment injunction against the grain: 'dare to know' really means at the same time also 'know how to dare.'" Their project here is to find a minor Kant beneath the major Kant.

<sup>211</sup> In relation to the interconnectedness of the revolutions C.L.R. James (1989) argues that the shock of the Haitian revolution, and the sustained British attempts to suppress it, provided breathing room for the revolutionary regimes of France and America, which might otherwise have been wiped out. We might further emphasise this connection between these revolutionary events and Enlightenment philosophy by citing Buck-Morss' (2009) argument that Hegel's theory of the master slave dialectic was inspired by the Haitian revolution.

<sup>212</sup> The compromise of Kant's attitude to the French revolution can be deduced from his article *What is Enlightenment?* in which he banishes 'daring to revolt' during his affirmation of 'daring to know'. "Argue as much as you like and about whatever you like, but obey!" (Kant 1991: 59). This attitude is further nuanced however with his distinction between enthusiasm and fanaticism in *The Critique of Judgment*. Here Kant (2000: 144-5) defines fanaticism as "a belief in our capacity of seeing something beyond all bounds of sensibility." Enthusiasm is "a transitory accident which sometimes befalls the soundest Understanding", while fanaticism is a "monomania... a disease that unsettles it." Kant casts the French revolutionaries as pathological fanatics but admires those spectators who show enthusiasm for it. Indeed Toscano (2006) positions Kant's within a Lutheran lineage. Martin Luther was

This casts republican politics as an interrupted process and the Enlightenment conception of reason as a compromise that becomes a fetish, with the results of a process coming to appear as the precondition of the process. As Deleuze (2006a: 85) puts it:

Kant concludes that critique must be a critique *of reason by reason* itself. Is this not the Kantian contradiction, making reason both the tribunal and the accused; constituting as judge and plaintiff, judging and judged? Kant lacked a method which permitted reason to be judged from the inside without giving it the task of being its own judge... Transcendental principles are principles of conditioning and not of internal genesis. We need the genesis of reason itself.

The realm of reason that we readily access is generated amidst the possibilities of our particular circumstances, our real experience. We cannot treat the reason we find there as unproblematically universal and continuous. "Reason is always a region carved out of the irrational – not sheltered from the irrational at all, but: traversed by it and only defined by a particular kind of relationship among irrational factors... the rational is always the rationality of an irrational." (Deleuze 2004: 262). To assume a universal necessary reason would be to ignore the irrationalities tied to established values. However, to pose a critique in terms of values we need to create new values, that is create new worlds. The creation of new values gives a point of external reference, allowing the effects of established values to become

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appalled by the revolutionary events provoked by his *daring to know*. He castigated those who rose up during the Peasants' War as fanatics who must be wiped out for raising the banner *Omnia Sunt Communia*. Thomas Müntzer, the foremost proponent of the slogan, was in fact a disaffected follower of Luther. Enthusiasm then is "a passion for the ideal that does not flow over into the "fanatical" effort to achieve it *hic et nunc*" (Toscano 2006). Interestingly one of the doctrinal disagreements between Luther and Müntzer was over the doctrine of continued revelation, the living word of God. It was through this doctrine that Biblical lessons could be applied to contemporary situations, such as the rule of the princes (Wu Ming: 2010).

clear.<sup>213</sup> You can't, after all, ask a deep-sea fish to describe the concept of wetness as its total immersion gives it no point of comparison. The genesis of reason then is the creation of new values. We must become legislators to rescue reason from its role as judge and plaintiff.

To return to the conceptual apparatus we discussed in the last chapter, such an area of rationality with a boundary of irrationality can be termed the full body or *socius*. Again let's use the example of capital. "Everything about capitalism is rational, except capital or capitalism. A stock market is a perfectly rational mechanism, you can understand it, learn how it works; capitalists know how to use it; and yet what a delirium, it's nuts" (Deleuze 2004: 262). Capital has only one aim, self-valorisation; its own self-expansion. The sheer inherent meaninglessness of this axiom becomes the line of irrationality that traverses our deployment of reason. Within the *socius* of capital, decisions about the distribution of social wealth and the production of new wealth – that is, decisions whether to proceed with one course of action or another – are reduced to the question of whether the profit ratio for a particular enterprise will meet or beat the market average. The increase of zeros on an accounting sheet is the bottom line for the whole of capitalist society. Many seemingly rational decisions we take in our every day lives only appear rational within a range of potential structured by this calculus.

Consider the following example. In 1998 consumers in Europe and the USA spent \$17 billion on pet food, while a UN-commissioned report estimated the cost of ensuring universal access to basic health and nutrition in all developing countries at only \$13 billion (UN 2008: 37).<sup>214</sup> Lets add to

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<sup>213</sup> It is in this light that we can understand Ceasare Casarino when he says: "(U)nveilling in and of itself does not constitute the primary goal of collective practice, does not constitute a telos unto itself. Unveiling is simply a by-product of collective praxis: it is what happens when we do things together. Whenever we pursue common projects, we also unveil." (Casarino, Negri 2008: 104-5).

<sup>214</sup> \$13 billion is the estimated additional cost needed to achieve universal access to basic social services in all developing countries.

this the fact that roughly 30,000 children die daily from preventable causes linked to poverty (UNICEF 2003), and the assumption that most people would value the life of a child above the life of a dog. When we present such statistics so starkly, that is abstracted from the 'realism' attached to capital's *socius*, this appears to be an irrational distribution of social wealth.<sup>215</sup> It is, however, the irrational outcome of rational decisions made within a limited range of potentiality. The reasoning deployed is the rationality of an irrationality. However, while such a statistic can illustrate a *socius's* moment of non-sense, it does not constitute a critique on the basis of values. It is not, on its own, sufficient basis for total critique because it fails to escape capital's system of measure. The statistic still presupposes money as a universal equivalent that can commensurate the incommensurable. How can a luxury yacht, for example, be made commensurable with life-saving access to clean water? Such a task of commensuration is only made possible by resting the application of reason upon a body of irrationality.<sup>216</sup> Perhaps we might think of it as a symptom that can indicate we are in the presence of a fetishism even if, on its own, this revelation is not enough to fully unveil and escape it.

Such symptoms can, however, provoke collective action that may break with existing values and thereby create new ones. We can illustrate this sequence through reference to a video interview with Augusto Finzi, a worker activist from the chemical factories of Porto Maghera, near Venice, which became a focus of worker militancy in the 1960s and 1970s. Finzi describes how early struggles at the factories were focused on fighting the use of short-term contracts and the subcontracting of labour. Following a large and very militant strike in 1968, workers won a flat-rate pay rise;

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<sup>215</sup> As Marx (1982: 343) says of capitalist subjectivity: "you may be a model citizen, perhaps a member of the R.S.P.C.A., and you may be in the odour of sanctity as well; but the thing you represent when you come face to face with me has no heart in its breast."

<sup>216</sup> From this angle money allows an infantile abdication from the difficult task of making democratic decisions on values.

subsequent struggles were aimed at direct employment and the achievement of wage parity for blue- and white-collar workers. We might say that there was an egalitarian motivation for these struggles, although some militants also saw the strategic aim as preparing the ground for further struggle by overcoming the divisions in the workforce put in place by management. These struggles threw up innovative forms of struggle and organisation (Edwards 2009), and although the victories remained within the value system of capital they had the effect of strengthening the potential for further collective action. Attention then began to switch towards the hazardous nature of working with chemicals, as worker enquiries, led by Finzi, began to uncover the high rates of cancer amongst employees, former employees and the surrounding communities. The struggles that followed began to exceed the possibilities of capital's axioms for they not only critiqued the results of capitalist value but also necessarily erected new values to guide the struggle. Work-related illness and death aren't necessarily recognised under the values system of the market, although struggles can force their recognition as 'externalities'. Such externalities can be brought within the market's value system – or 'internalised' – through the mechanism of compensation. The workers at Porto Maghera, however, refused that value system, and posited new values based on the irreversibility of serious loss of health, or death.<sup>217</sup> They didn't want more pay for work which was killing them; they wanted less work. Struggles switched

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<sup>217</sup> We might interpret this as a moment of defetishisation, in which the infantilism of capitalist subjectivity is unveiled. Capitalist subjectivity, and in particular the subjectivity of the consumer treats the arrow of time as reversible. This is an infantile temporality that underlies the irresponsibility of capitalist subjectivity, not just in terms of human lives but also in terms of the environment. Robert Nadeau (2008: 1) reveals the roots of neoclassical economics in "in the equations of a soon-to-be outmoded mid-19th century theory in physics." The presupposition of a closed system that tended towards equilibrium allows a reversibility of time's arrow that we simply don't find in reality. Much of the danger with climate change lies in the triggering of bifurcation points, or events, that prevent the return to equilibrium of the previous semi-stable state through a simple reversal of our original actions.

to control over the conditions of work, over the duration of work and to the refusal of work altogether. The slogan of the time, *Factory Work Makes Us Sick*, became transformed through struggle into the strategy of *The Refusal of Work*, which posited increasing collective control over our lives as the aim of political and economic struggle. A process of collective struggle and analysis created new values based on the question: what sort of life might we lead?<sup>218</sup> We can see here the processual interrelation between daring to know, daring to revolt and daring to create.

## **The Excess of Value and the Value of Excess**

Orthodox economists might object that there are no value judgements involved in their 'dismal science' but merely the neutral task of making different ethical positions equivalent through an objective system of measure. The theoretical framework established in the previous chapter would attach such a claim of objectivity to the operation of the socius of capital, which obscures the social specificity of established values. As we discussed in Chapter Two, orthodox (neoliberal) economics has a far from straightforward position on human nature. It presupposes a transcendent and fetishised model of human behaviour, which allows it to posit a socially and historically specific notion of value as a universal one and so declare that no alternative form of social organisation is possible. However, neoliberal politics is distinguished by its active intervention into society, creating institutions that are designed to bring about the forms of behaviour that its theoretical apparatus presupposes as pre-existent. As McMurty (1998: 13) puts it: "economists explicitly deny any value judgement is at work in their analyses, even though they presuppose a value system in every step of the analysis they make."

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<sup>218</sup> Finzi talks about this history in a moving video interview included on DVD *Porto Marghera: The Last Firebrands* (2006). He died of work-related cancer shortly after the interview was completed.

Similarly it makes little sense to claim a value-free notion of efficiency that exists in isolation from socially determined means and ends. If we look back at Olsen's positing of a cost/benefit analysis as the axiom of collective action, we can now see how it erects a fetish of capital's subjectivities and exempts established values from critique. A cost/benefit analysis can only take place through a shared conception of value, of what is valued. The reason that moments of excess provoke further collective action is not simply because the cost of participation is lowered by repertoire innovation. Moments of excess are moments of trans-valuation. By opening up political and social possibility, by provoking questions about the different sort of lives we might live, such a moment changes the very basis upon which a cost/benefit analysis can take place. These moments transform questions of motivation.

At this point we need a different conception of value, one that can escape the fetishised concept of capitalist value by positioning it as one amongst other value systems. We can turn for this task to anthropological approaches to value. Indeed, the study of the value systems of 'other' societies as, in part, a means of better understanding those of our own, has been a foundational problematic for social anthropology.<sup>219</sup> We might think

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<sup>219</sup> We should also note the role of these early anthropological studies in producing the concept of fetishism, the origins of which lay in colonial interpretations of West African religious practices, which Graeber (2007: 120) summarises thus: "An African intends to set out on some project, to go off trading for example. He heads out in the morning and the first thing that he sees that strikes him as in anyway unusual or extraordinary, or just that randomly strikes his fancy, he adopts as a charm that will enable him to carry out his project." The use of the term fetish to describe this practice, rather than the traditional Christian concept of idolatry, developed amongst sixteenth and seventeenth century Portuguese merchants living along West African coast. Graeber (2007: 118) argues that the term fetishism was created in order to "avoid some of the more disturbing implications of their own experience" in particular the risk that experience of other value systems can lead to recognition of the arbitrary nature of your own. The Portuguese merchants were, after all, engaged in the pursuit of gold, 'a soft yellow metal' with limited inherent use value. To do so they had to put themselves at very considerable risk. A European had around a fifty-fifty chance of surviving a year in one of the coastal trading 'castles' (Graeber 2007: 119).

back, for instance, to Mauss's seminal studies of gift economies, which played such an important role in Bataille's conception of the expenditure of excess. Indeed the anthropologist David Graeber (2005: 18) positions these studies within an anthropological tradition that understands values as a way of 'evaluat[ing] ... not things, but actions'. When we talk about value, we are really talking about the process of valuing, an action that takes place within a determinate set of social relations, which we can call a value system. This is true even when social relations are mediated through objects. As McMurty (1998: 7) says: "[A] value system connects together goods that are affirmed and bads that are repudiated as an integral way of thinking and acting in the world." Interpreting this literature De Angelis (2007) argues that we should talk about value practices rather than value systems, to illustrate that capitalist value actually exists alongside many other value practices and so must be constantly (re)created. Anti-capitalist social movements can be seen, in this light, as the frontline in a struggle between value practices. As Graeber (2005: 58) says:

The ultimate stakes of politics... is not even the struggle to appropriate value; it is the struggle to establish what value is... Similarly, the ultimate freedom is not the freedom to create or accumulate value, but the freedom to decide

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Graeber interprets the concept of fetishism as an orientalist inversion, which protected the European value system from considerations of its own arbitrariness by placing the arbitrariness onto the Africans, who were then constructed as child-like fetishists "willing to ascribe divine status to a completely random collection of material objects" (Graeber 2007: 144). Conceptualising these objects as fetishes, however, involved the overlaying onto African practice of the fetishistic aspects and assumptions of European religions. The African understanding of the objects was in fact quite different; they functioned as catalysts to the creation of new social relationships. For Graeber (2007: 138) "A fetish is a God under the process of construction." A certain amount of fetishism is "inevitable, both in the realization of value... and especially in moments of transformation or creativity... The danger comes when fetishism gives way to theology, the absolute assurance that the gods are real" (Graeber 2007: 144).

(collectively or individually) what it is that makes life worth living. In the end, then, politics is about the meaning of life.<sup>220</sup>

Continuing, Graber (2005: 58) suggests:

Any such project of constructing meanings necessarily involves imagining totalities (since this is the stuff of meaning), even if no such project can ever be completely translated into reality—reality being, by definition, that which is always more complicated than any construction we can put on it.

We can position this within our discussion of meaning, totalities and the socius in Chapter Four. A sense of totality is created when the results of a process come to appear as the preconditions of the process. In these circumstances a body appears to miraculate itself by producing its own preconditions and thus takes on an appearance of self-sufficiency. A totality, then, is a fetish because it appears to sustain itself in isolation from its surrounding relations. When Bataille argues that meaning is created by the expenditure of excess, he is saying that the mechanisms by which we incorporate excess into the body, create a body's value system. These mechanisms are value practices.

It is apparent, then, that value is not just produced by social relations but, as we have seen with the notion of the socius, also falls back upon social relations and determines them in turn. We can say then that value plays a role in determining the form taken by organisation. We can find a similar argument located within the debate over Marx's labour theory of value and, in particular, in Diane Elson's (1979) essay *The Value Theory of Labour*. Elson was arguing, on the one hand, against those who saw the utility of the labour theory of value in its proof that the capital relation was inherently exploitative, and on the other, against the Sraffian Marxists who

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<sup>220</sup> We would add that questions about the meaning of life and the creation of values are rarely provoked in everyday life but are one of the symptoms we identified in moments of excess.

saw in it an explanation of price-magnitudes. In opposition to those positions Elson (1979: 123) argues that:

[T]he object of Marx's theory of value is not price at all. ... My argument is that the *object* of Marx's theory of value was labour. ... It is not a matter of seeking an explanation of why prices are what they are and finding it in labour. But rather of seeking an understanding of why labour takes the form it does, and what the political consequences are.<sup>221</sup>

For Elson "the fundamental question about human labour in all societies is, how is it determined?" (1979: 129). In the capitalist mode of production, labour is 'determined' by means of the category *value*, and we can understand this 'non-deterministic determination' as organisation. In other words, value organises labour. A critique that incorporates established values is also a critique of contemporary forms of organisation and the impact of capitalist value on our lives. Capital is value in process, that is, in the process of self-expansion, what Marx calls self-valorisation. It is this process that determines labour. But if the point of Marx's analysis of value is unearthing its determining role on labour then this opens up the possibility of the famous Operaist Copernican inversion.<sup>222</sup> When we look at value from the perspective of its actual effects on labour, we see that ultimately:

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<sup>221</sup> As Marx's (1982: 174) says: "It [political economy] has never once asked the question why this content [i.e. work or human activity] has assumed that particular form, that is to say, why labour is expressed in value, and why the measurement of labour by its duration is expressed in the magnitude of the value of the product'."

<sup>222</sup> *Operaismo* was an intellectual current, developed primarily within Italian Marxism, which sought to understand the working class as active and capital as reactive. As a consequence they inverted the orthodox Marxist tendency to position capital as the central point of analysis, focussing instead on working class life and struggles. As this current has spread into social movements it has become more widely known as autonomism or autonomist Marxism. Of the original Operaist theorists Negri has become the most well known; however, the classical statement of the Operaist Copernican inversion was provided by Mario Tronti (1979: 1):

What we value within this mode of production is not wealth understood as things or resources — material or immaterial, natural or human-made — but continual competitive process. And this is how value organizes: by imposing a regime of constant reorganization. (Harvie, Milburn forthcoming 2011).

If we return to Guattari's (1996: 260) definition of the left as "a processual passion" we could ask if this constant reorganisation is in fact processual? How does it differ from the continual transition that we marked as a symptom of the processual? Such questions address one of the more persistent and tired accusations made of Deleuze and Guattari, that their analysis is complicit with contemporary forms of capitalism. Best and Kellner (1991: 107), for instance, critique Deleuze and Guattari's "productivist imaginary", which they equate with a modernist, even futurist ethic "of frenzied, permanent self-revolution" that doesn't radically break "from capitalist and consumerist behaviour." Such a critique is merely updated by Zizek's (2003) image of a yuppie reading Deleuze and Guattari as a *How To* guide for neoliberalism.

We can draw out the distinction between a Guattarian processual politics and the constant reorganisation associated with capital, and in particular neoliberal capital, through reference to a passage from the *Grundrisse*:

Capital as such creates a specific surplus value because it cannot create an infinite one all at once; but it is the constant movement to create more of the same. The quantitative boundary of the surplus value appears to it as a mere natural barrier, as a necessity which it constantly tries to violate and beyond which it seeks to go. (Marx 1977: 334-6)

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We too have worked with a concept that puts capitalist development first, and workers second. This is a mistake. And now we have to turn the problem on its head, reverse the polarity, and start again from the beginning: and the beginning is the class struggle of the working class. At the level of socially developed capital, capitalist development becomes subordinated to working class struggles; it follows behind them, and they set the pace to which the political mechanisms of capital's own reproduction must be tuned.

Now we can see the consequences of understanding capital as value in process, or as the process of the self-expansion of value. Capital's process of constant reorganisation is aimed not at the creation of difference but at the creation of the same. As Casarino says, in his reading of the same passage: "In capital, Marx discovers repetition without difference: capital is infinite repetition of the same whose structural limit is precisely qualitative difference" (Casarino, Negri 2008: 31). The constant repetition of the same traps difference into a trivial novelty. Have anything you want, as long as it's a commodity. Do anything you want, as long as you can pay for it, which means as long as you go to work, which means as long as your actions are conditioned and subordinated to the needs of capital. The prospect of difference and freedom becomes trapped in endless servitude. Similarly the effects of the constant reorganisation imposed by capital, and associated most strongly with neoliberal capital, are social entropy and powerlessness. A processual politics then does not valorise reorganisation or productivity in the abstract; only capital does that.

We should remember that the context for Guattari's processual definition of the left was its disorientation in the face of neoliberal 'radicalism'. It is for this reason that we have tried to trace a processual politics as a critique of established values. This is not, however, just an intellectual pursuit. The critique of established values is tied to the creation of new values, which, if we accept the maxim *value organises*, means the creation of new forms of organisation. While we can position economic value as one value amongst others, we must also have criteria for evaluating between different values practices. This requires not just a form of analysis that can operate across periods of transvaluation but also ethical criteria of evaluation based on the forms of life tied to those values. Ultimately a processual politics can only be guided by an immanent ethics.

To approach this problem we can return to the previously cited passage from the *Grundrisse*. In Casarino's reading of the passage, he asks the question: If capital 'creates a specific surplus value because it cannot create an infinite one' then we can ask what an 'infinite' surplus value would

entail. “Such an infinite surplus value would not be surplus value in any sense whatsoever: being infinite, it would be immeasurable, it would be unaccountable in terms of value – in short, *it would be surplus without value*” (Casarino, Negri 2008: 31).

For Casarino this conception of surplus beyond value is an important point of connection between “Marx and the thinker of immanence... par excellence, namely Spinoza” (Casarino, Negri 2008: 31). What he detects is a shared image of thought, which presupposes that specific forms of value close off an open field of potential. This image of thought makes possible “the intuition of another way of living surplus”; and it is here “that Spinoza and Marx are at their most revolutionary” (Casarino, Negri 2008: 35). The concept of a *surplus without value*, however, also seems a point of connection with Bataille, and in particular, the concepts of unemployed excess and the general economy. This might illuminate the form of organisation that we can compose in relation to a surplus without value. Bataille uses the sun, which gives without expectation of return, as the figure of the general economy. We can’t inhabit the sun, just as we can’t inhabit the general economy; however, we form bodies based on different means of incorporating the excess that it gives off. Similarly we can’t inhabit a surplus without value but we can compose organisational forms that valorise surplus without value. This would mean that a processual politics is a form of organisation that presupposes a surplus without value; it presupposes an infinite surplus. Such a presupposition disrupts bodies that presuppose only a specific surplus, or, rather a specific means of incorporating surplus. To return to Guattari’s definition of the left, such a perspective forces us to problematise the specific, historically situated values or positions that the left adopts at any particular time.

When we return to the problematic of the event, or more specifically, the moment of excess, we can interpret the expansion of political possibility as precisely this experience of a surplus without value, a glimpsing of infinite excess. We experience this excess as an increase in freedom, in the sense of an increase in the field of potential; the world re-potentialised. An

analytical war machine must then be a form of organisation that adopts the perspective of excess but does not mistake any specific enclosure of excess for a new universal. A processual politics based on the valorisation of surplus without value accords with the definition of a war machine as a form of organisation that “territorializes on deterritorialization itself” (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 381).<sup>223</sup>

A processual politics is a pragmatic politics. While it values the process of exceeding, of overcoming transcendental illusions and fetishisms in order to expand the field of potential, it also accepts the need for actual bodies from which to exercise that freedom. Within these bodies, however, it adopts the perspective of excess, but as Casarino makes clear, “The condition of possibility of [the intuition of another way of living surplus] lies in an understanding of surplus as immanence itself” (Casarino, Negri 2008: 35). The perspective of excess, then, raises the ethical problem of immanence, which Deleuze and Guattari interpret as the very problem of philosophy. How to open up thought without either falling prey to transcendent illusions or else falling into chaos, entropy, or catatonic schizophrenia. As Deleuze and Guattari (1994: 42) put it: “The problem of philosophy is to acquire a consistency without losing the infinite into which thought plunges.” To address this problem we will turn, more fully, to Spinoza “the Christ of philosophers” who “showed, drew up and thought the ‘best’ plane of immanence – that is the purest, the one that does not hand itself over to the

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<sup>223</sup> In fact Deleuze and Guattari are actually describing nomads in this passage, however nomads are closely connected to the production of the war machine. The war machine emerges from the way that nomads occupy space. In opposition to sedentary societies, the nomads are most at home when they are abroad in the world; they are at home when they are on the move. Of course this also applies to organisational forms and an image of thought. In reference to this terminology we can say that capitalism constructs a failed war machine, one that must fall back into transcendence. As Surin (2005: 27) says: “Capitalism... only deterritorializes in order to bring about a more powerful reterritorialization. When Capitalism breaches limits it does so in order to impose its own limits, which it projects as the limits of the universe.”

transcendent or restore any transcendent, the one that inspires the fewest illusions, bad feelings, and erroneous perceptions” (Deleuze, Guattari 1994: 64).

## The Passion of the Christ of Philosophers

Spinoza's ethics rest on the presupposition that existence has only one substance, and indeed has need of only one substance. As this substance can't be immanent to anything prior then it must be immanence in itself; this is then the positing of a plane of immanence. To maintain this plane Spinoza rejects any concept that presupposes a point of transcendence that would rise above it, what Deleuze would call a transcendent illusion. Theologically this means rejecting the notion of a supernatural God who sits above this world to impose order and meaning upon it. Spinoza's God is, instead, co-extensive with nature, a conception that re-casts nature, and the substance of nature, as the cause of itself, or as a self-organising dynamic.<sup>224</sup> The positing of a singular substance also provides the basis for a critique of a certain tradition of humanism that would replace God, with the subject or the self, as the privileged unit of experience.<sup>225</sup> Descartes, for instance, founds his philosophical system on the 'undoubtable' premise *Cogito ergo sum: I think, therefore I am*. This presupposes a conscious subject while adopting

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<sup>224</sup> One way of understanding Spinoza's pantheism is by returning to Nietzsche's critique of atheism for failing to break with Christianity; disbelief in God still retains God at the centre of the belief system. Spinoza, on the other hand, pushes belief in God so far that he removes any room for a transcendent, supernatural God. If God is absolute, reasons Spinoza, then there can be nothing outside of God, therefore God must be co-extensive with nature. We might say that rather than reject God, Spinoza radicalises, or deterritorialises God, he pushes through God until he comes out the other side. If God is everywhere, God is nowhere.

<sup>225</sup> More specifically the subject or self replaces the soul as the substance that separates man from nature.

the perspective of a disembodied rationality.<sup>226</sup> We can take this as a commitment by Descartes to more than one substance of being because the mind must be of a different substance to the body.<sup>227</sup> This mind/body dualism is, however, really the prioritising of the mind over the body. Indeed the positing of more than one substance to being usually involves the valuing of one substance over the another; if one substance doesn't transcend the other and therefore give us a better view of it then there is little point in discerning the distinction between the substances.<sup>228</sup>

Spinoza's positing of a singular substance of being can be seen as a materialist corrective to Descartes' idealism; he places reason back within the body. There is a danger in this move, however, as Hardt (1993: 74) warns:

Materialism should never be confused with a simple priority of body over mind, of the physical over the intellectual. Rather, materialism repeatedly appears in the history of philosophy as a corrective to idealism, as a denial of the priority of mind over body. Spinoza corrects Descartes just as Marx corrects Hegel. This materialist correction is not an inversion, but the proposition of an equality in principle between the corporeal and the intellectual.

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<sup>226</sup> For Deleuze, to presuppose the subject as a given is to mistake a result for a precondition. It is to fall prey to a fetishism or a transcendent illusion. As Colebrook (2002: 74) says: "We do not begin as subjects who then have to know a world; there is experience and from this experience we form an image of ourselves as distinct subjects."

<sup>227</sup> For Descartes there is also a third substance, God, but later philosophies of the subject do away with the need for God while retaining the mind/body dualism.

<sup>228</sup> The positing of a single substance of being is then a kind of realism, an orientation, *contra* Hallward (2006), to act in the world begins with a belief in the world. As Deleuze (1995: 176) says: "What we most lack is a belief in the world, we've quite lost the world, it's been taken from us." A belief that we are part of a world, constructed by and constructing wider flows of movement, gives us access to a potential malleability that exceeds the perspective of our specific bodies and subjectivities.

Spinoza posits an ontological parallelism between the body and the mind, or between thought and extension, as two equal expressions of the same substance. From this we can say that an immanent, materialist ethics must operate at the corporeal level, as well as at the level of the rational, conscious subject. Indeed it must also operate at the level of the social, or the *socius*, within which subjects and bodies are embedded. It would be a mistake, then, to cast Deleuze as an anti-rationalist. However, Deleuze's rationalism, following Spinoza, is an embodied and embedded one. As such it is always a bounded rationality; it is the rationalism of the mole and not of the eagle. This means that ethical evaluation must always begin in the middle, amidst the messy, base material of pre-existent bodies and the experience of their interactions.

For Deleuze (1995: 100) this leads to the distinction between ethics and morality:

Morality presents us with a set of constraining rules of a special sort, ones that judges actions and intentions by considering them in relation to transcendent values (this is good, that's bad...); ethics is a set of optional rules that assess what we do, what we say, in relation to the ways of existing involved.

Transcendent judgements evaluate bodies through reference to a pre-established standard. We can see how this is inadequate for our problematic of establishing forms of analysis that can be applied across a transformative event. Transcendent judgement elides the event by holding the analytical criteria, and hence the values that inform them, above the transformative process. An immanent ethics on the other hand is pragmatic, judging the modes of existing according to the tenor of life they produce. "There are never any criteria other than the tenor of existence, the intensification of life" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994: 74).

Spinoza (1996: 75) establishes such an immanent ethics through his concept of *conatus* or striving. "Each thing, as far as it can by its own powers, strives to persevere in its being." This striving to persevere becomes a striving to increase a body's power of acting, in order to maximise its ability

to persist.<sup>229</sup> Spinoza has a specific conception of a body, defining it through its capacity to act or be acted upon, or to be more precise, its power to affect or be affected. This is a definition of bodies in terms of their relations or possible relations, that is, their compossibility, their ability to compose new relations with other bodies and thus compose new bodies. As Deleuze (1997: 218) explains:

In short, relations are inseparable from the capacity to be affected. So that Spinoza can consider two fundamental questions as equivalent: *What is the structure of a body?* And: *What can a body do?* A body's structure is the composition of its relations. What a body can do corresponds to the nature and limits of its capacity to be affected.<sup>230</sup>

So a striving to persist is not a striving to persist as the same but a striving to connect with other bodies and so compose ever more powerful bodies. It is within the unrest of this striving that we can root immanent ethical evaluation. As Hardt (1993: 92) explains:

When two bodies meet, there is an encounter between two dynamic relationships: Either they are indifferent to each other, or they are compatible and together compose a new relationship, a new body; or, rather, they are incompatible and one body decomposes the relationship of the other, destroying it, just as poison destroys the blood.

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<sup>229</sup> We can see how this casts the definition of life quite widely, it includes anything that comes into being, strives to persist and then ceases to be. The more affects something has, the more it can interact with the bodies around it, the more it can express its being and so the greater its ability to persist. This definition doesn't separate sentient life from other flows of life by presupposing another substance is in operation, such as a soul or a self, but it does allow distinctions to be drawn. For instance, the ability to anticipate dramatically increases the ability to act. "The mind as far as it can, strives to imagine those things that increase or aid the body's power of acting" (Spinoza 1996: 77).

<sup>230</sup> This presents us with a complex phase space for an encounter between even just two bodies. We are dealing with changing relations between bodies, which are themselves defined by their relations and so also in a process of change.

Compatible encounters are experienced as joyful and incompatible ones are experienced as sadness. As Deleuze (1978: 10) says:

[B]roadly speaking, when I am affected in chance encounters, either I am affected with sadness or with joy. When I am affected with sadness, my power of acting diminishes, which is to say that I am further separated from this power. When I am affected with joy, it increases, which is to say that I am less separated from this power.

This gives us the first criterion for immanent ethical selection: we should orient ourselves towards joyful encounters and away from sad ones. We should attempt to maximise our powers to act by maximising our connections. This gives us the outlines of a political project based on the composition of powerful collective bodies.

We can apply this to our symptomology of excess. We experience such joyful collective affects of increasing capacities as the intensification of life. Joyful experiences are disruptive; they draw us beyond ourselves through the creation of powerful new collective bodies. In these moments the plane of immanence is experienced as surplus, as the exceeding of our bodies and subjectivities and then, perhaps, as the creation of new ones. These are powerful passions, which offer us “nothing less than the perception of one’s vitality, one’s sense of aliveness, of changeability (often signified as ‘freedom’)” (Massumi 2002: 36).<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>231</sup> Of course contentious political action is not the only arena of powerful affective experiences. In fact we can think of most crowd experiences in this fashion. Much of the appeal of sport, for instance – both playing and spectating – is the experience of being drawn out of ourselves by collectivity but in these cases the environment erects strong parameters around the experience. We might also draw parallels with religious crowds or congregations. We might speculate that when people talk of being moved by the spirit of God, or of feeling his love they are in fact experiencing affective connections established horizontally in the crowd, which they come to understand as the property of a transcendent entity. In this reading a Spinozan God is a defetishised Christian, or Jewish, God.

There is, however, another layer to Spinoza's ethics, the distinction between actions and passions. Actions are active affections, which are internally caused, or rather, which express their own cause. Passions are passive affections; they have an external cause and as such are separated from their cause.<sup>232</sup> Passions then involve the separation of a body from its power to act, as they are passions for something that appears external. "The affection is passive because it is explained by the external body, and the idea of the affection is a passion, a passive feeling" (Deleuze 1992: 239). A passive affection can also be either joyful or sad, depending on the compossibility of the bodies that encounter each other, their powers of affection. A sad passive affection results in the decrease in power, or the decomposition, of either one or both bodies.<sup>233</sup> A joyful passion increases a body's power to act but it still retains a level of impotence as we understand the joy to be beyond our control and as such it is not fully within our power to sustain or repeat that joyful affect. As Deleuze (1992: 240) explains: "All passion cuts us off from our power of action; as long as our capacity to be affected is exercised by passions, we are cut off from that which we are capable."

We might think of joyful passions as potential way stations on the path to active affections. "The ethical question falls then, in Spinoza, into two parts: *How can we come to produce active affections?* But first of all: *How can we come to experience a maximum of joyful passions?*" (Deleuze 1992:

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<sup>232</sup> "By affect I understand affections of the body by which the body's power of acting is increased or diminished, aided or restrained, and at the same time the ideas of these affections. Therefore, if we can be the adequate cause of any of these affections, I understand by the affect an action; otherwise, a passion" (Spinoza: 1996: 70).

<sup>233</sup> We can think of such clear cut sad or joyful encounters as limit points on a continuum that allow ethical distinctions to be drawn; actual encounters are likely to involve more complicated interactions between joy and sadness; "the sadness of what I hate brings me joy, etc" (Hardt 1993: 94).

246).<sup>234</sup> In joyful passive affections, “[a] man’s power of acting is not yet increased to the point where he conceives himself and his actions adequately.” (Spinoza 1996: 147). The route from joyful passive affects to active affects lies in a body comprehending and expressing their cause. For Spinoza we do this by forming common notions. “When we encounter a body that agrees with our own, when we experience a joyful passive affection, we are induced to form the idea that is common to that body and our own.” (Deleuze 1992: 282).

We can think of the creation of common notions then as processes of defetishisation in which bodies strive to increase their capacities by acting in common. A common notion is an adequate idea and for Spinoza:

The adequate expresses (or envelops or comprehends) its cause; the inadequate is mute. Like the active, the adequate is linked forward to what it can do; but it is also linked backward to its internal genealogy of affects, the genealogy of its own production. The adequate gives full view to both the productivity and the producibility of being (Hardt 1993 118).

But once again we must emphasise that the composition of common notions is not a purely intellectual pursuit. It involves the expression both of the body and the mind, extension and thought; as Deleuze and Guattari make clear, it involves the composition of both a machinic assemblage of bodies and a collective assemblage of enunciation. *Conatus* then drives the interdependent imperatives: *Dare to know, Dare to revolt, Dare to create*.

Of course these are far from straightforward processes. Spinoza has a pessimistic analysis of actuality; encounters tend towards the passive and the sad. Indeed for Spinoza the state of nature would tend towards sad, passive affects, being dominated by chance encounters and little understanding there is minimal chance of joyful encounters. “There is only one way of making the state of nature viable: by striving to *organize its*

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<sup>234</sup> We should point out that active affects are always joyful as joy is a measure of active expression; “there is no active sadness... only joy can be active” (Deleuze 1992: 274).

encounters" (Deleuze 1992: 260-1). By organising encounters we can become the cause of them and make joyful encounters repeatable. An ethics of maximising joyful, active affections then is a matter of political organisation. Let's return to the specific form of political organisation with which we began this chapter and our reading of alter-globalisation movement process through Guattari's concern with a processual passion. To make a judgement on organisation through reference to its anticipated conditioning of some far-off end point would be to risk falling into moral judgements. However we can make ethical judgements on political organisation based on the affects they create in the here and now.

Deleuze (1978: 4) suggests that such an ethics is the basis for Spinoza's rendering of the fundamental problem of politics:

How does it happen that people who have power [*pouvoir*], in whatever domain, need to affect us in a sad way? The sad passions as necessary. Inspiring sad passions is necessary for the exercise of power. And Spinoza says, in the Theological-Political Treatise, that this is a profound point of connection between the despot and the priest – they both need the sadness of their subjects.<sup>235</sup>

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<sup>235</sup> The translators highlight the word *pouvoir* in this passage to indicate that the English word *power* encompasses two distinct meanings that in the Romance languages relate to two separate words: in French they are *pouvoir* and *puissance*, in Italian they are *potenza* and *potere*, and in Latin *potentia* and *potestas*; although we should point out that in everyday usage the distinction may not be so distinct. Protevi (2009: 50) provides a useful description of the sense the words carry here:

[W]e can say that *pouvoir* is transcendent power: it comes from above. It is hylomorphic, imposing form on the chaotic or passive material of the mob. In its most extreme manifestation, it is fascistic: it is expressed not simply as the desire to rule, but more insidiously as the longing for the strong leader to rescue us from the chaos into which our bodies politic have descended. *Puissance*, on the other hand, is immanent self-organisation. It is the power of direct democracy, of people working together to generate the structures of their social life.

There have been many attempts to translate this distinction into English, including talking of Power with a big P and power with a small p, or talking of power-over and power-to. In relation to Spinoza we can see that the power (*potentia*) to affect or be affected is closer to

In relationships of domination the proliferation of sad passions is obvious. However many exercises of power (*pouvoir*) involve joyful, although passive moments, in which our joy is achieved through investment in a seemingly transcendent object, such as a leader, a priest, a football team or a commodity. When we are removed from that object we cannot repeat the joyful affect and we come to see it as a property of that transcendent object. Indeed the sad affects that are produced by separation from the object can lead to an addictive seeking out of that object. We can see this as a critique of both the reflective joy of the strong leader and the fleeting joy of consumption. The interruption of a processual politics leads to the investment of desire into social relations that ultimately separate us from our own power to act, a moment of joy leading to ultimate sadness and passivity. As Deleuze and Guattari (1984: 29) say: “the fundamental problem of political philosophy is still the one that Spinoza saw so clearly... why do men fight *for* their servitude as stubbornly as though it were their salvation?”<sup>236</sup>

A processual politics must start then with: “The devaluation of sad passions, and the denunciation of those who cultivate and depend on them” (Deleuze 1992: 270).<sup>237</sup> In fact can't we see such an imperative in the alter-

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capacity while power (*potestas*) as domination produces sad affects by separating bodies from their power (*potentia*) to act.

<sup>236</sup> A Spinozan ethics then provides an answer to one of the more familiar critiques of Deleuze and Guattari, encapsulated by Best and Kellner (1991:108) when they say: “Deleuze and Guattari have no theory of why revolutionary desire is better than Fascist desires.” Protevi (2009: 50-51) provides an answer in a nice vignette:

The Nazis at the Nuremburg rallies were filled with joyous affect, but this joy at being swept up into an emergent body politic was passive. The Nazis were stratified: their joy was triggered by the presence of a transcendent figure manipulating symbols – flags and faces –and by the imposition of a rhythm or a forced entrainment – marches and salutes and songs. Upon leaving the rally, they had no autonomous power (*puissance*) to make mutually empowering connections. In fact, they could only feel sad at being isolated, removed from the thrilling presence of the leader... Political affect then includes an ethical standard: Does the encounter produce active joyful affect? Does it increase the *puissance* of the bodies, that is, does it enable them to form new and mutually empowering encounters outside the original encounter?

<sup>237</sup> Indeed for Deleuze (1992: 270) this is “the practical object of philosophy”.

globalisation movement's distaste for representative politics? Beyond this a processual politics must also attempt to maximise the chance of joyful passive encounters and where these occur to create common notions that will ward off sadness and fetishisation and enable joyful activity in which we actively create our own values. The passion of a processual calling is not then an attachment to certain procedures, and nor does it involve the erection of a new universal model of democracy based on these procedures. The passion is, rather, a passion for freedom: the joyful passion of increasing capacities, the feeling of increasing, collective power (*puissance*). It is a striving to increase our capabilities, to increase our freedom to act beyond the limiting superstitions of religion, sovereignty and capital.

A political concern with certain procedures, the refusal to divorce organisational process from the collective production of aims, masks a passion for the joyful affect of increased capacities that those procedures make possible. Of course this can fall into a bureaucratic fetish, it can become a passionate attachment for a set of procedures. When applied in inappropriate situations those procedures can produce sad affects; who hasn't felt their powers sapping during long and frustrating meetings? Even when consensus decision-making is done correctly, there is no guarantee that the bodies that encounter each other will be compatible at that particular time and place. The aim of such procedures, however, should be to maximise the chance of joyful encounters and minimise the chance of the development of fetishisms that cut us off from our power to act. An analytical war machine is more than just a set of decision-making processes; it must be tied to a politics of defetishisation, the self-expansion of valuing surplus without value, combined with a continual process of composing common notions, facilitating the never-ending exploration of our power of acting in common.

We might conclude by asking what role such concepts as justice or equality might play in this political schema. We are certainly not dismissing a sense of justice as a motivating factor in collective action and indeed both justice and equality can be seen as prerequisites for the maximisation of

affective joy. However we would agree with Eric Alliez when he says: “equality can’t work *for real* as any kind of universal, beyond a strategic point of departure” (Alliez, et al 2010: 155). An ethics of radical immanence must presuppose a radical egalitarianism but not as a generic or platonic principle. It must instead be enacted through a lived process of disentanglement from the social consequences of fetishised values. We can, once again, relate this to different conceptions of communism within the Marxist tradition, and indeed within the writings of Marx himself. In the *Critique of the Gotha Programme* Marx (1968c: 323) declares:

What we have to deal with here is a communist society, not as it has *developed* on its own foundations, but, on the contrary, just as it *emerges* from capitalist society; which is thus in every respect, economically, morally and intellectually, still stamped with the birth marks of the old society from whose womb it emerges.

This statement is made during a critique of a programmatic notion of equality, “*equal right* here is still in principle – *bourgeois right*” (Marx 1968c: 323). Communism and equality are not then programmes but problematics. Indeed we can say that communism is a problematic based on equality but that this equality is also a problematic. Indeed that is what problematics are – problems leading not to resolution but to new problems.

As Deleuze and Guattari (1984: 293) remark: “A revolutionary machine is nothing if it does not acquire at least as much force as these coercive machines have for producing breaks and mobilizing flows”. While a generic egalitarianism can operate as a point of departure, ultimately it is only the joyful experience of the self-expanding circuit of increasing collective capacities that can provide the dynamism to overcome that of capital and other coercive machines. There is a sense of contagion to joyful affects, the potential of entering a positive feedback loop. We can see such a conception in Hardt and Negri (2009: 379) when they say:

The path of joy is constantly to open new possibilities, to expand our field of imagination, our abilities to feel and be affected, our capacities for action and

passion. In Spinoza's thought, in fact, there is a correspondence between our powers to affect (our mind's power to think and our body's power to act) and our power to be affected. The greater our mind's ability to think, the greater its capacity to be affected by the ideas of others; the greater our body's power to act, the greater its capacity to be affected by other bodies. And we have greater power to think and to act, Spinoza explains, the more we interact and create common relations with others.

An increase in our field of potential is an intensification of life. However, there is a danger in a runaway feedback loop of intensification. Too much intensity risks the loss of any consistency, the loss of the room for analysis. The political task is to retain control over the level of intensity. If the watchword for *Anti-Oedipus* is *Destroy, Destroy*, then for *A Thousand Plateaus* it is *Caution, Caution*. It is this problematic that will guide our reinterpretation of movement repertoires in the next chapter. In terms of the overall orientation of the thesis we could say that we are moving from the diagnostic mode of the symptomology, to the therapeutic model of Spinoza's ethic – although in a processual politics diagnosis is only ever temporary and analysis is itself therapeutic. We can agree with Hardt and Negri (2009: 194) when they suggest that:

[It] makes sense that Spinoza thinks of ethics in a medical framework – curing the ills of the body and mind, but more important, identifying how our intellectual and corporeal powers have become corrupted, turned against themselves, become self-destructive. Maybe this ethical and therapeutic model explains why Freud was so fascinated by Spinoza.

We will follow this connection in the next chapter, when we look to practical examples of processual politics and analytical war machines, beginning with Guattari's analytical practice in both political and psychiatric contexts.

## Chapter Six

### How Do You Make Yourself an Analytical War Machine?

*In the early morning of the first of June, 2003 I found myself in a field next to the small French village of Saint-Cergues. It was a beautiful morning with a huge expanse of blue sky stretching over the Alpine mountains that surround the village on three sides. Somewhere up in those mountains was the resort town of Evian where the leaders of the G8 countries were about to start their annual meeting. Of course the leaders were already there but Evian was nowhere near big enough for the 20,000 ancillary staff the meeting needed. For the most part these were billeted in the nearby Swiss city of Geneva. Saint-Cergues sits along side one of the main roads from Geneva to Evian and I was there as part of a crowd of 5,000 people aiming to blockade that road and prevent or delay the meeting, We had been stopped from getting any closer to Evian by a line of riot police stretching across the road, backed up by an impressively armored water cannon.*

*I was stood with a group of friends discussing how, with our old heads on old shoulders, we knew how to stay out of too much trouble, when we heard the bang of a tear gas canister exploding high in the air followed by a fizz as one of the pellets dispersed by the explosion, landed nearby. Disregarding our previous thoughts we ran over to the pellet, which was spewing out gas, and tried to extinguish it with our bottles of water. Our ineffectual efforts left us enveloped in a cloud of the stinging, choking gas until a young German ran over shouting, "hey, look this is better" as he pulled up a clod of earth and thumped it over the tear gas pellet, putting it straight out. We retreated to get the catch of the gas out of our throats but the tear gas canisters kept coming over. Soon, without any overt coordination a team of people was ferrying clods of earth from the fields onto the road where another group were using them to extinguish the gas.*

*Despite a continuous attack with tear gas, pepper spray canisters and concussion grenades the blockade continued for another six hours. This*

stability allowed a layer of more formal organisation to be established. A spokes council was called to which affinity groups, informal groups of friends, and people who had spontaneously self-organised into groups could send delegates to enable more efficient coordination. This was achieved despite interruption by tear gas, the absence of a shared language and disparate traditions of protest. But impressive as this self-organised constituted form was it only rested on top of the constituent affect that animated it.

For instance, during the course of the blockade two large burning barricades were built across the road. The first barricade was built entirely spontaneously but later the spokes council made a decision to build a second as police advances appeared to show an intention to capture the first. People went out to look for materials and a huge pile of wood was discovered amongst some trees. Without recourse to the spokes council people spontaneously organised to collect the wood. A line of people passed the logs through some bushes while others ferried them back to the barricade like a line of ants. I along with others was unaware of the spokes council decision – I merely saw what was going on, decided it was a good thing to do and joined in.

The most important decision the spokes council had to make was when to collectively abandon the blockade. The decision to leave was prompted by the feeling among the front liners that they'd been exposed to gas for so long that it was getting hazardous to their health. This information was transmitted through their delegates. The spokes council had provided coordination but had allowed a considerable level of heterogeneity. This, however, needed a clear, collective decision. Any stragglers left behind would be at the mercy of the riot police. The meeting deciding whether it was time to leave was interrupted by a tear gas attack but as it dispersed most participants seemed to think a consensus had been reached and word began to spread. After collecting everyone up we all marched off together. However a couple of people didn't think that the previous spoke council process had been completed and called another meeting a mile or so down

*the road. Even though people had seemed happy with the decision made, some thought that improper procedure had been followed. The constituted nature of the spokes council model had become a problem as conditions changed. With the barricades abandoned the crowd was in a much more exposed position. A feeling of anxiety set in as several helicopters could be seen coming to land back at the site of the blockade. We didn't know the intentions of the police. Maybe they were clearing the road to attack us or make arrests. This spokes council was undermined by the affect of fear and broke up in disarray.*

*The march continued along the road through countryside and occasional closed shop units when by some mad miracle we came across a shop with a couple of full swimming pools outside complete with slides and pool accessories. It was like a mirage in the blistering heat. A couple of people sprinted towards it. The first guy over the fence took off his shoes and threw them one after the other without breaking stride. The way he did it, the particular height to which he threw the shoes and the comedy dive that followed flipped the crowd into hilarious abandon. The danger was forgotten as people ran whooping towards the pool. The tension and anxiety was discharged and we ended the day with a joyful affect.*

## **Introduction**

The vignette above illustrates the complex interrelation of organisation levels and forms that go to make up an active collectivity. The more formal organisational repertoires rest on more informal ones as the situation moves between different levels of intensity and extensity. We can see the different sets of knowledges that are presupposed, learnt or shared. Perhaps most fundamentally we can see that the potential of different organisational forms rest upon, and are conditioned by, flows of affect and desire. As we try to think through what the concept of an analytical war machine could possibly mean in relation to contemporary movement practice, we need a conceptualisation that can operate on all these different levels. In this chapter we approach this problem by tracing a conceptual development in

the work of Deleuze and Guattari between their theory of groups and their theory of territory. We begin by looking at Guattari's experience of groups before moving to look more closely at his experience and theorisation of group analysis at the psychiatric hospital Le Clinique de La Borde. We then go on to examine the theory of groups in Freud and Sartre as context for an examination of Deleuze and Guattari's distinction between subject and subjugated groups. After a brief examination of this distinction in relation to the March 22<sup>nd</sup> Movement we discuss the problem of a displacement of fetishism onto the analytical body up an increasing level of scale, before moving on to examine Deleuze and Guattari's concept of territory in relation to analysis, as a more scalable concept than the group. We then think through some of the repertoires of the alter-globalisation movement in relation to this conceptualisation and in particular through Deleuze and Guattari's territorial concept of the refrain.

In the previous chapter we traced Deleuze's concern with the problematics of immanent analysis back to his earliest phase of work, allowing us some insight into subsequent conceptual development.<sup>238</sup> In our use of Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the BwO in Chapter Four we drew primarily upon *Anti-Oedipus*. The concept, however, undergoes development and is used differently in their later work. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, "the BwO becomes a matter of technique rather than of diagnosis or therapy" (Holland 2005: 60). We have already examined the BwO as a tool of critique, concerned with conceptualising a body's incorporation of its intellectual presuppositions and material preconditions. In *A Thousand Plateaus*,

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<sup>238</sup> We could very roughly split Deleuze's writings into three consecutive stages. Firstly there are his monographs on specific philosophers, including books on Kant and Nietzsche, in which he settles his account with the history of philosophy. Secondly there are his books, *The Logic of Sense* and *Difference and Repetition*, where he directly outlines his own project. The third collaborative phase, beginning with the publication of *Anti-Oedipus* and continuing until his death, is triggered by both the events of '68 and the linked event of his collaboration with Guattari.

however, there is a more constructive tone, as indicated in the title of the chapter, or plateau: *How Do You Make Yourself a Body Without Organs?*

This change of emphasis is undoubtedly related to the different circumstances and the different problematics with which they were entangled. *Anti-Oedipus* addresses the problematics emerging from “the hopes and despair following May '68” (Deleuze 2004a: 194). The proximity to such a major event made diagnosis the most pressing task. *A Thousand Plateaus*, however, was published in 1980 as the world began to solidify into what Guattari would call the years of winter.<sup>239</sup> In these circumstances the most pressing problems became less those of diagnosis than those of construction. The task was to break free from the clagging entropy of the time by constructing a new BwO and therefore revealing the full body of the socius. We should not, however, see this as a fundamental break in the concept. In the previous chapter we saw that Deleuze had already established, in his earlier book on Nietzsche, the inseparability of the two moments of critique: the tracing back to obscured values and the creation of new values. Perhaps the most we could point to is a change of emphasis as the concept was reworked in line with contemporary problematics.

With this, however, we encounter another danger of engagement with Deleuze and Guattari: that we subsume the work of Guattari under the apparently pre-existing philosophy of Deleuze. Such a subsumption is perhaps the dominant trend in the contemporary Anglo-American treatment of their work, and is in line with a de-politicised reading that also separates Deleuze and Guattari from the political problematics with which they were engaged. This tendency risks the construction of a fetishised repetition of Deleuze overcoded by desires for a new master theorist. Deleuze does come to his conceptual apparatus through an engagement with the history of

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<sup>239</sup> In 1986 Guattari published a collection of his work entitled *Les Années D'Hiver, 1980-1985*, which translates as *The Years of Winter*. The title's description was not just geopolitical but also personal as Guattari suffered from prolonged bouts of depression during this period.

philosophy. However, he found this inheritance deadening and sought to escape it through the creation of an alternative materialist lineage to that of the dogmatic image of thought.<sup>240</sup> Guattari, however, came to his conceptual apparatus through militant political and psychiatric practice. It is only with the event of their collaborative writing that the deadening grip of the philosophy of past generations was broken for Deleuze and, arguably, the high water mark of 'post-structuralist' theory was reached. An event was born in the collision between Deleuze's crystalline acuity and Guattari's intense conceptual creativity.<sup>241</sup> *A Thousand Plateaus*, in particular, still represents a rupture in thought that seems to resist attempts to enclose it within academic respectability. The attempt to excise Guattari by returning to and privileging Deleuze's earlier work, which fits more easily back into the history of philosophy, can be seen as an attempted domestication: the obscuring of the event of Deleuze and Guattari behind a politics of compromise.<sup>242</sup> It is for

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<sup>240</sup> "The history of philosophy has always been the agent of power in philosophy, and even in thought. It has played the repressors role: how can you think without having read Plato, Descartes, Kant and Heidegger, and so-and-so's book about them? A formidable school of intimidation which manufactures specialists in thought – but which also makes those who stay outside conform all the more to this specialism which they despise. An image of thought called philosophy has been formed historically and it effectively stops people from thinking" (Deleuze, Parnet 2002: 13).

<sup>241</sup> We are still struggling, here, to escape a personological fetishism. Such creativity was itself born amidst the collective intelligence of practice.

<sup>242</sup> Couldn't we push this line of argument further? Why does so little of contemporary 'Deleuzian' theory take place within the cramped space of contemporary social movement or anti-capitalist problematics? The theorising taking place within the Anglo-American academy rarely goes further than that safest of all academic radicalisms, ideology critique. And it's fair to ask why you would really need Deleuze for that. We could speculate that there has been a desire to open some space for thought by providing academic respectability for the study of Deleuze but we might again ask why this has taken such an un-reflexive form. There has been little attention paid within Deleuze studies to the disciplining mechanisms of academic institutionalisation. This is particularly surprising during a period of radical neoliberal restructuring of education and considerable student-led resistance.

this reason that when we ask: *How Do You Make Yourself an Analytical War Machine?* as a technique in the construction of a BwO, we position the question back amidst the problematics in which Deleuze and Guattari posed it. It is also for this reason that we now turn to our attention to Guattari's practice as a means of reopening the political problematics of that time.

## A Group Star

"Felix was a man of the group, of bands or tribes, and yet he is a man alone, a desert populated by all these group and all his friends, all his becomings" (Deleuze, Parnet 2002: 13). Guattari operated through groups, joining, forming or splitting them prodigiously. He started in 1946 as a precocious 16-year-old militant in the youth hostelling movement. Imbued with the spirit of the Liberation, this movement formed "a cluster of anti-didactic practices emphasizing autonomy and self-reliance" (Genosko 2002: 5). He was soon also a militant in the far-left, starting in the youth wing of the Communist Party, and then moving between various Trotskyite groupuscles before participating in the journal *La Voie Communiste*. As he sought to cross boundaries, and connect together different sectors and struggles, he was frequently expelled for exceeding the limits that groups set themselves. Despite their faults however such group experiences were central to Guattari's intellectual development. During the events of May '68 it was one of the groups he had founded, *FEGRI* (Federation des Groupes d'etudes et de Recherches Institutionnelles), that occupied the Theatre de L'Odeon creating one of the movement's key assemblies and turning it from a site of performance to a site of production and continuous discussion.<sup>243</sup> By the time of his meeting with Deleuze, Guattari was already a well-known activist dubbed "Mister Anti" by the French press. (Genosko 2002: 2).

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<sup>243</sup>As we shall see later in the chapter Guattari also participated in that other great institution of the '68, the March 22<sup>nd</sup> Movement.

Deleuze on the other hand was a man apart, almost unique amongst his milieu for having never joined the Communist Party. Indeed when they agreed to write together, Guattari assumed that Deleuze would be brought into the ferment of his various groups. Instead it led to a period of retreat from group work: “as soon as we agreed to work together, Deleuze immediately closed all the other doors. I hadn’t anticipated that” (Guattari 2009: 82). The collaboration came at a time when Guattari was trying to free himself from the entropy that had gripped his post-68 political collectives. As he says of that scene, “I was hoping that a collective development could be pursued, but instead a certain prohibition on thinking set in” (Guattari 2009: 83). The relationship with Deleuze deterritorialised Guattari’s conception of groups, breaking him from a mythic commitment to the inevitable productivity of the group.<sup>244</sup> This did not, however, entail a repudiation of militant group practice, which, for Guattari remained an essential component in breaking from Oedipal society. As Guattari (1984: 29) says: “I believe that no one who had the experience of being a militant in one of those youth organisations or mass movements, in the Communist party or some splinter group, will ever be just the same as everyone else.” Despite this, it would be foolish to presuppose that collectivisation is always the most productive move. Perhaps instead we can extract from Guattari’s practice the notion of a productive distance or rhythm to adopt in relation to groups. The need for immersion in the intensity of collectivity must also allow room for disengagement and analysis to avoid entombment as a group solidifies.

Alongside his militancy in far left groups, Guattari pursued group work in a different context, his psychoanalytic practice. This took place chiefly at Le Clinique de La Borde, a psychiatric hospital founded by Jean Oury, a mentor from Guattari’s activism in the youth hostelling movement. Guattari was hired in 1955 when La Borde was established as an experiment in institutional analysis. It might appear that Guattari’s practice in political group

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<sup>244</sup> “It’s true. Deleuze, carefully, with a light touch, broke down a kind of myth about groups that I had had” (Guattari 2009: 84).

would be more relevant than his psychiatric practice but in fact this dividing line soon breaks down. Guattari was hired at La Borde because of his political experience. Oury thought he could introduce elements of militant practice into the psychoanalytic institution. His psychoanalytical practice, then, aimed to bring politics, and the social, into psychoanalysis, while his political practice included analysing groups on the level of desire and desiring production. As Deleuze (2004a: 193) puts it: “A militant political activist and a psychoanalyst just so happen to meet in the same person, and instead of each minding his own business, they ceaselessly communicate, interfere with one another, and get mixed up – each mistaking himself for the other.”

## **From Transference to Transversality**

La Borde was established as an experiment in the adaptation of the analytical process to the institutional context of the psychiatric hospital. The traditional institutional form for psychoanalysis is the dyadic relationship between the analyst and the analysand, mediated through a contractual agreement.<sup>245</sup> In this context the analyst guides the process of transforming the analysand back towards a predetermined norm. The role of the analyst is to interpret the behaviour and speech of the analysand through the application of an interpretive grid.<sup>246</sup> This structure keeps both the subjectivity of the analyst and the interpretive grid notionally beyond the

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<sup>245</sup> One of the innovations at La Borde was their treatment of schizophrenics, who as a group had been marginalised within psychoanalysis. As Deleuze (2004a: 201) explains:

Freud's stroke of genius was to show that bourgeois families and the frontiers of the asylum contained a large group of people ('neurotics') who could be brought under a particular contract, in order to lead them, using original means, back to the norms of traditional medicine... one of the principle consequences of this was that psychosis remained on the horizon of psychoanalysis, a general source of clinical material, and yet was excluded as beyond the contractual field.

<sup>246</sup> Without wishing to overdo it, we should draw attention here to an isomorphism in the role of the analyst as transcendent guide in psychoanalytic transformation and the role of the vanguard party in revolutionary social transformation.

scope of transformation. The analyst, then, with his pre-accomplished knowledge, has a certain authority, which allows the analysand the confidence to enter into a disruptive period of transformation. In practice, however, the structure is not so clear-cut, though the general institutional form of the dyadic relationship is placed beyond transformation, it does enter the analysis through the phenomenon of transference.

Transference is the libidinal tie between the analysand and the analyst, in which, for Freud, "the patient sees in [the analyst] the return, the reincarnation, of some important figure out of his childhood or past, and consequently transfers on to him feelings and reactions which undoubtedly applied to this prototype" (Freud 2006: 29). Transference can bring advantages for analysis if, for example, it increases the patient's openness to the influence of the analyst. "If the patient puts the analyst in the place of his father (or mother), he is also giving him the power which his super-ego exercises over his ego, since his parents were, as we know, the origin of his super-ego" (Freud 2006: 30). It can also be a strong source of resistance to analysis in the form of the Oedipal desire to kill the father. The analyst, however, can also turn this resistance to their advantage.

The transference is made conscious to the patient by the analyst, and it is resolved by convincing him that in his transference-attitude he is re-experiencing emotional relations which had their origin in his earliest object-attachments during the repressed period of his childhood. In this way the transference is changed from the strongest weapon of the resistance into the best instrument of the analytic treatment (Freud 1995: 26).

Transference, then, turns the analyst into a mirror upon which original traumas can be restaged and recognised by the patient, and ultimately resolved. The question raised at La Borde was how this transference plays out when the analysis occurs in a different institutional structure.

The context for Guattari's approach can be traced through his critique of the psychoanalytic interpretive reduction of social relations to the Oedipal triangle of the father, the mother and the self. As Deleuze and Guattari (1984: 96-7) argue:

There is no Oedipal triangle: Oedipus is always open in an open social field... The father, the mother, and the self are at grips with, and directly coupled to, the elements of the political and historical situation – the soldier, the cop, the occupier, the collaborator, the radical, the resister, the boss, the boss's wife – who constantly break all the triangulations, and who prevent the entire situation from falling back on the familial complex and becoming internalized in it.

The operation of transference in psychoanalysis, however, reinforces Oedipal isolation as “desire is re-established in a drastically reduced space, a miserable little area of identification (the analyst's couch, his watching eye, his supposedly attentive ear)” (Guattari 1984: 55).

At La Borde the basic therapeutic unit was the group, and transference in this context was used to move away from Oedipal reduction towards an engagement with the full complexity of social forces. The defining characteristic of the institutional analysis at La Borde was:

[P]recisely a determination never to isolate the study of mental illness from its social and institutional context, and, by the same token, to analyse institutions on the basis of interpreting the real, symbolic and imaginary effects of society upon individuals. (Guattari 1984: 208).

The group, or institutional context, then, triangulates the dyad of analyst and analysand. “The analyst is no longer the mirror; rather, it's the group. This places the group in the position of the analyst, thus making it an *analyzer*” (Genosko 1996: 15). The institutional form and the institutional object are therefore brought within the scope of analysis and transformation.

It is in this context that Guattari develops the concept of transversality, in which the one-way libidinal tie of transference is disrupted by the analysis of, and experimentation with, multi-directional transversal libidinal ties. Guattari (1984: 17) opposes transversality to both “verticality” and “horizontality”. The former refers to the vertical lines of bureaucratized authority, while “horizontality” refers to an inert seriality, in which different sectors, patients, roles, etc remain separated from each other, “a state of

affairs in which things and people fit in as best they can with the situation in which they find themselves.” Verticality, then, is associated with paranoid investments in which all communication and meaning is channelled through a few key individuals.<sup>247</sup> Guattari contrasts a coefficient of paranoid investments to its inverse, a coefficient of transversality, the maximisation of which “tends to be achieved when there is maximum communication among different levels and, above all, in different meanings” (Guattari 1984: 18).

There is in transversality a sense, derived from Sartre, of the productive nature of an encounter with alterity. At La Borde an effort was made to construct groups with unusual mixtures of participants as a means of engineering encounters that would not otherwise occur. We might think of this as a means of revealing and disrupting the usually obscured operation of power as it conditions our experience. Overcoming verticality, for instance, meant experimenting with the distortions in social relations caused by the hierarchy of roles and careers. As Guattari (2006: 144) explains: “What we’re trying to do... is to upset the caste imaginary that marks these patients, nurses and doctors (not to mention all the numerous sub-castes).” The ultimate aim of such experiments with transversality was to “change the data accepted by the super-ego into a new kind of acceptance of initiative” (Guattari 1984: 13).<sup>248</sup>

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<sup>247</sup> Despite Guattari’s association with the anti-psychiatry movement of David Cooper, R.D. Laing, *et al*, he was critical of their practice precisely on their failure to break with an Oedipal model and its paranoid investments. The following testimony from a participant in R. D. Laing’s Kingsley Hall commune provides an insight into the dangers of paranoid investments in group analysis:

I later realised, this community functioned like a large spoked wheel with Laing at the centre. All communications had to pass through him. All relationships were centred on him. He knew what everyone was thinking and doing, but most of the residents were dimly aware of what was happening on their periphery. This led to a lot of paranoia. The principle projective processes had to do with jealousy, who was closest to him, and who had been shunted to the outer circle. Much of the psychotic interactions had to do with these highly charged, but vigorously denied jealous emanations (Berke 2003: 112).

<sup>248</sup> As Dosse (2010: 46) elaborates:

Among the most important transversal techniques developed at La Borde was *La Grille* (the grid), which was drawn up as a means of breaking down the psychoanalytic “predetermined grid of interpretation” (Deleuze 2006b: 89), and encouraging “spatial permeability, freedom of movement (Dosse 2010: 44). As Deleuze (2006b: 79) explains, “[t]he old psychiatric hospital locks you away in an enclosed space that has coordinates on a grid.” At La Borde the institutional and interpretive grids were brought out into the open and transversal techniques were introduced to disrupt them. Positions within the grid, jobs, roles, etc were rotated and swapped to try to prevent the predetermined grid of interpretation from falling into place. As Guattari (1984: 103) elaborates:

Consider what we call at the La Borde clinic the *grid*: in all the various forms and stages of its existence, it involves the emergence of an abstract machine. The problem was to connect the fluxes of time, of labour, of function, of money and so on, on a rather different mode from the one normally prevailing in other establishments of the same kind which can be characterized by the existence of a relatively static organogram of function. The work time-table – written down on paper – the circulation of functions inscribed in a semiology of gestures, the modification of hierarchical categories inscribed in a juridical and social semiology, all these are specific manifestations of the same abstract machinism that conveys a certain (local, and not very important) mutation in production relations.

Of course the process of analysis goes beyond the formal organisation of the institution. The grid was overlaid with Freud's distinction between the manifest and latent content of an encounter with the intention of unearthing the latent dimensions of communication.

I think it convenient further to distinguish, in groups, between the ‘manifest content’ – that is, what is said and done, the attitudes of the different

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The exchanges amongst the community members were designed to bring people out of their morbid compulsions, including the repetition compulsion, by constantly creating new group-subjects. The goal of practising institutional psychotherapy like this was not to create relationships *per se* but to ‘develop new forms of subjectivity’.

members, the schisms, the appearance of leaders, of aspiring leaders, scapegoats and so on – and the 'latent content', which can be discovered only by interpreting the various escapes of meaning in the order of phenomena. We may define this latent content as 'group desire'" (Guattari 1984: 15).

As will be evident from previous chapters, we can treat such breaks in meaning as symptoms. Group analysis, then, includes the construction of organisational symptomologies. Indeed when Guattari (1996: 137) was asked how to organise institutional practices he replied:

*[It] consists in marking the indicative elements, the experienced sequences of non-sense as a symptom, as institutional lapses which, instead of being pushed to the side, marginalized, will see themselves confer a field of expressions, a gamut of possibilities that they did not have before.*

Such symptoms, however, are not read interpretively, as signs of an underlying condition, but constructively, as indications of new possibilities. The symptoms indicate blockages in group desire, which obscure the potential for transformation. A symptomology then can be used to identify, organisational forms, semiotic content, moments of creativity, etc, that can be detached from their normal series and turned into mutant nuclei of enunciation, opening new universes of reference and potential.<sup>249</sup> As Guattari (1996: 200) explains:

*Analysis is no longer the interpretation of symptoms according to a pre-existent, latent content, but the intervention of new catalytic centres susceptible of bifurcating experience. A singularity, a rupture in sense, a cut, fragmentation, the detachment of semiotic content – for example, in a dadaist*

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<sup>249</sup> As Guattari (2009: 66) says:

*Lapses, parapraxes and symptoms are like birds tapping at the window. It's not a matter of 'interpreting' them, but of tracking their trajectory to see if they can serve as indicators for new universes of reference susceptible of acquiring sufficient consistency to change the direction of the situation*

or surrealist fashion – can be at the origin of mutant centres of subjectification.<sup>250</sup>

These nuclei of enunciation could take the practical form of engagement with the outside world through, for example, producing plays or a newspaper.<sup>251</sup> Or they could involve an organisational or semiotic innovation. By initiating a process of collective creation the group attempts to break with the conditioning of experience by the socius and gain control over its own constitution. The analytical question then becomes:

How do certain semiotic segments acquire their autonomy, putting themselves to work to generate new fields of reference? It is on the basis of such a rupture that an existential singularization, consecutive to the genesis of new coefficients of freedom will become possible. Such a detachment of a 'partial object' from the field of dominant significations corresponds at the same time to the promotion of a mutant desire (Guattari 1996: 198).

This approach displaces notions of conscious intention and control, with a conception of subjectivity produced through an array of both social and pre-personal processes. This creates a problematic reminiscent of a processual politics. In the dyadic relationship the transcendence of the analyst and the interpretive grid provided confidence that the disruptive transformative process will turn out well. But where can that confidence come when, "you throw yourself into analysis without knowing what you are going to find" (Guattari 1996: 136)?<sup>252</sup>

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<sup>250</sup> Amongst the Dadaist or surrealist techniques to which Guattari is referring here is the found object or ready-made. Duchamp's famous work *Fountain*, for instance, involves the detachment of a urinal from its usual context and associations, and its insertion into the artistic context from which a whole new mode of enunciation becomes possible. We will return to this technique later in the chapter.

<sup>251</sup> The production of a newspaper at La Borde and be can be seen as one of the techniques imported into the psychiatric context from militant political practice.

<sup>252</sup> Indeed, Guattari (1996: 198) completes this connection when he says: "It is precisely this notion of process that to me is fundamental. One abandons the idea that one must seek

We can find the solution to this problem, partly, in the concept of group phantasy, the partly unconscious image that a group has of itself, created through processes of both projection and introjection. The analytical techniques are interventions into this phantasy to attempt to construct it as a transitional object, which can provide the affect of confidence in the transformational process.<sup>253</sup> We might ask though what role there is for those, like Guattari, who have specialised knowledge of the field of transversality. Guattari wanted to avoid the priestly role of interpreting signs in relation to foundational texts. Transversal techniques were used to ward off the paranoid investments that might come from looking to him as a source for confidence in the outcome of analytic process. As Guattari says: “I think of my active participation, and that of other personnel or communitarian elements, as *catalytic*. Either my work is effective, and I'm a good catalyser, or it is not, and I'm not, and in that case the process must be interrupted” (Ettinger, Guattari 2002: 241). This, however, seems merely to displace the problem without resolving it. We will have to return these considerations later in the chapter.

## **The Theory of Groups in Freud and Sartre**

Guattari's experience of institutional analysis fed into the development of Deleuze and Guattari's theory of groups, more specifically, their non-absolute distinction between subject groups and subjugated groups. We shall, in the next section, go on to discuss this distinction in relation to political groups. Before that, however, it will be useful to position their theory in relation to some philosophical precursors, namely the group theories of both Freud and Sartre.

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to master an object or a subject – I am no longer 'either master of myself or master of the universe.'”

<sup>253</sup> D. W. Winnicott's concept of the transitional object and has entered popular consciousness through the example of the safety blanket (Genosko 2002).

Freud's theory of groups, as laid out in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, is developed through reference to the Crowd Theory of Gustave Le Bon. Crowd Theory as a whole was a reactionary genre developed in the shadow of the 1871 Paris Commune, which, coming after a century of collective action, had forced the crowd to the centre of the political stage. These experiences produced real analytical difficulties for the emergent liberal ontological narrative of the rational, autonomous liberal individual.<sup>254</sup> In response, a series of French and Italian writers brought the newly emerging 'sciences' of sociology and psychology to bear on the problem, discovering that far from being a force for progress, the crowd events of recent history were atavistic eruptions of primitive, irrational behaviour.<sup>255</sup> On top of this, Crowd Theory found the means of resolving crowd phenomenon with an individualist ontology through the figure of the crowd leader. Though their opinions on the mechanisms involved differed, there was general agreement that crowds formed in relation to leaders and that at least part of the collective subjectivity of the crowd was in fact a reflection of the individual subjectivity of the leader (King 1990).

We can see such a schema at work in Le Bon's bestselling book *The Crowd: a Study of the Popular Mind*. Le Bon (2001: 2) begins by setting out the distinction between the individual mind and the crowd mind.

Under certain given circumstances, and only under those circumstances, an agglomeration of men presents new characteristics very different from those of the individuals composing it. The sentiments and ideas of all the persons in the gathering take one and the same direction, and their conscious personality vanishes. A collective mind is formed; doubtless transitory, but

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<sup>254</sup> In actual fact most crowd theorists, and Le Bon in particular, limited the necessary scope of rationality by making distinctions based on race and class.

<sup>255</sup> The paradigmatic problem with which Crowd Theory framed crowds was the juridical one of assigning individual responsibility within collective acts. The perceived phenomenon which the theory seeks to explain is that of an individual of good character swept up by a crowd into acts they would otherwise not consider.

presenting very clearly defined characteristics. The gathering has thus become what, in the absence of a better expression, I will call an organised crowd, or, if the term is considered preferable, a psychological crowd. It forms a single being, and is subjected to the *law of the mental unity of crowds*.

The mechanics of this mental unity are threefold. Firstly, “the individual forming part of a group acquires, solely from numerical considerations, a sentiment of invincible power” which in turn leads to a loss of inhibitions. Secondly, the crowd causes an affect of contagion where “every sentiment is contagious, and contagious to such a degree that an individual readily sacrifices his personal interest to the collective interest” (Le Bon 2002: 6-7). Lastly, and most importantly, membership of a crowd mentality, lowers the participant’s intelligence and leads to a heightened suggestibility. This leaves the crowd open to hypnotism by crowd leaders with any suggestion immediately reinforced by the mechanism of contagion.

Le Bon’s crowds can come together without leaders, its hypnosis can be self-induced, but he makes clear that crowds “are so bent on obedience that they instinctively submit to whoever declares himself their master” (Le Bon 2002: 75). The crowds suggestibility needs leaders and crowds automatically seek them out. This schema was designed to play on the predominant bourgeois fears of the time. As the leading crowd agitators of the late nineteenth century were of a socialist or anarchist bent, then the danger, seemingly embodied by the Paris Commune, was that the suggestible masses of the newly teeming cities would be led to embrace a primitive, atavistic communism. In response Le Bon offered his book as a guide to the counter-manipulation of crowds by established elites.<sup>256</sup>

When Freud (2001) comes to consider group psychology he takes Le Bon as his starting point, fully accepting his description of crowd phenomena. His sole point of criticism is that hypnotism is an inadequate

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<sup>256</sup> Although as Le Bon’s book was a contemporary best seller and has remained in print continuously to this day, we might suppose that it chiefly served as a titillating group phantasy for bourgeois readers.

explanation of the mental unity of the crowd. For Freud formation of the ego takes place, in part, through identification with external objects that act as ego ideals.<sup>257</sup> This identification, as one of the earliest libidinal ties, is usually with the father. However in certain situations another object takes the place of the father as the ego ideal. So for Freud (2001: 116) a crowd consists of a “number of individuals who have substituted one and the same object for their ego ideal and have consequently identified themselves with one another in their ego.” This common object is the leader. Each individual in the crowd has a libidinal investment in the leader. However the leader as a single person cannot reciprocate all the libidinal energy that has been invested in him. There is a surplus that gets invested in the other participants of the crowd, who can identify with one another as common egos since they share the same ego ideal.

Despite its long-lasting popularity Le Bon's description of the crowd is unable to account for a significant amount of crowd behaviour. Not all crowds act stupidly or irrationally, for example.<sup>258</sup> Freud's conception has the advantage of identifying the crowd with the circulation of sublimated libidinal bonds. This allows him to account for crowds without diagnosing a necessary reduction in intelligence. There is though much crowd behaviour that still seems to escape Freud's description. His account seems limited to crowds in their most paranoiac form; indeed the image brought to mind is of a Nuremburg rally gripped by the oratory of Hitler.<sup>259</sup> We can suppose that Freud would advocate the adoption of a better father figure but the anti-democratic political message of his theory is clear. Just as there can be no

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<sup>257</sup> It would be technically more correct to describe this identification as an investment of libidinal energy, an object cathexis.

<sup>258</sup> We can think back here to the vignette with which we began this chapter. Little of the phenomena cited there is explainable within Freud's schema.

<sup>259</sup> Indeed this may not be a coincidence. Gonen (2003) provides a detailed tracing of the influence of Le Bon's theory on both Hitler and Mussolini.

family without a father, so there can be no society without leaders. Indeed Deleuze and Guattari (1984: 102) describe Freud's schema as:

[T]he disgrace of psychoanalysis in history and politics. The procedure is well known: two figures are made to appear, the Great man and the Crowd. One then claims to make history with these two entities, these two puppets, the Great Crustacean and the Great Invertebrate.

What is of interest, though, is that as both the Great man and the Crowd are formed in relation to the Oedipal triangle then the libidinal relationship between them can only be an instance of transference. Indeed, as Freud (1995: 26) makes clear, transference is not a product of clinical neurosis nor is it a product of the analytic relation. "Transference is merely uncovered and isolated by analysis. It is a universal phenomenon of the human mind."<sup>260</sup> In light of our discussion of Guattari's institutional analysis, we can raise the idea of the possible transformation of this crowd transference into a transversal relation. To return to Guattari's vocabulary, Freud's crowd is merely a description of a group with a high coefficient of paranoid investments. There are many other potential group formations but these are obscured by the presuppositions of Freud's theory of the unconscious. As Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 29-30) put it:

Freud tried to approach crowd phenomena from the point of view of the unconscious, but he did not see clearly, he did not see that the unconscious itself was fundamentally a crowd. He was myopic and hard of hearing; he

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<sup>260</sup> We should position Freud's critique of Le Bon in relation to the development of psychoanalysis. Freud's rejection of hypnotic suggestion as a psychiatric treatment, in favour of symptomological techniques, such as free association, was central to the emergence of psychoanalysis as a distinct therapeutic approach. We should note however Borch-Jacobsen's (1989: 150) argument that Freud fails in his attempt to rid psychoanalysis of the concept of hypnosis:

For it must be understood that hypnotic suggestion had returned *into* psychoanalysis, as psychoanalysis. The dependence of the hypnotized subject on the hypnotist; the establishment of an elective, exclusive, somnambulant bond; suggestibility; even thought transmission – all had come back up, at the core of analytic treatment, in the form of transference.

mistook crowds for a single person. Schizos, on the other hand, have sharp eyes and ears. They don't mistake the buzz and shove of the crowd for daddy's voice.

If Freud only accounts for neurotic and paranoid groups, then Deleuze and Guattari find additional resources in Sartre. In the *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, Sartre (2004) creates a non-absolute distinction between two types of groups: the practico-inert series and the fused group, or group-in-fusion. The first kind of group, the series, is not actively formed and so can easily be mistaken for a spontaneous grouping. For Sartre, however, any passive group is determined and conditioned by external forces. When Sartre (2004: 265) describes the series he uses the example of a bus queue:

[T]he small gathering which slowly forms around the bus stop, apparently by a process of mere aggregation, *already has* a serial structure. It was produced *in advance* as the structure of some unknown group by the ticket machine attached to the bus stop... [Each member of the series] *actualises* his being-outside-himself as a reality shared by several people and *which already exists, and awaits him*, by means of an inert practice, endowed by instrumentality, whose meaning is that it integrates him into an ordered multiplicity by assigning him a place in a prefabricated seriality (Sartre 2004: 265).

The second type of group, the group-in-fusion, can be defined in counterpoint. If the inert series is formed by pre-existing and external structures and, we might say marked by the conditioning of the socius, then the "reality of the *praxis* of a (fused) group depends on the liquidation... of the serial, both in everyone and by everyone in everyone, and its replacement by community" (Sartre 2004: 387). This is, however, a non-absolute distinction: the fused group emerges from seriality and is haunted by the prospect of a fall back into seriality. The two do not form a symmetrical binary. Indeed, as Jameson (2004: xxvi-xxvii) says, "the group-in-fusion is hardly a social form at all, but rather an emergence and an event." We can make this clearer by following Sartre's (2004) example of the storming of the Bastille in formation of a group-in-fusion.

As might be expected in Sartre, the fused group is formed through encounters with alterity, but there is a marked sequence to these encounters. Firstly the group is broken from its seriality by the emergence of an external threat; in the case of the French Revolution this was sparked by a feared repression from newly arrived Royalist troops. As Jameson (2004: xxviii) explains, the “formerly serial individuals are united by the threat (or the Look) of an external third, which the emergent group must interiorise in order to retain its coherence and its dynamic.” As the city becomes an active group, the external threat is re-discovered within the body of the city in the form of the Bastille, whose weapons are a source of danger but also, potentially, of hope. As the group acts, by storming the Bastille, control is gained over the source of alterity and a fused group is formed.

Now the group no longer has to depend on the look of the outsider or the enemy: a structure has been evolved such that the group carries its own source of being within itself, and moreover this structure is a profoundly democratic one, for in it there are no leaders, only agitators (in other words, thirds who attempt to verbalize the implicit feelings and aims of the group), and at this stage in the group’s development everyone is a member, or third (Jameson 1974: 253).

This sequence extends beyond a simply movement of conscious intention. The Bastille is more than just a physical threat. It is a transferential object, a mirror upon which the group can project its phantasy and in the transformation of that group phantasy the transforming subjectivities within the group can recognise one another in their process of transformation.

## **From Subjugated Groups to Subject Groups**

Deleuze and Guattari’s discussion of subjugated and subject groups, which plays an important role in *Anti-Oedipus*, bears the inheritance of Freud, Sartre and the practice of institutional analysis. A subjugated group, for instance, carries elements of both Freud’s paranoiac groups and the inert

seriality of a passive group determined by the conditioning of the socius. As Deleuze (2004a: 193) summarises:

Groups are subjugated no less by the leaders they assign themselves, or accept, than by the masses. The hierarchy, the vertical or pyramidal organization, which characterizes subjugated groups is meant to ward off any possible inscription of nonsense, death or dispersal, to discourage the development of creative ruptures, and to ensure the self-preservation mechanisms rooted in the exclusion of other groups. Their centralization works through structure, totalization, unification, replacing the conditions of a genuine collective 'utterance' with an assemblage of stereotypical utterances cut off from both the real and from subjectivity".

Subject groups, on the other hand, can be seen as a rendering of Sartre's fused groups overlaid with Guattari's experience of group analysis.

[They] are defined by coefficients of *transversality* that ward off totalities and hierarchies. They are agents of enunciation, environments of desire, elements of institutional creation. Through their very practice, they ceaselessly conform to the limit of their own nonsense, their own death or rupture (Deleuze 2004a: 193).

The inheritances from Freud and Sartre are clearly visible in this passage but there are also points of originality where the inheritance is exceeded. In order to grasp these points more fully we can turn to the conceptual developments we have explored in previous chapters. For instance, the notion that subject groups 'conform to the limit of their own nonsense, their own death or rupture' might seem obscure at first yet it becomes clearer when we overlay this with the concept of antiproduction and the BwO.<sup>261</sup>

Similarly the distinction between subject group and subjugated group can be usefully overlapped with our previous distinction between a war machine that acts as an analyser of desires, and a State apparatus that acts

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<sup>261</sup> We shall explore this shortly, in relation to the March 22<sup>nd</sup> Movement.

as a synthesizer of interests. In this light the concept of subject and subjugated groups can explain how “a group can be revolutionary from the standpoint of class interests and its preconscious investments, but not be so – and even be fascist and police-like – from the standpoint of its libidinal investments” (Deleuze, Guattari 1984: 348). Interests are based on what is possible within a particular *socius*; they are orientated towards established values.<sup>262</sup>

Once interests have been defined within the confines of a society, the rational is the way in which people pursue those interests and attempt to realize them. But underneath that, you find desires, investments of desire that are not to be confused with investments of interest, and on which interests depend for their determination and very distribution. (Deleuze 2004a: 262-3).

This analysis can help explain how political parties, based on transcendent syntheses of pre-existing interests, often find themselves out of synch with the new desires crystallised by an event. Certainly one of the key problematics addressed by *Anti-Oedipus* is how to avoid falling into the reactionary role played by the French Communist Party during the events of May '68.<sup>263</sup> “(T)he bureaucrats of the revolution” (Foucault 1984: xii) not only failed to break reason from the presuppositions of the existing *socius* but also invariably elided the event by overlaying it with a pre-existing interpretive grid.

By contrast Deleuze and Guattari's favourite example of an analytical war machine was a very different group active in the same events, the March 22<sup>nd</sup> Movement. As Deleuze (2004a: 201) says:

The March 22<sup>nd</sup> Movement is exemplary... because while it was insufficient as a war-machine, it nonetheless functioned exceedingly well as an analytic and

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<sup>262</sup> This is what Deleuze and Guattari (1984) mean when they say that the BwO is a surface upon which production takes place.

<sup>263</sup> On the role of the Communist Party during the May events see, for example, Cohn-Bendit, Cohn-Bendit (1969).

desiring group which not only held a discourse on the mode of truly free association, but which was able also "to constitute itself as an analyzer of a considerable mass of students and workers," without any claims to hegemony or avant-garde status; it was simply an environment allowing for the transfer and the removal of inhibitions. Analysis and desire finally on the same side, with desire taking the lead.

The March 22<sup>nd</sup> Movement played a key role in sparking the events of May 68. Founded during an occupation at the University of Nanterre, which began on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March, it was a loose grouping of anarchist and leftist students that managed to act non-dogmatically while also avoiding an avant-garde status (Cohn-Bendit, Cohn-Bendit 1968).<sup>264</sup> What made the March 22<sup>nd</sup> Movement effective, however, was its ability to aid the "crystallisation of desire on a wide social scale" (Deleuze 2004a: 269). Indeed this is not just Deleuze's view; a contemporaneous comment by a militant of the March 22<sup>nd</sup> Movement (cited in Labro 1969: 100) concurs: "In the last analysis the only function that March 22... had was one of interpretation. They found the watchwords that would crystallize things".

As the events of May began to gain traction, the fundamental political form that emerged, apart from the great assemblies of the Sorbonne and the Theatre de l'Odéon, was the *comites d'action* (action committees), with around 460 springing up in Paris by May 31<sup>st</sup>.<sup>265</sup> Within these wider

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<sup>264</sup> March 22<sup>nd</sup> avoided a vanguard position, in part, through its faith in spontaneity. Yet this ideological position probably contributes to Deleuze's (2004a: 201) judgement that it is "insufficient as a war-machine".

<sup>265</sup> Ross (2002: 76) provides a useful description of the *comites d'action*:

Small groups of perhaps ten or fifteen people, most of whom had belonged to no pre-formed political group, began to organize – by profession in some cases, in neighborhood or factory in others – after the general strike began in mid-May, largely with the goal of providing material aid to the strikers and producing agit-prop to extend the strike.

Some lasted only a few months while others continued for some years after the events. It is interesting to note that this size of between ten to fifteen people is the same as the number settled upon at La Borde as the ideal size of an analytical group.

movement forms, however, a group like the March 22<sup>nd</sup> Movement could catalyse analysis by finding forms of expression to crystallise emerging desires. Despite the importance of texts and slogans in May '68 this expression does not have to take a linguistic or textual form; indeed the process is often at its most effective when an action concept becomes a form of expression.<sup>266</sup> We could, for example, conceptualise the initial construction of barricades in the Latin Quarter on the pivotal night of the 11<sup>th</sup> 12 of May as a form of expression that crystallised desire. This contemporary account suggests such a conception: "Thus according to M 22, the first barricades were exemplary: they were built, not for their defensive effectiveness, which was fairly low, but as 'a collective action in which everyone worked and gave proof of extraordinary imagination'" (Willener 1970: 166). The barricades made later that night were more effective and took on a real defensive function but the initial barricades were more expressive than functional. They crystallised the emerging combative mood. To think this in the light of Guattari's analytical practice we could see the exemplary use of barricades as the detachment of a partial object and its turning to expression. This creates a rupture from which new nuclei of enunciation can be built.

Similarly styles of organising and even modes of speaking can act as moments in the crystallisation of new desires.<sup>267</sup> This testimony from a participant in the Sorbonne assembly provides an interesting example.

The important thing was to be able to express yourself. Foresight, practicality, etc., were quite secondary. Building the future, yes but with words and for the

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<sup>266</sup> We can see here the beginnings of an overlap with the Social Movement Theory concept of movement repertoires.

<sup>267</sup> Hardt and Negri (2004) also talk of the way physical style, the manner of walking or of holding the body become altered through the experience of moments of excess. There are many testimonies of how the deployment of such elements of style by the Black Panther Party acted as a crystallisation of desire in sections of the black community in the 1960s and 70s. See, for example, Hilliard (1993).

sheer pleasure of it. This reminded me of the automatic writing practised by the Surrealists. Here, it was automatic speaking (Germ. Grad. cited in Willener 1970: 27).<sup>268</sup>

The mention of Surrealist techniques aimed at breaking with habitual patterns of thought seems significant and suggests a connection to Bataille's concept of nonproductive expenditure. Indeed, openness to moments of non-productivity seems an integral element in a processual analysis in which a collective understanding of the situation has to emerge rather than be imposed. To remove collective discussion from 'foresight' and 'practicality' may risk a certain amount of redundancy and drift but it also contains the possibility of revealing, and breaking with, the conditioning of possibility by the presuppositions of the existing socius. The line between productive and nonproductive discourse and action becomes indistinct in a situation in which the possible and the practical are in transformation. In these circumstances a technique to avoid "an assemblage of stereotypical utterances cut off from... the real" (Deleuze 2004a: 193) is the detachment of an element from its function and its turn to expression. The task of an analytical war machine then is to construct a link between nonproductive excess, the transformation from function to expression, and the creation of the new. There are, of course, numerous obstacles to overcome in this task. Firstly there is the risk of the proliferation of redundancies leading to a fall into political catatonia, inactivity and thus the return of seriality. But secondly, there is the related risk of becoming trapped in horizontality, with expression remaining limited to the personal or sectional. This would be the failure to become a truly

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<sup>268</sup> Automatic writing was a Surrealist technique aimed at releasing creativity by loosening conscious control over the writing process. Of course such non-productivity is not a position we can occupy exclusively but isn't an allowance for some nonproductive activity an essential element in any form of creativity? Certainly the best discussions I have taken part in have worked out mechanisms through which participants can take a concept and run with it without any clear idea where they are going. Similarly doesn't the best writing always take the form of a surprise to the author?

*collective* assemblage of enunciation and therefore its failure to become mutational.

As Guattari (1984: 214-5) makes clear, the March 22<sup>nd</sup> Movement pursued a processual politics:

Those involved set out to interpret the situation, not in terms of some programme laid down at successive congresses, but gradually, as the situation itself unfolded in time... They refused to present their movement as the embodiment of the situation, but simply as something upon which the masses could effect a transference of their inhibitions, and the way to a new understanding and a new logical formulation outside of any framework of conformism.

In this process a collective assemblage of enunciation can construct a group phantasy to act transversally as a transitional object. We can, once again, find contemporary testimony of the group fulfilling this function:

The tactics of the Mouvement du 22 Mars were really just that – a new sort of image... So a sort of social experiment was carried out: they set about creating a certain image of society in people's minds... it was a very new kind of experimental politics (Rolle in Willener 1970: 76).

As a counter to this we should recognise that the French Communist Party played the role of the Bastille, a threat internal to the body of the movement. "[T]he CP served as a projection: it was the Rorschach of the other groups. Through it, they imagined everything that the Left must not be, everything that a revolutionary organization can be, everything that socialism must be" (Lourau in Willener 1970: 86).

This entanglement of group phantasies should make it clear that we are not dealing with a simple binary of organisational models. As Guattari (1984: 37) explains:

In reality... we are dealing not so much with two sorts of groups, but two functions, and the two may even coincide. A passive group can suddenly throw up a mode of subjectivity that develops a whole system of tensions, a whole internal dynamic. On the other hand, any subject group will have

phases when it gets bogged down at the level of the imaginary: then, if it is to avoid becoming the prisoner of its own phantasies, its active principle must be recovered by way of a system of analytic interpretation.

There is in this an obvious danger of a recursive dynamic. Just as the relation of transference can lead the analysand to fetishise the analyst, so the same relationship can be repeated at a higher level of scale. If the group acts as an analyst for the wider movement, or the mass, then it too can become subject to fetishism. The problem of the subject group then is how to act as a catalyst to analysis in the mass while avoiding the paranoid investments that misrecognise any transformation as derived from the properties of the analyst rather than the wider field of relations within which the analyst is situated.

The processes of fetishisation take many forms and come from many directions; as such they can be understood in relation to several of the concepts we have already discussed. We can, for instance, see such a danger in Sartre's distinction between the series and the fused group, which, threatens to replicate the orthodox Marxist distinction between an inert, passive working class and an active minority; the fused group as the new party. We can see the same potential dynamic in an analytical group, as analyst or group gains specialist knowledge of the concept transversality and its techniques then it can become separated from the mass.

In a similar vein, but with perhaps more seriously consequences for our project, Balibar (1993: 7) points to an aristocratic potential in Spinoza's ethical project "to free oneself from the passions". Such a project involves the combating of "sad passions not only by reinforcing joyous passions but by developing active affects, which would immediately result from an adequate knowledge of causes" (Balibar 1993: 7). But this runs the risk of becoming "a reality, either as the 'end' of history or as the project of a society of free persons, bound together by friendship and by the common enterprise of knowledge and living together, without internal or external conflict in the midst of the crowd of others" (Balibar 1993: 7). The danger, of course, is a self-isolating dynamic in which a group gains privileged knowledge of causes

and thus privileged access to joyous affects. In response we might accuse Balibar of betraying Spinoza's materialist parallelism in his over emphasis on the intellectual over the corporeal. But the same potential dynamic could work on a more directly corporeal level. As Massumi (2002b: 34) reminds us, "joy is not the same thing as happiness... It's on a different axis. Joy can be very disruptive, it can even be very painful." However, bodies can be familiarised with the disruption that comes from joy, they can be trained to respond to joy with open affects. We could imagine, then, the development of an elite of bodies sharing a common receptivity to joyous affects. This would be a novel supplement to the critique of summit hopping, with more experienced activists seeking out the company of those bodies most compatible to theirs, those that will, at least in the short term, maximise their joy.<sup>269</sup>

## Light out for the Territory

When Deleuze and Guattari come to write *A Thousand Plateaus* the theory of groups disappears. It is, to a large extent, replaced by the concepts of assemblages and territory. We can see this as, in part, a response to problems such as those discussed above. If the subject group as analyst takes on a fetishised form in relation to the mass, then the mass itself must become the analyzer. On this level of scale territorial concepts allow more purchase than a theory of groups. As we examine Deleuze and Guattari's concept of territory we will see that it carries an inheritance from their

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<sup>269</sup> We might reply that this problem would be a blockage in desiring production and its unblocking is precisely the object of analysis. But we could push the previous line of argument further by overlaying it with Protevi's (2009) definition of 'the warrior' as a body that has become addicted to high intensity situations. This brings to mind the image of an activist addicted to joy, compulsively seeking out intensive highs and becoming less and less able to relate to more quotidian situations. If Balibar's suggestion of "a society of free persons" dedicated to ridding themselves of the passions brings to mind a monastery, then when overlaid with Protevi's definition the monks become warrior monks, 'summit hoppers' as Knights Templar.

concept of groups. We might even go so far as to say that the concept of territory is the theory of groups overlaid with re-worked concepts drawn from the field of ethology. However, it is not just the problem of group fetishism that provokes this move. It also represents a further movement away from the positioning of the human subject as the privileged unit of experience. The concepts of assemblages and territory allow the complexification of analysis, as a wider diversity of elements is brought within its scope.

I am convinced that analysis will get out of this deadlock only if it ceases to be the exclusive concern of a specialist or psychoanalyst, or even an analytic group, as these cannot avoid constituting themselves as authorities. Analysis must become a process defined by what I have called assemblages of analytic enunciation; it must be founded not only on speech and composed of individuals, but also defined by a specific social, economic, institutional, micropolitical operation and a non-linguistic semiotics (Guattari 2009: 42).<sup>270</sup>

“Territory”, as Guattari (2006: 421) explains, “describes a lived space, or a perceived system in which a subject ‘feels at home.’” Deleuze and Guattari develop their concept of territory in relation to Konrad Lorenz’s (1967) ethological research into territorial animals. Their critique is based, in particular, on Lorenz’s identification of aggressiveness as the basis of territory. They call it an “ambiguous thesis, which has dangerous political overtones... [and] little foundation” (Deleuze, Guattari 1988: 316). Deleuze and Guattari, instead, identify territorial behaviour with expression, and more specifically the building of an abode through expressed qualities, either selected or produced. This leads Deleuze and Guattari (1994: 183) to say: “Perhaps art begins with the animal, at least with the animal that carves out a territory and builds a house.”

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<sup>270</sup> In the next section we will concentrate on the concept of territory rather than assemblages but, without wishing to elide the distinction between the concepts, Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 503) do make it clear that the concepts overlap, “[e]very assemblage is basically territorial.”

We can see Deleuze and Guattari's critique of Lorenz then as a means of decentring ethology's focus on the internal milieu of drives and instincts. By linking territory to expression the interior milieu is understood through its orientation to the exterior milieu. Following Deleuze and Guattari's argument, then, we can position the concept of territory within a line of development in which additional dimensions of expression allow greater interaction with the surrounding milieu. This means, of course, an increased capacity to affect and be affected, and so carries the traces of a Spinozan conception of conatus.

Lorenz (1967) links aggression, colour and territory in his examination of coral fish, whose bodies, he says, act as a poster to display the internal level of aggressivity.<sup>271</sup> Displays of aggression in defence of territory, however, don't explain the creation of territory; indeed it already presupposes that the animal is in its territory. As Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 315) put it: "Functions in a territory are not primary; they presuppose a territory-producing expressiveness." In poster fish the creation of territory involves a repetition in expression that breaks it from internal function.

[C]olor is a membrane state associated with interior hormonal states, but it remains functional and transitory as long as it is tied to a type of action (sexuality, aggressiveness, flight). It becomes expressive, on the other hand, when it acquires a temporal consistency and a spatial range that makes it a

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<sup>271</sup> As Lorenz (1967: 13) explains:

When one examines the aggressive and the more or less non-aggressive species, it is evident that there is a connection between colouring, aggressiveness, and sedentary territorial habits. Among the fish that I examined... extreme aggressiveness associated with territorial behaviour and concentrated on members of the same species, is found almost exclusively in those forms whose bright poster-like colour patterns proclaim their species from afar.

Lorenz (1967: 14) does understand this colouring as expression but in his schema it remains subordinated to function:

In many of these fish the degree of their emotion can be measured by their colouring, which also shows whether aggressiveness, sexual excitement or the flight urge is uppermost... In other words, the colours of all these fish are a means of expression.

territorial, or rather territorializing, mark: signature (Deleuze, Guattari 1988: 315).

Territory, then, is created then through the repeated transformation of an element from function to expression. Faeces and urine, for example, are detached from a purely digestive function and turned into signs that mark a territory. "One puts one's signature on something just as one plants one's flag on a piece of land" (Deleuze, Guattari 1988: 314). Through this process territorial animals produce dimensions of expression that interact with and transform the surrounding milieu. Poster fish, for example, produce expression through a specialised function of its body; it uses its body as a placard. This is an example of internally generated expressivity, but territorial animals can also select a component of the external milieu and turn that to expression. Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 315) use the example of the brown stagemaker bird, which "lays down landmarks each morning by dropping leaves it picks from the tree, and then turning them upside down so the paler underside stands out against the dirt: inversion produces a matter of expression." This allows Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 315) to say: "There is a territory precisely when milieu components cease to be directional, becoming dimensional instead, when they cease to be functional to become expressive. There is a territory when the rhythm has expressiveness."

Deleuze and Guattari follow this construction through a conception of motifs and counterpoints. "Expressive qualities entertain internal relations with one another that constitute *territorial motifs*" (Deleuze, Guattari 1988: 317). These rhythmically repeated motifs interact with the external milieu creating *territorial counterpoints*.<sup>272</sup> It is this rhythmical interaction between the two that creates style out of signature. The expressive objects "no longer constitute placards that mark a territory, but motifs and counterpoints that express the relation of the territory to interior impulses or exterior

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<sup>272</sup> Deleuze and Guattari (1994: 185) use the concept of counterpoint to capture the entrainment of one territory with another. For example: "The spider's web contains 'a very subtle portrait of the fly,' which serves as its counterpoint".

circumstances, whether or not they are given. No longer signatures, but a style” (Deleuze, Guattari 1988: 318). Birds like the blackbird or the nightingale have to learn to sing, as their song never repeats. Their song moves from motifs to counterpoints as they incorporate the songs of other birds, and indeed other milieu components, even including, famously, the sound of lawnmowers and the like. Style then is expression as it becomes mutational, in which “motifs and counterpoints... form an autodevelopment” (Deleuze, Guattari 1988: 319).

The example of selecting components and transforming them into expressive qualities is isomorphic to the analytical process of detaching partial objects to use as mutant nuclei of enunciation. This can now be conceptualised as an act of deterritorialisation followed by a concomitant re-territorialisation. Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 316) indicate such a connection when they say, “[t]erritorial marks are readymades... Take anything and make it a matter of expression.” We will recall that readymades, such as Duchamp’s ‘Fountain’, are objects extracted from their functional series with the purpose of breaking our habitual conception of them, opening new universes of reference.<sup>273</sup> As Lazzarato (2008) puts it: “Duchamp uses a readymade to undermine the dialectical logic of exclusive disjunction of the type ‘either/or’, and to allow the logic of inclusive disjunctions of the ‘and’ [type]”.

The turn from function to expression can be seen as a moment in the loosening of behaviour from adherence to pre-given goals. We can then make a connection with Bataille’s concept of nonproductive expenditure.<sup>274</sup>

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<sup>273</sup> Guattari (1996: 164) illustrates how this artistic strategy can reveal an object’s hidden potential for expression:

Marcel Duchamp’s Bottlerack functions as the trigger for a constellation of referential universes engaging both intimate reminiscences (the cellar of the house, a certain winter, the rays of light upon spider’s webs, adolescent solitude) and connotations of a cultural or economic order – the time when bottles were still washed with the aid of a bottle wash.

<sup>274</sup> Indeed there is some evidence of a connection between territorial expression and nonproductive expenditure. Bird and Federspiel (2008), for example, suggest a connection

Indeed when Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 221) say, "it is always *on* the most deterritorialized element that reterritorialization takes place", there is an overlap with Bataille's notion that it is the expenditure of excess that provides meaning and purpose to productive activity and not the other way around. As we saw with our previous discussion of antiproduction not all territories are the same. We can make a distinction through the relation to exteriority and interiority, with Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 354) conceiving of the war machine as "a pure form of exteriority", and the State-form as "a form of interiority" (Deleuze, Guattari 1988: 360). The aim then is to construct a set of positive deterritorialisations that "prevails over the reterritorializations which play only a secondary role" (Deleuze, Guattari 1988: 508). We can then connect such style to the war machine's form of exteriority, which "is such that it exists only in its own metamorphoses" (Deleuze, Guattari, 1988: 360).

Tracing these connections between territory and the theory of analytical groups allows us to pose the question of how to build an analytical territory. Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 320) associate territory with the maintenance of a critical distance. This discussion is carried out, at first, in terms of "the critical distance between two beings of the same species... I growl if anyone enters my territory, I put up placards." At a more abstract level, though, territory "is a question of keeping at a distance the forces of chaos knocking at the door." In an early essay on transversality Guattari (1984: 18) re-uses a parable about porcupines employed by both Freud and Schopenhauer.

One freezing winter day, a herd of porcupines huddled together to protect themselves against the cold by their combined warmth. But their spines pricked each other so painfully that they soon drew apart again. Since the cold continued, however, they had to draw together once more, and once

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between mimicry in birdsong and ostentatious waste. "Since copying a sound that's not part of the species' own repertoire comes at a certain expense, time and energy expended in mimicking suggest a healthier suitor. Hence vocal repertoire may help females decide which males to mate with."

more found the pricking painful. This alternate moving together and apart went on until they discovered just the right distance to preserve themselves from both evils.

Guattari relates this example to transversal communication but isn't this also a discussion of critical distance? There is an optimal distance between openness to the outside and a collapse into chaos. Or, on a temporal register, we can say that there is a rhythm in a transversal analytical territory between immersion in intensive situations, which are open to the outside and a drawing back from intensity to keep the forces of chaos at bay. The building of an analytical territory must involve experimentation with the right critical distance, to create the conditions within which analysis can take place yet avoid a stratified, closed-up territory cut off from the forces of the outside. To discuss this further, let's return to the problematics of the alter-globalisation movement and the relation between moments of excess and analytical war machines.

## **Territory of the Movement and Movement of the Territory**

In the previous chapter we discussed the alter-globalisation movement's concern for process through the prism of a processual passion for joyful encounters. When participants talk of movement process, they often mean a decision-making process based on consensus. The process has undergone continuous development within social movements for over forty years. This has resulted in a fairly developed and highly structured process. The group Seeds for Change, who provide training in consensus decision-making, provide a useful definition:

Consensus is a decision-making process that works creatively to include all persons making the decision. Instead of simply voting for an item, and having the majority of the group getting their way, the group is committed to finding solutions that everyone can live with. This ensures that everyone's opinions, ideas and reservations are taken into account. But consensus is more than just a compromise. It is a process that can result in surprising and creative

solutions – often better than the original suggestions (Seeds for Change 2006: 1).

A diverse range of techniques and technologies has been developed in relation to this aim. However, thanks, in part, to training groups such as Seeds For Change, a fairly standard set of procedures has come to dominate movement process. These include a set of hand signals to be used by the participants, the specific role of meeting facilitators and the spokescouncil model for scaling the process to larger groups.<sup>275</sup> In this section we will see what is to be gained from thinking this process through the concept of an analytical territory. As such we might ask whether there are components that carry an analytic function? Or indeed, if there are components that can be detached and turned to expression as nuclei of mutant enunciation?

When viewed through this problematic we might think, for instance, of the role of the facilitators. Their job is not just to note the order in which people raise their hands; it also contains an analytical dimension. They should, for instance, take the various dimensions of group dynamics into account during their structuring of the meeting. They may prioritise female speakers if they detect a gender imbalance in those speaking. They must also attend to the affective state of the group, detecting tiredness or, perhaps, the development of animosities and the hardening of positions. There is an armoury of techniques they can use then to intervene and address these dimensions of the meeting. Indeed we could understand the entire aim of the consensus process as the maximisation of the flows of information, and therefore the prevention of the paranoid investments and

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<sup>275</sup> Notes from Nowhere (2003: 115) provide a concise description of the operation of a spokescouncil:

Affinity groups, and clusters of affinity groups chose spokespersons who are empowered to speak for the group. The spokespersons sit in a circle, with their affinity group behind them. In this way, groups can confer during the meeting and participate via their spokesperson, but only spokespersons address everyone, vastly reducing the amount of time required for inclusivity.

control over information that is familiar in some, more traditional left practice.<sup>276</sup>

At the Hori-Zone, the convergence camp built to support the protests against the 2005 Gleneagles G8 summit, a specialised facilitation working-group was formed. Their role was “to make processes transparent and to involve everyone in the decision-making process” (Trapeze Collective 2007: 60). When those involved in the group describe their role they certainly seem aware of the danger of the organisational distortions that can arise through the monopolisation of information and knowledge.

We also had to pro-actively dismantle any informal leadership that grew out of the relatively small group of people who organised the set-up of the camp and had more knowledge and experience of how things worked. There was a lot of awareness around these issues (Seeds for Change 2007: 9).

We could even see the facilitators' role in synthesising disparate proposals into new proposals that everyone can live with as, in part, a transversal technique to combat the inert seriality of distinct groups remaining separate from each other, what Guattari calls horizontality. One of the aims of consensus process, especially when tied to forms of direct action, is precisely the collective development of a common project.

We can, here, refer again to the example of the large spokes council meeting in which I participated at the Hori-Zone on the 5 July 2005.<sup>277</sup> The action concept for the protests, at least those linked to the camp, had still not been decided and there were a couple of different proposals on the table. One was to blockade the M9 motorway close to the camp, the other to blockade the A9 closer to the summit. Each one would involve very different forms of action. The M9 proposal was for a mass walk-out from the camp,

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<sup>276</sup> For examples of the close control over flows of information and its use to control and manipulate meetings during the organisation of European Social Forum in London 2005, see Maeckelbergh (2009).

<sup>277</sup> We referred to this meeting in Chapter Three.

which would confront the police and push through to the road. The A9, being further from the camp, favoured dispersed groups who would spend the preceding night hiding in the woods before congregating and performing pulsed, swarming attacks on the road and the summit. After a remarkably well-facilitated process involving several hundred people, the meeting agreed on the latter action format. Despite this, however, the M9 action still went ahead, organised by those who were left in the camp after those committed to the A9 action had left for the woods. At the debrief meeting following the day of action this forking within the camp was seen as a strength rather than a weakness. The decision taken was not binding but the process of maximising the flow of information allowed participants to gauge the intentions of others as they made their own decision.

This example, however, also reveals some of the limitations of the model, particularly when linked to the form of the summit protest. The consensus process works best, for instance, amongst fairly cohesive groups committed in advance to the same broad objective. It relies, of course, on a common commitment and understanding of consensus decision making.<sup>278</sup> But more fundamentally to work effectively it requires a fixed point of reference. At the Gleneagles protests the object was provided by the summit, the accepted aim was to disrupt the summit and the decision under discussion was the tactical one of how best to do that. We could say then that consensus process is better at tactical decisions than strategic decisions. As the decision in the Hori-Zone meeting was a tactical decision it did not have to be binding – this allows the movement principle of 'unity in diversity'. The big stalling point for the alter-globalisation movement, however, has been the difficulty it has had in making strategic decisions, that is, how to collectively transform and generate its own objectives.

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<sup>278</sup> We could refer again to Maeckelbergh's (2009) discussion of the different conceptions of consensus at work during the 2005 European Social Forum. In a split between, what came to be known as the verticals and the horizontals the former favoured a decision-oriented 'consensus' and the latter a process-oriented consensus.

A consensus process might appear to be ill-suited to this task. The pressure to come to consensus, for instance, can provide a bias towards the status quo. It is more difficult to achieve near unanimity on a proposal for a radical break with normal practice. Indeed Guattari (2009: 55) associates consensus with “oppressive redundancies” and “a situation in which participants say exactly what they are expected to say.” A consensus process, although it can contain techniques to allow moments of expression, is fundamentally orientated towards common agreement on a shared objective. As such it is biased against the kind of nonproductive expenditure from which radical change can emerge and with which a group can transform its objective and orientation.<sup>279</sup>

When analysed on this formal level and compared to Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of subject groups we could point to some more limitations. For example, the treatment of consensus process as a potentially universal model tends, in contemporary social movements, to produce group phantasies that are overcoded by a certain type of activist mentality, which we referred to in the previous chapter as the linear accumulation model of the activist. This group fantasy played its part in the dispute around the 2005 European Social Forum as it produced the expectation that groups with very different organisational models and traditions should automatically adopt the consensus model.<sup>280</sup>

Perhaps the most pertinent analytical dimensions to consensus process, however, are revealed less in their formal organisational properties than in the manner of their use and the problematic to which they respond. Rather than judging the process for its formal properties we should think about the role they can play as a component in the creation of a wider

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<sup>279</sup> The question of whether nonproductive expenditure can be formally included in constituted forms overlaps with discussions of the right to resistance (cf Negri 1999).

<sup>280</sup> Indeed an analysis that sees certain procedures as creating a territory in which participants feel at home when they are abroad would have some real explanatory power here.

analytical territory. We can approach this point through the following account of the 6 August anti-summit protests around the A9 near Gleneagles:

For the road blockades at Gleneagles, for instance, we had adopted swarm tactics – people had to get themselves to the general area along a seven kilometre stretch of road at the same time and then cohere together and block the road. As the police came and dispersed us, we had to work out ways of cohering back together at a different part of the road. This went on all morning. But at certain times consensus decision-making meetings were called. We would retreat away from the road and assess and analyse how things were going and what to do next. On the morning of the blockade we took part in three of these meetings, each involving over 100 people... In this way the consensus and spokescouncil meetings were used to reduce the level of intensity and slow down the speed of decision-making. They were also a way of providing reassurance, a way of reaffirming our mutual trust and collectivity (Free Association 2006: 13-14).<sup>281</sup>

We can see here, just as we saw in the opening vignette, that extensive forms, such as consensus meetings, take their place alongside more intensive situations. The form of decision making that takes place in structured meetings is different to the forms of decision making that take place in more intensive situations. In the later, decisions can be made at a more directly affective level, only reaching the level of the conscious subject in retrospect. Again a flavour of this can be found in the following account:

[O]n the Wednesday of the blockades, in the fields next to the road that intensity was ten-fold. Decisions were made so quickly you barely had time to think. Look! that lot in the next field are trying to get on the road, the police are going to block them. Let's charge down here and draw the police off. Great idea, I'll join in. Next time, hey, the police aren't falling for it. They don't believe our fake charges any more. That means we're unopposed. Here we go. Over the fence. On the road. Block the traffic. Yeh, this is actually

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<sup>281</sup> I should make clear, once again, that this text was written by a collective writing group I am involved with, and as such it is partly my own account.

working. We're running rings around them. We're too smart for them. We're thinking too fast (Free Association 2005b: 18).

We can also see this distinction operating over a greater temporal scale during larger moments of excess. Take Narot's account of '68, mediated through Ross's (2002: 102) description:

May and June, he insists, had a temporality all of their own, made up of sudden accelerations and immediate effects: the sensation that mediations and delays had all disappeared. Not only did time move faster than the frozen time of bureaucracy it also surpassed the slow, careful temporality that governs strategy and calculation.

This returns us to the conception that moments of excess can operate as ruptures within the trajectory of a movement, a point at which their problematics are shifted and suggests the analytical territory, or war machine, as a mechanism for mediating these shifts. It is in the combination of moments of excess and mediating analytical war machines that shifts in strategy emerge.

It is this that we have talked about previously as the production of a critical distance or rhythm.<sup>282</sup> We can perhaps relate this to the note of caution that enters Deleuze and Guattari's work. *A Thousand Plateaus* contains many warnings about the need for careful experimentation.

This is how it should be done: Lodge yourself on a stratum, experiment with the opportunities it offers, find an advantageous place on it, find potential movements of deterritorialization, possible lines of flight, experience them, produce flow conjunctions here and there, try our continuums of intensities segment by segment, have a small plot of new land at all times (Deleuze, Guattari 1988: 161).

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<sup>282</sup> As Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 313) make clear a rhythm is the communication between two different milieus. "There is a rhythm whenever there is a transcoded passage from one milieu to another, a communication of milieus, coordination between heterogeneous space-times."

In order to experiment with intensive situations you need some safe space to retreat to in order to assess, 'a small plot of new land'. "You have to keep enough of the organism for it to reform each dawn" (Deleuze, Guattari 1988: 160) after a wild night's destratifying. Could we use this notion of safe space to understand the role of extensive forms of organisation during moments of excess?

If we consider the institutional form of the convergence centre or convergence camps, then they certainly seem to emerge in response to this problematic. Convergence centres were developed as a point of contact and assembly, to provide space for the organisation of actions, and to allow the movement to cohere. The convergence camp is a development of the centres that allows for a longer duration of action and protests, and a greater level of self-organisation. They are large, often rural, self-managed camping spaces with a specific form of layout and organisation. The basic organisational form is the *barrio* or neighbourhood, in which people camp around a kitchen. It is these neighbourhoods that feed into the running of the camp and sometimes even the organisation of the actions. Following discussion in the neighbourhoods delegates, or spokes, are sent to camp-wide meetings. The neighbourhoods themselves can be based around the geographical area of the participant's origin, the country or city; or perhaps around some other factor of affinity.<sup>283</sup> This model was first developed at a 'No Border' camp in Strasbourg in 2002, which had around 3,000 participants. The camp model was first employed at a summit protest during the 2003 anti-G8 protests around Evian.<sup>284</sup> As we have already indicated, during a week of protests such camps function as safe spaces to which to retreat after protests, direct actions, or other intensive occasions. Indeed the usual format is for large collective debriefing meetings to take place after

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<sup>283</sup> There is, for instance, often a queer neighbourhood.

<sup>284</sup> Protest camps, of course, have a much longer and more diverse history but I would argue that they have not taken quite this form before even if they have addressed a similar problematic.

protest and actions with the aim of analysing them and assessing the next move.

Their form, however, as a good fit with the concept of safe space, also indicates some of the dangers with the concept. We could point, for instance, at Raunig's (2007: 258) assessment of the original Strasbourg camp, as containing an inward-facing orientation as a "consequence of self-administration in the succinct sense as closure and turning to the inside".<sup>285</sup> Perhaps ironically for a repertoire that first developed in the 'No Border' movement, convergence camps by necessity have strong borders around them, often with elaborate defensive structures and self-organised defensive patrols to defend the camp from the police, etc. The camps, then, reinforce a certain separation between those inside the boundary (activists) and those outside (the public, the mass) – a distinction made even more solid if the camps take on an avant-gardist group phantasy, presenting themselves as exemplary. The Hori-Zone in Gleneagles, for instance, was also called the Eco-village and was constructed as a model of low environmental impact and democratic living.<sup>286</sup>

One of the problems of the concept of a safe space, then, is the ease with which it can fall into the sense of a liberated zone. This could leave the appearance that what is inside the camp does not need significant transformation but can instead act as a model to be adopted by the rest of the world. In response to this we propose that it is more useful to

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<sup>285</sup> Raunig (2007: 258) goes on to argue that this orientation meant "there was no room left for discussions and preparing actions on these formal platforms of organisation." My experience of convergence camps as they have developed since that time is that while they certainly are used to organise and assess actions there is little scope for discussion of wider political issues, and therefore analysis of aspects such as the neoliberal, transcendental conditioning of experience.

<sup>286</sup> Indeed it served as the model for the Camps for Climate Action; the climate camp concept emerged during the post-Gleneagles discussions amongst the network that had organised the Hori-Zone.

conceptualise these movement practices through another of Deleuze and Guattari's territorial concepts, the refrain (*ritournelle*).

Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 311) introduce the concept with the following image:

A child in the dark, gripped with fear, comforts herself by singing under her breath. She walks and halts to her song. Lost, she takes shelter, or orients herself with her little song as best she can. The song is like a rough sketch of a calming and stabilising, calm and stable, centre in the heart of chaos... Now we are at home. But home does not preexist: it was necessary to draw a circle around that uncertain and fragile centre, to organize a limited space... Finally, one opens the circle a crack, opens it all the way, lets someone in, calls someone, or else goes out ones self, launches forth... One launches forth, hazards an improvisation.<sup>287</sup>

In Deleuze and Guattari's (1988: 323) usage the refrain has a couple of senses. There is a narrow sense of the concept of a refrain in which "an assemblage is sonorous or 'dominated by sound'".<sup>288</sup> The model for the use of refrains to create a territory is, of course, birdsong. We, however, are more concerned with the general sense of the concept in which a refrain can be "any assemblage of matters of expression that draws a territory and develops territorial motifs and landscapes (there are optical, gestural, motor, etc., refrains)." Used in this sense we can think of certain movement repertoires as refrains. So, in the woods and fields around the A9 near Gleneagles, spokescouncil meetings were used to lower the level of intensity, to slow down the speed of decision-making, to re-establish some coherence. The participants could do so because they all knew the refrain.

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<sup>287</sup> Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 312) go on to make clear that these are not "three successive movements in an evolution. They are three aspects of a single, the Refrain."

<sup>288</sup> They assign this apparent privilege to sound because its flexibility makes it the cutting edge of deterritorialisation.

Refrains are what we fall back on in moments of stress and uncertainty. They let us feel at home when we are abroad in the world. But they also allow us to open a crack in the circle and launch forth on experimentation. The advantage of the refrain is that it is portable – it comes with you when you venture into new milieus and territorialise there, as they are expressed. We might think of the use of the refrain in Jazz: it is what links each player as they launch forth on an experimental, improvised solo. Just as the music threatens to lose all coherence, the ensemble can fall back on the familiar chorus, riff, or refrain, even if it now contains some variations. The refrain, then, allows the development of style.

Refrains can of course be excluding – you have to know the tune to join in – but they do not, necessarily, depend on a clear inside/outside distinction. It is the notion of safe space that is more prone to such exclusive disjunction. Refrains are not always consciously chosen; they can apply to the pre-subjective and pre-conscious. Refrains can be corporeal, visceral, autonomic, operating of the level of the affective.<sup>289</sup> But as territorial concepts they are orientated to the outside. They are the point of communication between a territory and its milieu.

So how are refrains created? Let's return to movement practice. At certain points, certain practices, or other elements of the milieu, become expressive. We can think of the way that a consensus process became, for many participants, definitional of the alter-globalisation movement. However, refrains are also situational, they are the blocks of code that communicate with the external milieu. We can think then of how the refrains of movements change as the problematics of the movement change. New elements become expressive of the new situation and crystallise emerging desires. It is refrains "as the most deterritorialized factor, the most deterritorialized vector" (Deleuze, Guattari 1988: 327) that assure consistency, "the holding together' of heterogenous elements" (Deleuze, Guattari 1988: 323).

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<sup>289</sup> Of course a familiar refrain can act as a Proustian madeleine, triggering the affective state that the body associated with it.

The concept of the refrain certainly holds an inheritance from Guattari's experience of analytic groups. Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 348) define the refrain as a "crystal of space time", which has "a catalytic function". They describe the refrain as an example of a transversal, "a component that takes upon itself the specialised vector of deterritorialisation, reminding us that "what holds an assemblage together is... its most deterritorialized component" (Deleuze, Guattari 1988: 336). It is, however, in Guattari's (1996: 201) work that the connection to analysis is most clear, when he characterises refrains as "virulent fragments of partial enunciation which work to 'shift' subjectivation." It is these refrains that the movement sings to itself to feel at home when it is abroad.

Of course, there is nothing necessarily liberating about refrains. As a technique for creating the sense of an abode their function can be colonised by capital. Lazzarato (2003), for instance, argues that commercials and brands can function as refrains of a certain kind. The policy of McDonalds, for instance, is that their burgers should taste the same in each of their restaurants, no matter where in the world it is located. A little taste of home when abroad? This, however, is a refrain without an opening to the outside. The territory it constructs is the infantile, serial subjectivity of consumption. The metronomic tick of capital's need to valorise is meter not rhythm.<sup>290</sup>

An analytic territory then cannot be constructed merely out of the use of refrains to lower intensity. It must also contain "a-signifying *ritornellos* constitutive of new existential territories" (Guattari 1996: 133). These are refrains as rupture, when the refrain's expressivity produces a moment of non-productivity. As Guattari (1996: 200) says, "the refrain does not rest on the elements of form, material, or ordinary signification, but on the detachment of an existential 'motif'... instituted as an 'attractor' in the midst

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<sup>290</sup> As Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 313-14) explain:

It is well known that rhythm is not meter or cadence, even irregular meter or cadence: there is nothing less rhythmic than a military march... Meter is dogmatic, but rhythm is critical; it ties together critical moments, or ties itself together in passing from one moment to another... It is the difference that is rhythmic, not the repetition.

of sensible and signification chaos." The role of the analytic war machine is to bring out the refrains, make them audible through revisiting the events and problematics from which they arose so as to allow collective innovation to take place. Perhaps the role of the analyst is the production of style, selecting refrains to act as provocations to the territory. It is with this sense that Lazzarato (2006:) says:

In the refrain, in the *rapport à soi*, in the production of subjectivity, there is the possibility of unfolding the event, of escaping from the serialized and standardized production of subjectivity. But this possibility must be constructed. We have to create possibles. This is the sense in which Guattari speaks of the "aesthetic paradigm": to construct political, economic and aesthetic devices where this existential transformation can be tested – a politics of experimentation, not representation.

In Chapter Three we discussed the alter-globalisation movement's use of the summits of global governance structure as a stand-in for the dispositif of neoliberalism. We could now conceptualise this strategy as the detachment of a partial object from the wider milieu, in which our subjectivities are conditioned transcendentally. The summit then would take the place of the Bastille, an object upon which we could cast a group phantasy in order to break from our seriality. The movement's compositional effects can be understood as the attempted internalisation of the object. Or rather the attempt to displace the problematic into a compositional one, in order to break that transcendental conditioning of our lives and gain control over the production of subjectivity, to auto-generate subjectivity. In this schema, however, it is not the summit that fulfils the role of the transitional object; it is rather the movement refrains that have emerged from its compositional efforts. It is these that provide the safety blanket, the mobile territory that the movement carries with it on its back. It is this that provides it with the confidence to enter a period of transformation, allowing it to experiment and explore.

At this point we can return to the problem of repetition that we raised, via Marx, at the beginning of the thesis. As movements shift problematics,

and as new cycles of struggle emerge, we need a mode of repetition, of the figures and practices of past struggles, which will allow the production of the new. In an extraordinary piece of analysis Deleuze (1995: 131) discusses the tennis playing styles of Bjorn Borg and John McEnroe, saying: "Each new style amounts not so much to a new 'trick' as to a linked sequence of postures – the equivalent, that is, of a syntax, based on an earlier style but breaking with it." What we need to develop, then, is a style of movement engagement that persists beyond any specific social movement. The conceptualisation of the repertoires, practices and problematics of previous movements as refrains might aid that process. If so, the refrains must be constructed so that they "constantly criticize themselves, constantly interrupt themselves in their own course, return to the apparently accomplished, in order to begin anew" (Marx 1968a: 100).

## Chapter Seven

### Conclusion

We began the thesis with a quotation from *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* out of which we posited the problematic of producing a mode of repetition that will not overcode the struggles of future generations but will provide the tools from which they can generate the new, and confront the problematics of their time. During the construction of our symptomology, in Chapter Three, we found that this search for antecedents is a recurring symptom of moments of excess, as people search for point of orientation during a period of disruption. In Chapter Five we examined the notion of 'a generation' contained in Jefferson's argument that the laws of one generation should not bind another. It is from this notion that Jefferson (2007: 56) proposes, "[e]very constitution, then, and every law, naturally expires at the end of 19 years." We critiqued this conception by suggesting that, as births don't occur in twenty year bursts, then the concept of a generation only makes sense in reference to shared seminal experiences.<sup>291</sup> From this we can argue that generations are generated through events. This implies, of course, that the same groups, or individuals, can partake in several generations of struggle. When we talk about the traditions of past generation weighing "like a nightmare upon the brains of the living" (Marx 1968a: 97), it is not unreasonable to count ourselves amongst the ranks of the living.

This is, in some respects, only a minor theme running through the thesis, yet it is important because it helps to illustrate what is at stake. If we are to participate in future generations of struggle then we must avoid the fetishisation of past experiences. Those of us with past experience in social movements can't impose our previous practice, or process, on the

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<sup>291</sup> For Jefferson's generation, of course, this was provided by the American Revolution.

movements to come. To this aim we have attempted to find a mode of abstracting political problematics from the alter-globalisation movement, and of conceptualising the practices generated there, in a manner that will allow them to be picked up and built upon by future movements, even though those movements will be concerned with different 'issues' and problems.

To develop this approach we began in Chapter Two with a symptomatic reading of some other approaches to the study of social movements. We focussed, in particular, on the behaviourist and pluralist inheritance that runs through certain strands of the treatment of social movements in political science and Social Movement Theory. By doing so we sought to use the tracing of certain *lacunae* that we found there as a means of approaching the transcendental dimensions of neoliberal forms of power. It is this "structuring [of] the conditions of possibility of social life" (Hardt, Negri 2009: 6) that so restricts the political options open to us and makes the expansion of possibilities found in moments of excess so vital.

In Chapter Three we suggested that the episodic, evental form taken by the alter-globalisation movement is a symptom of the movement's struggle to get to grips with the slippery form of neoliberalism's transcendental dimensions of power. The summit protest, we suggested, is used to put a place on the non-place of power; that is to say, it is used as a means of letting the movement's compositional effects take place. We then sought to re-inhabit these compositional effects by constructing a symptomology, a grouping of experiences on the basis of their shared affective qualities.

It is from this symptomology that we developed, in Chapter Four, the concept of moments of excess. We also sought to reconceptualise the relation of such moments to the transcendental structuring of experience, through a reading of Bataille's concept of nonproductive expenditure, and the vital role it plays in breaking with dominant notions of utility. It is only through moments of nonproductive expenditure that a society, an organisation, or a movement, can generate real difference. We then followed this concept into the work of Deleuze and Guattari through their reworking of nonproductive expenditure into the concept of antiproduction. We then

examined the role that antiproduction plays in their concepts of the Body without Organs and the socius. It is through this conceptualisation that we sought to recompose the problematic of the relationship between moment of excess and everyday life, into an organisational question. In particular, Guattari's proposal for analytical war machines to operate in relation to moments of excess marked a point of transition in the thesis. From that fulcrum the focus of the thesis shifted towards drawing up a diagram of a potential analytical war machine by reconceptualising the alter-globalisation movement's practices, repertoires and organisational process.

Chapter Five began by showing how elements of the movement have sought to define the movement through reference to its organisational process. We then sought to resolve this desire with Guattari's (1996: 260) definition of the left as a "processual passion". We used the resolution of these two concepts of process as a means of exploring the form of analysis that can operate across the ruptures and discontinuities produced by moments of excess. To approach this problem we briefly examined Jefferson and Lenin's theories of revolutionary transformation, before moving to Deleuze's critique of Kant for his failure to include the genesis of established values within the scope of his analysis. Within the contemporary socius it is the form of economic value that structures the presuppositions of our everyday common sense understanding of the world. After examining this structuring we moved to a discussion of Spinoza's ethics. We suggested that this ethics could operate in both the intensive conditions of a moment of excess and the more extensive conditions of everyday life. As such it can act as the basis for an analysis that can cross ruptures and discontinuities and can serve, then, as the ethical basis for a processual politics. Indeed we also proposed that the alter-globalisation movement's concern with process was not, necessarily, an attachment to certain procedures, it can also be conceptualised as a stage in the development of a passion for the joyful affects of increasing collective capacities.

In Chapter Six we investigated the neglected area of Guattari's practice in political and psychoanalytical groups. Examining the analytical concepts

he developed in this practice, particularly the concept of transversality and the distinction between subject and subjugated groups, allowed us to reconceptualise Deleuze and Guattari's concept of territory in terms of the analysis of group desires. This enabled us to reinterpret the practice of the alter-globalisation movement in terms of a nascent analytical territory. In Chapter Two we suggested that we conceive of social movements in terms of the problematics with which they are engaged. In Chapter Three we put forward the idea that summit protests had been used as a means of grappling with the problematic of neoliberal forms of power. In Chapter Six we used the concept of an analytical war machine functioning on the level of the territory, to reconceptualise the strategy of putting a place on the non-place of power in terms of the detachment of a partial object from the wider milieu. It is the turning expressive of this partial object that helped generate the alter-globalisation movement. More precisely, summit protests allowed the movement to generate itself through the development of compositional refrains. A conceptualisation of movement practices as refrains, by highlighting their role in producing the comfort of home when we are involved in intensive moments of transformation, might help future generations of struggle to repeat the alter-globalisation movement's practice in a way that can serve as a basis for authentic creation and the engagement with contemporary problematics.

This thesis, then, provides a novel and innovative reading of the political problematics of the alter-globalisation movement, and fundamentally reconceptualises some familiar repertoires and practices. At the same time, however, the thesis can be read as a novel and innovative interpretation of the political problematics contained in Deleuze and Guattari's work.

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