

A TASTE FOR ENCOUNTERS

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Prologue

The notes transcribed here are only the outline of a *quest* that attracts them, although exceeding them considerably. That is why they do not culminate in a conclusion. They intend to seek a plurality of occurrences that may allow to deal - as critical to a philosophy of becoming - with the game of productivity of encounters in Deleuzian conceptual co-creation. The *problem of immanence* involved here, can be summarized as follows¹: in the same way as the potency of casual intensive encounters launches the Deleuzian thinker to lurk for necessary thought and for punctual action, it is within the immanence of encounters that differential repetition of intensive multiplicities – proliferating mutual implications between the virtual and the actual – puts philosophical thought into becoming and turns the thinker himself into a co-operator of becomings, beyond ego and logocentric relapses. This is the abusive summary of the problem that inspires the notes transcribed below, but in relation to which they peremptorily avoid to draw conclusions.

Experience and philosophy

In order to start, we ought to consider the following platitude: it is impossible to separate philosophy from experience. Even when practiced with strictest and justifiable formalism and even if the experiment is dedicated to the abstract movement of a concept, it is a fact that certain procedures that isolate the argumentative flows of any philosophy whatsoever, thus avoiding references to some experience of the philosopher, even in this case a certain philosophical experimentalism - related to the determination of problems, the detailing of links between components of concepts, the selections of bridges between them etc. - takes place. Inversely, another type of philosophical experimentalism is at work in attempts to link concepts of a philosophy to individual experiences lived by philosopher or to the more general socio-historical field that encompasses his life.

¹ This summary relies on excerpts of the following works of Gilles Deleuze: *Différence et répétition*. Paris: PUF, 1968, pp. 383-389; *Spinoza et le problème de l'expression*. Paris : Minuit, 1968, 162 ; and the work by Deleuze and Félix Guattari *Mille plateaux*. Paris: Minuit, 1980, p. 31. It is worth to remember that François Zourabichvili makes a precious reference to these excerpts in *Deleuze. Une philosophie de l'événement*. Paris: PUF, 2nd ed. 2004, p. 84.

It is assumed, therefore, the very impossibility of separating any philosophy from some kind of experience. For example, in one of his first essays, collected in *Situations*², Sartre indicated his entirely personal manner of interrogating a philosophy. He said roughly the following: it is possible to ask any philosopher (Descartes, in the case of this essay) concerning the privileged situation in respect to which he made the *experience of his freedom*.

Well, when we read Deleuze's writings, it is not uncommon to notice that his thought involves itself with experiments, thus outlining one *more* philosophy of some kind of experience. But which kind precisely? Would it be adequate to impose on him the same question Sartre asked Descartes? Deleuze certainly lived moments or situations in which his subjectivity experienced a certain freedom of choosing this or that shortcut in order to select one or another kind of composition with his territory. For example, in the final moments of his existence, and already no longer enduring the state of extreme exhaustion of his power to breathe, maybe he disposed of at least two pathways and was still able to choose one of them: the hospital, always oscillating between recoveries and gradual degradations of this power; or the shortcut that prevailed, the suicide, able or not to create a lightning body without organs. Be it as it may, his *philosophy* does not seem to be determined by experiences that express sovereign subjective freedom.

Reencounter with the here-and-now

Freedom of choice itself, in the case of Deleuzian writings, is not simply that of a self-determined subjectivity. To choose this or that way in the maze of experiential territory implies a complex involvement of subjective volition with brittle conditions, not transparent to consciousness. It is in a state of profound ignorance that we live, here and now, in the immanence of challenging conditions of feeling, thinking, acting ... conditions whose blocks recombine at each move of the bodies. There is the block of *longitudinal* conditions, that is to say: dynamics of movement one is capable of, of rests within reach, of attainable speeds, of slownesses one is submitted to, and all this happens without having knowledge of what the body is capable of; and there is an intempestive block of *latitudinal* conditions, that is to say: the unexpected fulguration of affects that overcome the body in the here-and-now, intensifications of a power, yes, but

² Jean-Paul Sartre, *Situations I*. Paris: Gallimard, 1947.

a power to be affected. All this hurls the choices into a non regimented game of contingent reasons and of a complicated zigzag of passions and rhythms, because they implicate that which is happening in the *here-and-now* of connections between bodies. These words are here to insinuate a Spinozian atmosphere, of course, an atmosphere that is precisely the one that provides the texture of the Deleuzian idea of experience³.

But it was in the ensemble of his writings, interviews and lectures, that Deleuze conceptually consolidated a philosophy of experience of this kind of atmosphere. Properly speaking, he determined his philosophical experience as being that of a thinking through concepts, yes, but a thinking that implies, in its own effectuation, a singular mutual involvement of activity and passivity; a thinking one perceives as active by virtue of irreducible differential connections to both the voluntarism of the thinking subject and the ordinary reception of external data. For this reason, this philosophy strictly avoids to define itself as “dogmatism” or as “empiricism”. As explicated by itself, its perspective consists in avoiding two mistakes: the dogmatic "mistake" of an invasive thinking's subject, destined to "always fill what separates"; as well as the vulgar empiricist "mistake" led by a kind of perceptionism that considers as “exterior” what appears to it as “separate”. In this philosophy, thinking becomes to experience what Deleuze calls the *critical point*. How can this paradoxical point, capable of the operation of separation and reunion, be characterized? Here's how Deleuze says what happens at this point: it is the "'critical' point where difference, as difference, exerts the function to reunite”. It is in the sense of a differential capable to reunite heterogeneities that this philosophy defines itself as "transcendental empiricism"⁴.

Very well, where does it occur, where does this experience of a thought that perceives itself thinking by virtue of differential connections that force it to think distribute itself? It occurs in a problematic field, in a field that does not stop to impose questions and to trigger problems, a transcendental *field* affirmed in a *plane* of immanence ... in short, in the productive multiplicity of encounters that erupt in the here-and-nows. What we gain with this transcendental empiricism is not simply a narcissistic thinking satisfied with its own expressions, but a philosophy of the experience of thinking immersed in this complex productivity.

If there is any Being on the agenda of this philosophy it is the being of becomings that pulsates in encounters. And if we find that the vocabulary of this

³ G. Deleuze, *Spinoza – Philosophie pratique*, cap. VI, “Spinoza et nous” (1981), p. 171.

⁴ G. Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, op. cit., pp. 221 and 187.

philosophy complicates things, it will respond that complication already is in the encounters of the bodies themselves. In states of common life - these states of non-philosophy - one feels, as a complex experience, even an admiration, a sympathy or some dismay or fright in the face of *something*; and this almost always opens dimensions not contained in this something, dimensions that the participant feels as insistent in the emergence of *something*.

Plurality of encounters

Every ordinary encounter is therefore exposed to the possibility of an instant revulsion that can project everything out of whack. It is as if life itself feels shaken by this crease in which ordinary experience is folded along another one, the extraordinary. We forefeel that the effective complexity of the experience of encounters depends on what happens in this fold, which is why it is necessary to search for its explanation. Everyone feels and expresses in his own way this simultaneous occurrence of divergent lines, the odd folding in which the gathered ones experience their own ties as being that which throws them into a time outside the axes: the ghost that appears to Hamlet, revealing that mother and uncle murdered his father, is a move that complicates his situation, the sensation of a fractured I and a time that does not reconcile with itself. This is the meaning of Shakespeare's singular expression: "The time is out of joint."⁵ Deleuze, as we know, leads these and other "poetic formulae" to the encounter of the Kantian subversions. In this case, the subversion consists in conceiving time as an "autonomous form", an "immutable form of change and movement", a pure form of determination by which the *I think* determines the *I am*. This way, the "I" is fractured in a way that is not perceivable in the Cartesian formula of the cogito: "I think, therefore I am"⁶. It is the complexity of experience that fosters transitions from one philosophical problem to another.

Why this flirt with a Kantian subversion? When Deleuze creates or captures a resonance like that between Hamlet and Kant, is to enforce a productive outside, an outside of anonymous forces vibrating in the encounters and also insinuating itself in the conceptual elaboration. This "romantic" resonance created between the philosopher and the literary character, passes through references to combinations of a new *concept*

⁵ Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, I, 5 ("The time is out of joint").

⁶ G. Deleuze, "Sur quatre formules poétiques qui pourraient résumer la philosophie kantienne" (1986). See G. Deleuze, *Critique et clinique*. Paris : Minuit, 1993, pp. 40-49. See also G. Deleuze e F. Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?*. Paris : Minuit, 1991, Example 1, pp. 29-31.

of time. These combinations occur on a plane which is erected to the extent to which a philosopher is taken by the creation of his concepts. Therefore, to be lurking for the force that ignites living encounters, and to think them philosophically, imposes a new state of lurking and dedication to the conceptual encounters themselves, which should increasingly inhibit the mere substitution of the first ones by the latter, and viceversa. One of the effects of Deleuzian thought is precisely this: the dedicated lurking, doubly instigated by conceptual encounters and by encounters between modes of living, ends up stimulating a variety of lines of non-reductive interpretation of any previous philosophy, displacing us from the position of a judge, opening us to transpositions fertilized by varying levels of selective receptivity. For Deleuze, this dedicated lurking is also that of "empiricism", because empiricism "treats the concept as the object of an encounter, as a here-now"⁷.

In his book about Deleuze's vocabulary, Zourabichvili points out the task that might guarantee a certain kind of encounter with a thought: "the exposure of concepts is the only guarantee of an *encounter* with a thought." The term encounter appears in italics in order to highlight the distinction of the exposure he advocates: it is irreducible both to mere expository technicalities, allegedly neutral in relation to the text studied, as well as to mellow feelings of adherence to the words and phrases of the philosopher; the point is to expose the concepts of a philosopher, yes, but "under the double condition of the sympathetic and the strange"⁸, a condition that certainly matches with the strangeness and attractive force at the intersections of problematic sites. Previous philosophies do not deserve technocratic expositions nor imbecile allegiance but, in order to avoid this, it is necessary that a vibration of problems magnetizes the encounter with its conceptual articulations.

The philosophical experimentalism of Deleuze, his constructivism, also implies a certain respect for other disciplines of thought. Indeed, for Deleuze and Guattari, aside of art and science, philosophical thought, as it is also known, is one of the "three big forms" or "ways" of thinking. Without hierarchy, they are basically defined by the common task of "facing chaos". But each of them erects its own and distinct plane of exercise of its mode of thinking. While art thinks "through sensations", tracing a "plane of composition", while science thinks "through functions", tracing a "planes of coordinates", philosophy, facing the variabilities of the chaotic of encounters, traces "a

⁷ G. Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, op. cit., p. 3.

⁸ François Zourabichvili, *Le vocabulaire de Deleuze*. Paris : Ellipses, 2003, Introdução, item 2.

plane of immanence" erected to the extent to which it "thinks through concepts."⁹ Therefore, the philosophical comprehension of the productive complexity of experience exposes us to a double impregnation: that of the chaotic of encounters itself no matter with what and that of the vertiginous back-and-forth exhibited by the concepts in various mutual encounters to which they are driven by problems to which they need to correspond.

These problems are not verbiage, like those considered eternal by a certain image of what philosophy is, and that could be remedied by one of them or by sanitizing language. They are problems that gain their objective truth in a revolutionary pragmatic of encounters.¹⁰ Indeed, in *What is Philosophy?* concepts make sense for dynamically corresponding to problems that transfer to them a force of *self-positing*, so that they, irreducible to subjective arbitrariness or simple discursive engagement of the philosopher, imply a mode of invention sensitive to the problematic character of the encounters. Since Deleuze's first book, this problematic exists in a relation of immanence with the circumstantiality of encounters themselves; and already insinuates itself in the idea that encounters constituent of the subject involve relations *exterior* to the related terms¹¹. In another writing, Deleuze shows that the "voice" itself intervenes in the "dynamics" of conceptual encounters:

"philosophy is the art of inventing concepts, of creating new concepts that we need to think our world and our lives. From this point of view, concepts have velocities and slownesses, movements, dynamics that extend or that contract themselves throughout the text: they do not refer to characters, but they themselves are characters, rhythmic characters. They complement one another or separate from, confront, lurk for one another like wrestlers or lovers."¹²

Feeling and thinking *in* encounters

When one joins the game of concepts of a philosopher, it is not uncommon to feel oneself oscillating between an extensive reading, usually orientated by a guide line,

⁹ G. Deleuze e F. Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie ?*, op. cit., pp. 186, 187.

¹⁰ This is the first rule Deleuze extracts from Henri-Louis Bergson (1859-1941): "To apply the proof of the true and the false to the problems themselves, to denounce false problems, to reconcile truth and creation on the level of the problems". *Le Bergsonisme*. Paris : PUF, 1966, p. 3.

¹¹ G. Deleuze, *Empirisme et subjectivité*. Paris : PUF, p. 109-110 .

¹² G. Deleuze, "Ce que la voix apporte au texte" (1987) – in *Deux régimes de fous*, Paris: Minuit, 2003, p. 303.

ranging from evanescent to the markedly theorematic lines, and the problematic state of intensive reading. In this case, this strange state of impregnation, it is not uncommon to feel connected to a zigzag of rhythms in which transpassages travel back and forth between conceptual and living encounters.

These transpassages seem to echo folds and defolds pulsating in this double experience of encounters, between almost always rebellious folds and excessively categorical guide lines. They seem to imply brittle segments of lines of metamorphosis sensitive to the circumstances of the occurrences, to what initiates games of forces, to what exhales tensions etc.. There is a phrase said by Deleuze while remembering his childhood: *when one is woken up at a certain moment, one is woken up by someone*. In the case of this phrase, one might imagine that this 'someone' being Pierre Halbwach, then professor in Deauville, and who enthusiastically read to his students, and to Deleuze in particular texts by Baudelaire, Anatole France, Gide ...¹³

Well, would it be too naive to ask concerning the conceptual transpassage of the experience of this encounter? What occurred in it in order to make this question necessary? To answer, we must still ask something else, perhaps inspired by Bergson: should it be that Deleuze's memory of that encounter is consumed by a remembrance retained, simply, as an extensive actuality, cushioned there in the fadings of existence? First, while meeting this other subject named Pierre Halbwachs, one realizes that the other was not simply reduced to a subject talking about cultural objects; one realizes that he was felt, in the encounter itself, as a "beautiful voice" opening literary worlds to young Deleuze, worlds that proliferated in his life. Thus occurred the beautiful vocal expression of possible literary worlds. That is enough to understand such an encounter as intensive, and to insist on the return of that question: would there be at least one example of such intensity sparkling in Deleuzian conceptual transpassages?

Yes, there is more than one example. One of them relates quickly and directly to the point of interest. It can be found in chapter 5 of *Difference and Repetition*, in the paragraphs dedicated to the notion of the *Other*, "its nature and function in psychic systems". This dedication sought to go beyond a kind of I-Youism, i.e., the retention of the pair I-You in the rotation of subject and object roles; this I-Youism is common in some level of lyrics for music and images of television, but it can also be noticed in

¹³ "L'Abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze", interview by Claire PARNET filmed by P. A. Boutang in 1988 and broadcasted as a series by TV-ART starting from November 1995: Video Edition Montparnasse, 1996. See letter E, "Enfance".

certain "theories", says Deleuze, that wander "from one pole where the other is reduced to the status of an object to a pole where he is led to the status of the subject". Even Sartre – considered by Deleuze as his extra academic "master"¹⁴ – even he "satisfied himself with inscribing this oscillation in the other as such, showing that the other became object while I was subject, and did not become subject without the me, on my turn, becoming object". The problem felt by Deleuze is that this type of rotation maintains as "unknown" what he calls "the structure of the other" and "its functioning in psychic systems". More precisely: it is adequate to think that "both systems" - that is to say, "me in relation to the other and the other in relation to me" – imply a "nobody". This nobody is precisely the "*Other a priori*", i.e., not a tangible subject or object, but that which vibrates "in each system because of its expressive, i.e., its implicit and engaging value." Let us imagine ourselves encountering a "terrified face (in conditions of experience in which I do not see and feel the causes of this terror); this face expresses a possible world - the terrifying world¹⁵". There are expressive values producing themselves like vibrations in certain encounters, here called intensive. The Deleuzian feeling-and-thinking is forced to operate in transpassages between expressive values, jumping in the meetings, and conceptual joints that do not impose themselves as coordinates because they operate by through intensive ordination magnetized by the problem that imposes itself. It was said forced thinking and feeling. Yes, because these transpassages correspond to an image of thought according to which feeling and thinking are affected by differential connections that are imposed on them from *outside*, just as it happens in this concept of *the other as an opening to possible worlds*.¹⁶

At each instant, a problematic rampage of encounters strikes through our vital immersion. Among the networks of lines that connect us to the experience of encounters, two enjoy a privilege that no philosopher can get rid of. That is feeling and thinking. When Deleuze conceptually sifts the encounters that touch him, we notice that he elaborates a singular connection between feeling and thinking. What attracts him in this new elaboration? What attracts him is that which determines his destiny, his fortune, his fate, his luck in the history of philosophy: the problematic of complex differentiations involved in the encounters. The productive connections between feeling and thinking are crucial to this new problematic. One might have an impression of this

¹⁴ G. Deleuze, *L'île déserte et autres textes – textes et entretiens 1953-1974*. Paris : Minuit, 2002, pp. 109-113.

¹⁵ G. Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, op. cit., pp. 333-335.

¹⁶ Cf. G. Deleuze, *Logique du sens*. Paris : Minuit, 1969, appendix II, pp. 350-372.

through mere mentioning of questions that imposed themselves: for example, the question concerning what «forces sensitivity to feel» and concerning that which «can only be felt» and that which is "insensitive at the same time"¹⁷. These are apparently strange questions that register a new kind of attention to the experience of the percussion that trembles in the encounters, an attention already present in Kant's third critique, the *Critique of Judgment*. This attention can register how much, *in* the encounters, *something* reverberated in each of these networks of lines opening fissures hitherto insufficiently discussed. The mere plurality of empirical senses does not express the drama going on when, by breaking the very weaving of feeling, an intensity spreads like lightning, reverberating thought, imagination etc... . This imposes on Deleuze the task to conceptually correspond to this dramaturgy of ideas in feeling and thinking. The summarizing formula for this is: "here are we forced to feel and think difference"¹⁸.

So the question concerning what is happening in the fold of complication of encounters approximates another one: the one interested the role played by a certain idea in this dramaturgy where feeling and thinking suffer reverberations which, passing through them, impose a revision of their connections. It is commonly said that Deleuze contradicts an entire tradition which, according to him, erected an image considered "dogmatic" of what it means to think. In an abusive summary, it says the following: as "form of representation", this image simplifies the problem: something strikes our senses, our perception apprehends, and our thinking represents it based on a voluntary effort, the "natural exercise of a faculty"; this faculty of thinking is supposed to be endowed by itself, in its intimacy, with a "an affinity with truth", in a way that the thinker, as such, is characterized by "good will" as well as his thought is characterized by a "righteous nature", assigning the errors and mistakes to passions, to a lack of methods etc..¹⁹. The point is to reverse this form, this representative or cognitive image that obscures what actually happens when I am forced to feel, to think etc.. And how Deleuze does it? He does it by calling attention to the very experience of encounters that, triggering sensibility, trigger other faculties, including thinking.

¹⁷ G. Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, op. cit., p. 185.

¹⁸ G. Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, p. 293.

¹⁹ G. Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, p. 171.

Remember that, in alliance with Proust, he said that "thought is nothing without something that forces to think, that exerts violence on thought"²⁰.

This does not mean that there is no consciousness of *something* found in the intensive encounter: it may be so and so, that I recognized by his face or voice, it can be a certain favela, which I acknowledge because lived in its labyrinth etc.. Similarly, in the encounter, the one who perceives this something is conscious of conceiving it with joy or pain. However, if the encounter would remain of consciousness of something and of personal feelings, it could rigorously, and from the point of view of the problematic that concerns us, not be called *fundamental*. We might say that an encounter of this kind, i.e., on this level is not only inevitable but also necessary, useful etc. from the point of view of survival, of travels, of life in general. It is present at all times and works in the common apprehension of situations. These are extensive encounters.

Feeling and thinking in another way

As the organizational plane of extensive encounters does not exhaust the problematic of encounters, we must return to the question: concretely, what happens in those encounters that Deleuze considers noteworthy, encounters that bring another experience of the exercise of the faculties of feeling, remembering, imagining and thinking into play? What happens in an encounter considered *fundamental* is a complex process: let us suppose that, in this here and now, in this very present in which I live, I am relishing the sensible quality of this light and tasty cookie called madaleine, like that of Proust, for example; and supposing that, like Proust, this gustatory encounter with a madeleine triggers in me a joy so singularly intense that I cannot assign it only to that which was *given* to me in this encounter, to this sensitive quality of the cookie in my mouth; in the same way that I cannot explain it using memories of what I lived in the past. Why? Because this intense joy, that can only be felt, opens me to states to which I am launched involuntarily; it impose on me the atmospheres overflowing with experienced situations; it opens me to virtualities that insist on what I was *given* in the encounter, but that do not appear in the *given* itself.

However, an encounter of this kind is not just any encounter. Let's see. It is true that also here, as in the extensive encounters, we are aware of the participants: we are happy or we get scared when we find "Socrates, the temple or the devil"; and we are

²⁰ G. Deleuze, *Proust et les signes*. Paris : PUF, 1976, p. 117.

aware that we comprehend these companies "under diverse affective shades, admiration, love, hate, pain." That is: even a fundamental meeting comprises the series of extensive differences that, in a markedly extensive encounter, are apparently the only ones; meaning: we are never totally free from "common sense", so that we we find ourselves pleased while tasting the madeleine, which is a "sensible in the recognition", i.e., which counts on the agreement by which the senses (sight, taste etc.), in their empirical exercise, refer to an "object" (the madeleine "which can be remembered, imagined, conceived." Suddenly, however, the intensity of joy reverberates in the lines of feeling escapes from the cognitive links controlled by common sense, by which the lines of thinking are also reverberated, knocking out the volunteerism and the good will of the thinker. And even a tear might be shed, forcing us to ask for what is happening in this strange moment that lances past and future simultaneously.

Paradox: philosophy is a way of thinking through concepts, but thought alone would not be sufficient to establish the necessity of that is thought or the very necessity of thinking. What must happen in order to have this double necessity? Here is how Deleuze forwards the response in a sentence that opens up his philosophy to the intrusion of the productive outside, that is, not to the mere exteriority of extensive encounters, but to the surprising chance of intensive encounters: "let us not count on thought in order to ground the relative necessity of what it thinks; let us count, on the contrary, on the contingency of an encounter with that which forces to think, in order to stress and to erect the absolute necessity of an act of thinking, a passion of thinking." It is the careful attention to this openness to encounters that justifies the combat in favor of "the destruction of the image of thought which presupposes itself" and considers itself capable of fixing a foundation of things. And another statement adds one more point to this combat: "There is something in the world that forces to think. This something is the object of a fundamental *encounter* and not of recognition."

To intensify

First, we still do not know how this *something* operates. Therefore, we do not anticipate its name. But, considering that the phrase situates it as the *object of a fundamental encounter*, we suspect that this *something* does not consume itself as an object for the thought of an accomplished and recognitive subject. Why *fundamental*? Because, in the first place, as it has been said, this strange *object* flickers and reverberates in the lines of feeling. This reverberation is such that the determining vector of these lines stops being the one dominated by common sense, i.e., it is no longer that of the (ordinary though important) empirical exercise, the one by which the sensitive quality of data is received through the senses (the simple sweetness of a Madeleine stoking the palate); the now determining vector is that of "sensibility" elevated to the "nth degree", sensibility that emerges momentarily in the lines of feeling, that emerges by force of that which provoked the reverberation and of that which resonates in it, a resonance that insists in the given, although it does not appear as the given (the intensity of joy in the example of Proust's Madeleine). It is this strange object of a fundamental encounter that Deleuze names "sign".²¹

Why is it always said that this object, the sign, is strange? First, it is not an object of a subject, but the object of a fundamental encounter. Second, it is called strange for a seemingly simple reason, which nevertheless shows Deleuze's Humean, Nietzschean etc. concern to put his concepts in the service of the case, the case of his radicalism: so if something does not raise some sort of strangeness in the very empirical experience of finding it, it already can no longer be conceptualized as a sign. Indeed, if I submit this something to an *identification* in the situation of encounter, if I consider it *similar* to whatever it may be, if I confront it with something that I conceive as its *opposite* or if I enunciate an *analogy* between it and another phenomenon, then that something is already and in advance entangled by macro-operations that submit it to my common sense, to my power (illusory or not) to represent it, to my rhetorical skills etc. I submit it to the representative image of thought, to the big game of this "quadruple submission", says Deleuze, "in which only the identical, the similar, the analogous and the opposite", these four guardians of representation, "can be thought as different"²².

²¹ G. Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, op. cit., p. 182.

²² "The I think is the most general principle of representation, that means, the source of these elements and the unity of all these faculties: I conceive, I judge, I imagine, I remember, I realize - as the four branches of the Cogito. And precisely on these branches difference is crucified. A quadruple subjection in which only the identical, similar, analogous and opposite can be thought as different; it is

But when the strangeness of something catches me, I feel without any esoterisms the fragility of that power to subject and to turn everything into a diversity among others, or to take it as a part of some kind of extensive or discursive operation etc. Then it catches me as a sign, causing variations in my power of being affected, forcing me to feel, to memorize, to imagine... to think otherwise, meaning, without the support of devices of simplification of my encounters, devices of fixation of identities, similarities, oppositions and analogies.

In Deleuzian conceptual reconstruction, encounter itself is conceived as a complex connection, a connection involving heterogeneous lines. According to what happens in the multiplicity of lines, the encounter itself varies: it is marked as extensive when the empirical differences are given to affections and perceptions that thought represents through overlapping categories; but it can be marked as an intensive encounter when "flows of intensities" pass through the lines. Experienced as vibrations of "bodies without organs"²³, those flows open up affections and percepts, i.e., other ways of feeling and perceiving, and trigger in thought itself a "thinking overly intense"²⁴, launched into a "rhizomatic work" amidst the "perception of things, desires" amidst "molecular perceptions", "micro-phenomena", "micro-operation" "... a "world of velocities and slownesses with form, without subject, without face", mobilized by the "zigzag of a line" or by the "whiplash of a wagoner in fury"²⁵.

Therefore, each time, by force of the proper experience of encounters, this philosophy revives itself through resumptions and variations. What is in question are not simply macro conceptual shifts between philosophical disciplines. What varies are rather the soundings of nuances of feeling and thinking, refining the apprehension of the very noological activity invested in this or that chaotic. Indeed, while they claim that the "essential" is in the "forces, the densities and the intensities" and not "in the forms and matters", one must understand the following: the evaluative selection of the intensive resonates with a "modern" philosophical tendency, with this "cosmic age", they say. Well, in Deleuze and Guattari, this tendency requires more than the act of thinking itself. Why? Because what is in question is to "elaborate the material of thinking" in order to capture "forces not thinkables in themselves." The philosophical "problem" of

always in relation to a conceived identity, a judged analogy, an imagined opposition, a perceived similarity that difference becomes the object of representation." *Différence et répétition*, p. 180.

²³ G. Deleuze e F. Guattari, *Mille plateaux*, op. cit., p. 200.

²⁴ *Mille plateaux*, op. cit., p. 164.

²⁵ *Mille plateaux*, op. cit., p. 347. Concerning this point the authors refer to an encounter with *Misérable miracle* by Henri Michaux (1899-1984).

this tendency is neither that of a "beginning", nor that of a "foundation-fundament". It is, rather, a "problem of consistency or consolidation: how to consolidate the material, make it consistent, so that it can capture" - on the plane of immanence that it erects while it traces its concepts - "these non-sonorous, invisible" and even "unthinkable forces?" At this point, this philosophy resumes its Dionysian encounters with the arts. Dionysian, because what is in question is not simply extensive communication between ruling concepts and fragments of art at the service of philosophical theses. What is in question is communication through intensive encounters. One can say that these intensive encounters are encounters between Ideas, as long as one understands an Idea in the immanence of its problematic state, in the immanence of the dramas that occupy it as spatiotemporal dynamics. It is the effect of a communication between Ideas that can be seen in the passages of this philosophy through the arts, as in this paragraph from *A Thousand Plateaus*: "Even the ritornello becomes molecular and cosmic at the same time, Debussy ... Music molecularizes the matter of sound, but thus becomes able to capture non-sonorous forces such as Duration, Intensity. *Turning Duration sonorous*. Let's recall Nietzsche's idea: the eternal return as a little cantilena, as a ritornello, but which captures the mute and unthinkable forces of the Cosmos. We leave, therefore, the assemblages to enter the age of the Machine, immense mechanosphere, the plane of cosmicization of the forces to be captured."²⁶ To avoid surprise in face of this reference to *duration* as a force, it is suitable to remember that this Bergsonian concept refers to that which "only divides itself by changing its nature"²⁷.

We employ the word intensity, presuming that it relates to a concept, but yet we don't have an idea of it. We know that it operates in the determination of the sign as that which by *intensifying feeling, forces us to think*. And we already need to highlight a detail. To say that it forces us to think is already to affirm that it bears a "connection from a force to a force." This connection, or crossing of forces, implies "the differential element of force" (dominant force/dominated force) that Deleuze, in his encounters with Nietzsche, connects to the idea of the "will to potency"²⁸. Claiming that this differential element is the Nietzschean *will to potency* means the following: it is as a differential element that this will achieves "its highest level", in "its intense or intensive form"²⁹. It

²⁶ G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *Mille plateaux*, op. cit., pp. 422, 423.

²⁷ G. Deleuze, *Le bergsonisme*, op. cit., p. 32.

²⁸ G. Deleuze, *Nietzsche et la philosophie*. Paris : PUF, 1962, p. 7.

²⁹ G. Deleuze, "Conclusions sur la volonté de puissance et l'éternel retour" (1967), in *L'Île déserte*, op. cit., p. 166-167.

is as an “‘intensive’ principle”, as “principle of pure intensity”, that the idea of will to potency releases itself from the Nietzschean “taste” for energetics, from the interest in the physics of “intensive quantities”, and operates in the idea of a differentiator of difference and as a selective criterion of encounters; a double oriented selection: towards an ethics, as we shall see, as well as in favor of a more demanding kind of thought for being conjoined to the effort of “releasing the *superior form* of everything that is”, i.e., “the form of intensity”³⁰.

³⁰ G. Deleuze, “Conclusions sur la volonté de puissance et l’éternel retour » (1967), in *L’Île déserte*, op. cit., p. 171.

In the case of the sign, its superior form (the one that is not reducible to the sensible qualities of one of its faces) is precisely the one by which the intensification of feeling forces the act of imagining, thinking etc.. Why does this happen? Why is this intensive and superior form being released? In this philosophy, we cannot look for the cause of this *superiority* in an external transcendence or internal to the thinking subject. Therefore we have to seek within the very immanence of encounters the operation by which differences are triggered through intensification. In this immanence of encounters anything can be a sign, provided that a system of differences or complex differentiation featured with intensive disparation operates in the encounter itself. Something is a sign when it occurs by disparation within a "system endowed with dissymmetry", in a system of "disparated orders of magnitude". Deleuze also says that the sign (or the phenomenon) "fulgurates in the interval" of "disparates", putting a strange kind of "communication" into vibration. Properly speaking, the "sign is an effect" in the encounter of divergent series, an effect composed of "two aspects: one by which, as sign" (properly said) "it expresses the productive dissymmetry, the other" (its aspect as current data) "by which it tends to nullify" the productive dissymmetry itself³¹. It is under this latter aspect that it still leaves an open flank to reductive macro-appropriations of its impact, for instance when it is said that the intense Proustian joy, already cited above, referred exclusively to complicated effects of extensive encounters that occurred in the lived past. In extensive encounters the lived only means "sensible qualities". But, when disparated, the lived means "the 'intensive'", in a processuality in which becomings, "passages of intensity"³² excel. For implying intensification and passages of intensity in flows and cuts of flows ("given that any intensity is necessarily in connection with another, in a way that something passes"), the "lived state" is not necessarily "subjective", nor "individual" but full of this "movement" or "game", which is that of "intensities, of intensive quantities", as others also "saw"³³.

³¹ G. Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, op. cit., p. 31.

³² G. Deleuze, "Capitalisme et schizophrénie" (1972), in *L'Île déserte*, op. cit., p. 331.

³³ As Klossowski and Lyotard. Compare G. Deleuze, "Pensée nômade", in *L'Île déserte*, op. cit., p. 358-360.

Intensive disparation

After stating these points of the Deleuzian sign theory, with emphasis on the game of encounters, we retain the following: in every conceived case, Deleuze finds the necessity and the means of his philosophical creation in the triggering of intensive encounters. The paradoxical nerve center of this triggering is a synthesis of heterogeneous lines, a *disjunctive synthesis*. Paradoxical, because in each case, the triggering articulation is threatened by borders glued to the synthesis itself: on one hand, the borders clutter extensive encounters with an excess of opinions and a derisive communicativism; on the other hand, the borders bring very near the chaotic of intensities, which, under penalty of not being up to the problem of difference, cannot simply be suppressed. That's why, for Deleuze, "speaking of creation" is to be "tracing one's way between two impossibilities"³⁴. On the one hand, it is not possible to take the critique of representation up to the point of simply suppressing the extensive. On the other hand, if chance is most necessary, then, in the encounters, the creative articulations need intensities, even under the threat of their chaotic: "one could say that the struggle *against chaos*" is inseparable from a certain "affinity" with this "enemy" for staying in sameness already amounts to losing the fight.³⁵

How to name the strange act that echoes in the articulations attended by this philosophy in its encounters? It is the same name of which the signs are made. It is also this name that we find in the construction of all Deleuzian concepts. And nothing would exist or appear without the paradoxical mutual contagion of heterogeneities, without this connection called *disjunctive synthesis*, without this intangible *disparate*. Since Deleuze's good theoretical encounter with the renewal of the problem of individuation by Gilbert Simondon, the disparate appears, and "without the condition of a minimum of similarity among the series"; it appears as "'dark precursor'" establishing *intensive* "communication" among "disparate series", disparation "couplings, internal resonances", "forced movements", as well as the "constitution of passives selves and larval subjects in the system, and the formation of pure spatiotemporal dynamics "etc..³⁶

³⁴ G. Deleuze, *Pourparlers*. Paris : Minuit, 1990, p. 182.

³⁵ G. Deleuze, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?*, op. cit., p. 191.

³⁶ G. Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, op. cit., pp. 156, 356.

Disparates also operate as the "ultimate elements of the unconscious"³⁷. The *disparate* appears as "paradoxical element that traverses" divergent series making them "resonate, communicate and ramify" and yet commanding "all recaptures and transformations, all redistributions"; this leads Deleuze to conceive it, at this stage, as the "place of a question" in a special connection with the idea of the problem: "the *problem* is determined by *singular points* which correspond to the series, but the *question* [is determined] "by a *random point* that corresponds to the empty house, to the moving element", given that the complex *question-problem* (present in the paradigm of the pair *virtual-actual*) characterizes the "mode of the event" as "problematic"³⁸. To think the *disparate* as the place of a question is a formula reconsidered in another way in *A Thousand Plateaus*. It is a new incidence in the Deleuzian conceptual system. On the plateau called "Treatise on Nomadology: the War Machine", Deleuze distinguishes the "theorematic" sciences (Euclidean geometry, for example, focused on the "constants") from the "problematic" or "nomad" sciences (as the Archimedean geometry). The *disparate* operates heavily in this distinction³⁹. What we notice here is an unfolding of the *disparate* as operator of discharges, as a disparation of intensive states, states that sharpen in the apprentice the notion of *being lurking* for the *lines of flight*. This unfolding seemed predictable since the use of a "tautology" that defined the *disparate* as "difference of intensity". Tautology, because "all intensity is differential, is difference in itself." There is an "infinitely unfolded" differentiating in the changing of phases or states that Deleuze, quoting Rosny, notes as a sequence of proliferations of brittle encounters: "all intensity is $E-E'$, where E itself refers to $e-e'$, $e e'$ refers to $\varepsilon-\varepsilon'$..."⁴⁰.

As a *patient* of intensive encounters, as a *larval subject of its own system*, keeping himself lurking for the *disparates*, the thinker is likely to *have something to think* and to create - with his concepts and his macro and micro encounters with intercessors - the variations that correspond to problematic spatiotemporal dynamics

³⁷ G. Deleuze and F., *L'Anti Oedipe*, Paris, Minuit, 1972, p. 386.

³⁸ G. Deleuze, *Logique du sens*, op. cit., pp. 72, 69.

³⁹ "As an element of nomad science, the disparate refers to material-forces, rather than to matter-form. The question is no longer, exactly, to extract constants from variables, but to put the variables themselves in a state of continuous variation. If there are still equations, they are adaptations, non-equality, differential equations irreducible to the algebraic form, and inseparable from a sensible intuition of variation. They capture or determine singularities of matter rather than constitute a general form. They operate individuations through events or haecceities, and not through an 'object' as composed of matter and form; the vague essences are merely haecceities." G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, op. . cit, p. 458.

⁴⁰ G. Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, op. cit., p. 387.

not subject to any prior form. One could say that this intensification of thinking implies an "*involution*" to *passive syntheses*. It would imply a "*regression*" that does not return "to a principle"⁴¹. It is that "the 'regression' is misunderstood as long as it is seen as the activation of a larval subject immersed in sensations, as the only patient capable to sustain the demands of a systematic dynamism"⁴². Implying disparations, this double movement corresponds to a problem that circulates through the Deleuzian system, a problem fertilized precisely by the complexity of encounters, but which also resonates in the proper elaboration of concepts.⁴³

A problem of this kind creates a good connection between Deleuze the philosopher and the non-Oedipalized animal. For example, the idea of marking a "territory", this "domain of having," is a situation that concerns us, but that already concerned the animals. Implying a myriad of hues in the multitude of encounters, marking a territory is not reducible to functionalities. Meaning that, through "postures, chants, colors", lines of an "art in its purest form" are being touched. Moreover, a "territory only has worth in relation to a movement by which it can be left". In other words, there is no territory without "deterritorialization", ie, without "a vector of exit from the territory" pulsating in the encounters, "and there is no departure from the territory, ie, no deterritorialization, without, at the same time, an effort to reterritorialize oneself elsewhere." And the animals participate in this, because they "emit signs" and "react to signs", and "produce signs". And as much as the "writer" and the "philosopher", the animal in its encounters "is the lurking being, a fundamentally lurking being"⁴⁴, lurking for new encounters, without which deterritorialization would be reduced to mere change of domicile.

⁴¹ G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *Mille plateaux*, op. cit., p. 326.

⁴² G. Deleuze, *L'Île déserte*, op. cit., p. 136. See also *Différence et répétition*, op. cit., 128-140.

⁴³ Here's how François Zourabichvili states this problem: "how to articulate, beyond Bergson, the two inverse and yet complementary dynamics of existence, on one side the actualization of forms and on the other the involution that destines the world to incessant redistributions?". See *Le Vocabulaire Deleuze*, op. cit., Entry "body without organs".

⁴⁴ *L'abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze*, op. cit., letter A as Animal.

Traversing conceptual encounters

How to traverse the Deleuzian conceptual encounters? This is not a merely didactic question addressed only to those who have never read any writing of this philosopher. As it is still a matter of a varying philosophical taste, it always returns at each text read by a beginner or reread by an experienced researcher. It is not the case to present a tourist guide giving an answer to it. What is in question is to seek that which pulses in any detail of this philosophy interested in the experience of the complexity of encounters: the *disparate pulsation* as a cushioned or proliferated operation in the encounters and implied in the creation of the Deleuzian concepts themselves. As an element without identity the *disparate pulsation* generates in the apprentice the sensation that the Deleuzian system is a labyrinth. And the question returns: can't we find there a kind of Ariadne's thread, like the one that guided Theseus through the labyrinthine adventure in which he defeated the monster?

In philosophy, we can say that the monster is the thought of the philosopher ... a monster, yes, for reasons he recreates in his own way, that do not confirm us in our opinions, not even in those based on other philosophers. The monstrosity appears in the form of swift and untimely encounters of notions, ideas sharpened in the eagerness to distinguish themselves from one another, but engaged, at the same time, in helping one another within strange concatenations. Only when the reading feels itself affirmatively affected by a force born from its encounter with the text, it occurs that the scholar realizes that he doesn't need to kill the monster, but to let himself be impregnated by it, to join its crossings and even caper, thereby winning in himself its inevitable state of slowness or those splashes of precipitation. This means that Ariadne's thread does not await us at the entrance of the Deleuzian labyrinth. Why?

Referring to literature Deleuze connects the "modern work of art" - these "problematic works" - to the "abandonment of representation" in a way that turns an important question of his philosophy decisive: the construction of a system of irreducible differences related to a center or a convergence. At this point his alliance with Umberto Eco concerning the "problem of the Open Work"⁴⁵ is noticeable. He allies himself to Eco in order to say that "the 'classic' work of art is to be viewed from several perspectives and that it is subject to various interpretations, considering that to every point of view or interpretation doesn't yet correspond an autonomous work understood

⁴⁵ Umberto Eco, *Obra Aberta*, translated by Giovanni Cutolo, revised by Pérola de Carvalho, São Paulo: Ed. Perspectiva, 1971.

in the chaos of a masterpiece. The characteristic of the 'modern' work of art appears as the absence of a center or convergence."⁴⁶ We believe that also the Deleuzian philosophy is in resonance with the modernity of art works characterized this way, because it implies a principle of intensive proliferation of readings, a proliferation which ends up eroding centers and convergences in favor of an intensive coexistence that puts us into a zigzag.⁴⁷

But what does this have to do with the term 'labyrinth'? Well, this term accompanies the name of one of the operators of this proliferation, a name employed by Umberto Eco when writing the *Postscript* to his novel *The Name of the Rose*. He determines three types: the "classic labyrinth" of Theseus, but which is also that of Sherlock Holmes, traversed with the aid of "Ariadne's thread", containing an "entrance to the center" and a path from the "center to the exit"; there is the "mannerist labyrinth", structured like a "tree" in "form of roots with many dead ends," containing "one single exit" and also lacking the help of any guiding line. Finally, he says, there is "what Deleuze and Guattari call a rhizome." In this labyrinth "each path can be connected with any other", having no "center", "periphery" or "exit", for being "potentially infinite". We could say that the disparate pulsation dispartes in it a limitlessness effected by heterogeneous fragmentations and connections. Eco rhizomatizes the "world in which William" (one of the characters) "thinks himself living", world "structured in form of a rhizome: or rather able to be structured, but never definitively structured".⁴⁸

Without the logic of Sherlock Holmes, William, who investigates murders in a medieval monastery, practices a kind of *logic of the and*, because he is the character that insists as the welcoming opening of a series of possible choices, to the point that his search is being complicated within a rhizomatic practice that is only resolved in encounters at random. It is that "rhizome" as well as the conjunction "and" is not precisely one thing, but an 'inter-being', a mobility between things, a leap that "connects any point to any other point, and each of its traits does not necessarily refer to traits of the same nature" and that is able to put "in play very different regimes of signs, including states of non-signs". Unlike the "tree", the rhizome is irreducible to the One and to the multiple; it "is not made of units but of dimensions, or rather of shifting

⁴⁶ G. Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, op. cit., p. 94, n.1.

⁴⁷ "When I invoke the zigzag the question is how to connect disparate singularities", says Deleuze in *L'Abécédaire*, op. cit., p. 200.

⁴⁸ Umberto Eco, *Postille a "Il nome della rosa"* (1984). *Pós-Escrito a "O Nome da Rosa"*, translated by Letizia Z. Antunes and Álvaro Lorencini, Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 2nd edition, 1985, pp.45-47.

directions." Rhizomatizing implies disparations and the task of "mapping" substantive multiplicities. Therefore, and in order to turn the rhizome into a dynamic "model" of multiplicities, it is also necessary that rhizomatizing involve operations of disparation that lead mapping to build alliances with those components that, while present in the multiplicity of encounters, may disrupt processes attempting to block them, processes that are also produced within the multiplicities. For containing this kind of operation the authors can say that the rhizome "has neither beginning nor end, but always a middle (medium, in-between) by which it grows and overflows"⁴⁹. Here we have the productive and paradoxical, theoretical and practical functioning of the rhizome: the model that maps folds itself in operations that change the nature of the mapped.

And if desire, as proposed by Deleuze and Guattari, is the potency of this medium, it is because it defines itself, not by the lack of something but as an "immanent principle" of a complex productivity. This productivity, as natural as artificial, is that of a production that reiterates itself differently, an amazing machining of the outside, a "permanent producing of producing", which happens to be precisely the immanent "rule" of the "desiring-machines".⁵⁰ The point of view that we are searching in order to envision the potency of encounters in this philosophy, the *disparate* point, cannot be indifferent to the way this rule operates in the Deleuzoguattarian writing itself, a *rule* that does not fail to invade also the proliferation of texts involved with this philosophy, a rule which is also that of taste, as we shall see.

It is interesting to see how Deleuze perceives his own effort of conceptual creation. What strikes him - since a manuscript from the fifties⁵¹ - is the idea of "re-creation", "re-start", considering that the very beginning already finds itself in a state of spatiotemporal dynamics, like a "radiating egg". His writings are rebellious against the sadness of simplifications practiced by the rudeness of generalities and even by the devices of a representation that promotes identities, similarities, oppositions and analogies. The atmosphere of these writings seem to correspond to what they value, "a fine medium of superimposed perspectives, of communicating distances, divergences and disparities, of heterogeneous potentials and intensities," since "the question is not,

⁴⁹ G. Deleuze e F. Guattari, *Mille plateaux*, op. cit., p. 31.

⁵⁰ Production as process exceeds all ideal categories and forms a cycle to which desire relates as an immanent principle."(p. 10-11) "The rule of always producing production, of inserting producing in the product, is the characteristic of desiring-machines or of primary production: production of production" p. 13.

⁵¹ G. Deleuze, « Causes et raisons des îles désertes », in *Lîle déserte*, op. cit. pp. 11-17.

primarily, to resolve tensions in the identical but to distribute disparities in a multiplicity."⁵² The collection of his writings is rich in passages that prove his co-creative encounters with the arts and other thinkers. He says that "the intercessors are the essential," that "creation implies the intercessors" because "there is no work without them." We cannot take these statements only as a tribute to influencers who have propitiated him something important to his *having to say something*. If *having to say something* is already connected to the exposition of oneself to a problematic field, to intensive encounters, everything receives an additional dimension of intensities when it comes to *being able to say* what one has to say. Taken by the tensions of this in-between Deleuze is lurking for his intercessors. And it is the tensions inherent to the free indirect discourse of Deleuze, so strongly emphasized by Zourabichvili, which become evident in this phrase of *Pourparlers*: "I gave myself intercessors, so that I can say what I have to say."⁵³ The intercessors are intensive vectors selected by a power of being affected in the encounters with what forces him to feel and to think; they are like rhythmic moves that fertilize this power, a power that, doubly affected, becomes a passer-by, a passenger capable of roaming between the having won what to think and the telling what he won.

Taste in the conceptual development of encounters

An intensive encounter is sufficient to force a philosopher to think; in this encounter he feels invaded by having to think something and, thus, by a *having to say something*; and other encounters (more or less intense) will provide him with decisive intercessors for his *power to say* what affected his thinking. Well, Deleuze and Guattari discern some operations active between these components of the creative process of philosophical concepts. Consider, for example, the operation that consists in naming a concept, no matter which. It is sufficient to handle a dictionary of philosophy to notice the philosophical taste for distinctions that testify for apparently far-fetched variations, but which prove that we never have the same collection of encounters, the same world at the tip of differentiated dictions. In short, we are never fully aware of the atmosphere surrounding the *baptism* of a concept. How to conceptualize this atmosphere? What is implied in the simple designation of a concept? The response of the authors leads baptism to meet with something else: "The baptism of the concept calls for a specific

⁵² G. Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, op. cit., p. 71.

⁵³ G. Deleuze, *Pourparlers*, op. cit., p. 171.

philosophical taste that proceeds with violence or insinuation, and that constitutes in the language of philosophy not only a vocabulary, but a syntax that reaches the sublime or a great beauty"⁵⁴.

If a philosophical taste is implied even in the designation of concepts, we can ask: in which philosophical operations does it act? How do the authors finally characterize its function in these operations? Among the major philosophical operations highlighted in *What is Philosophy?* there is one dedicated to *invent*, to *turn alive* characters, called *conceptual characters* (or *pro-philosophical* characters) with rich *personalistic traits*. This operation, called operation of *insistence*, seems, at first glance, given its imaginative force, that which would exhaust or absorb more the investments of philosophical taste. By the way, one of the examples taken into account by the authors seems to go in this direction: it is that taste is markedly active in the exemplified relation between images of living encounters privileged by a philosopher and heavy thesis intrinsic to his philosophy; the philosopher, in this case, is Spinoza, and the living encounter has its anecdotal aspect dislocated, filtered by a strictly philosophical apprehension like this: "Spinoza's taste for the combat of spiders" is justified because they "reproduce, in a pure way, connections of modes in the system of *Ethics*."⁵⁵ This is a beautiful example of spiders-in-combat becoming a conceptual character.

This operation of insistence – inventive operation of conceptual characters with their personalistic traits - "intervenes" both, say the authors, between the chaotic of variabilities and "diagrammatic traits of the plane of immanence," and between the latter and the "intensive traits of the concepts that come to populate" this plane. This means that insistence acts between the two other major philosophical operations, with which it completes the trio of "elements" constituent of philosophy: the operation of *immanence*, by which the conceptual investments go *tracing* the plane of immanence with *diagrammatic traits*; finally, but simultaneously, there is the operation of *consistency* of a philosophy, which is to *create philosophical concepts* full of *intensive traits* magnetized by the problem they correspond to.

⁵⁴ G. Deleuze e F. Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?*, op. cit., p. 13.

⁵⁵ G. Deleuze e F. Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?*, op. cit., p. 71.

Very well, what happens to be philosophical taste in this collection? As *one cannot deduce* any of these operations from the others, considering that "the connections between them are incommensurable", the authors declare that "a co-adaptation of the three" is required. Taste turns out to be "this philosophical faculty of co-adaptation, and that rules the creation of concepts"⁵⁶. Earlier above, following somewhat the term *disparate*, we saw the term *rule* characterizing the regime of desiring machines as permanently producing production. Now, in the present case, what is meant by ruling the creation of concepts?

First, "taste appears as the triple faculty of the yet undetermined concept, of the character still in limbo, of the still transparent plane". Already in this nascent state, taste does not appear as a superimposed instance, ruling something from above. Why? Because "it is necessary to create" (concepts), "to invent" (conceptual characters) and "to trace" (the plane), in a way that taste appears as a rule, yes, but a "rule of correspondence among the three instances" (productive instances, we would say) "that differ by nature." The authors make it very clear that philosophical taste is irreducible to a "faculty of measure". They make philosophical taste appear as the "love of the well build concept", which does not mean "moderation of the concept", but something like a "discharge", a "modulation".

Finally, one of the suggested forms of caution is not to imagine that philosophical taste substitutes or moderates the creation of concepts. On the contrary, the authors say that "it is the creation of concepts which appeals to a taste that modulates it". Why does this happen? Simply because "the free creation of determined concepts requires a taste for undetermined concepts". This certainly implies the atmosphere of intensive encounters forcing the feeling, the thinking, the imagining ..., in a way that taste, as philosophical taste, appears as the concept in a potential state, as "the state-of-potency of the concept". The consequence of this is to reaffirm that the concept "is not created because of 'rational' or reasonable reasons".

Each philosopher effectuates philosophical taste in the style or styles that characterize him in one or the other state of his operations. Each style involves linguistic constructions within the reach of the philosopher; these constructions rely on procedures which differ from one philosopher to another and among the writings of the same philosopher. Effectuated in this or that style, philosophical taste never leaves

⁵⁶ G. Deleuze e F. Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?*, op. cit., p. 74.

without traces the status of "permanent crisis" in which "philosophy lives." Crisis, yes, because affected by encounters, the operations gathered by taste are those of a "plane that operates by quake", of "concepts that proceed by volleys" and "characters who proceed by bumps"⁵⁷.

But it is precisely this entanglement of difficulties that excites the practical and theoretical interest in a complex pedagogy of the concept.

Ethics in encounters

Deleuzian philosophy, this philosophy of the experience of encounters, tends to a special ethical productivity, one that unties intensive proliferation of *good* encounters. Deleuze wants this, believing that "there is no work which does not indicate a way out to life, that does not trace a path between the rocks"⁵⁸. It can be argued that Deleuze considers as a good encounter what he helps to extract from his good encounters with Nietzsche and Spinoza.

Indeed, the Nietzschean *will to potency* is disparate, it is a differential element in a connection of forces when it reaches its highest degree, its "intense or intensive form". In this intensive state, which distinguishes it from a will to power, it forces thinking "to detach the *superior form* of everything that is", i.e., the "form of intensity", as we have seen. However, it also acts as a selective criterion of encounters promoting an ethical attitude – that "does not consist in coveting and not in taking, but in giving and creating" – and for which Zarathustra finds the "true name": in its intense form, the will to potency "is the giving virtue"⁵⁹. It is expected that in this virtue pulses the suggestion of the Nietzschean ethical imperative: "to raise whatever is wanted to its ultimate potency, its *nth potency*." The ethical problem is reset into the motion of intensities, imposing attention to the "game of low intensities and high intensities", "to the way by which low intensity can undermine the highest and become as high as even the highest, and vice versa"⁶⁰.

From Spinoza's *Ethics*, this extreme love-affair, Deleuze collects an *ethology*. This means, roughly, that the distinction of good and bad encounters, eliminating transcendent moral prescriptions, shall depend on what occurs in two types of

⁵⁷ G. Deleuze e F. Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?*, op. cit., pp. 75, 76, 79.

⁵⁸ G. Deleuze, *Pourparlers*, op. cit., p. 196.

⁵⁹ G. Deleuze, "Conclusions sur la volonté de puissance et l'éternel retour" (1967), in *L'Île déserte*, op. cit., pp. 166-167 ; 171.

⁶⁰ G. Deleuze, "Pensée nômade" (1973), in *L'Île déserte*, op. cit., pp. 358-360.

dimension: one in which beings live experience in the way their mutual constitutive connections compose with one another (or not) in their movements and rests and in velocities and slownesses (*longitude*); and another one in which they live, in their mutual connections, the experience of increase or decrease of their "force to exist" and their "power to be affected" (*latitude*), the experience of what happens, therefore, in their "intensive states", experiences which they express through happy or sad passions⁶¹, these affects that arise as life in the ethology of their encounters.

Conclusion

I kindly urge any eventual reader to read again the prologue of these notes.

Sincerely

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⁶¹ G. Deleuze, *Spinoza – Philosophie pratique*, op. cit., p. 171. See also pp. 27 ss : cap. II, « Sur la différence de l’Ethique avec une morale ». G. Deleuze, *Spinoza - Philosophie pratique*, op.cit, p. 171. Pp. See also. 27 ss, ch. II, 'Sur la différence de l'Ethique avec une morale'.