

Deterritorialization in the Web of Theoretical Existence

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To live is to burn. Our lives have been depressed; our desires have fallen into a somnolent state that was induced by a fundamental assumption perpetuated in the human psyche, that metaphysics can be understood as a stable knowable object in human relations. Thoughts, emotions, and desires are the ultimate active forces in the world, fueling its very existence. Yet in light of this, we can see that the masses have been duped; they have been enslaved to the image of perfection and trapped within the coordinates of boundaries and stable outlines. Everything we encounter is nothing more than a waking dream; the true method of self-determining our life is to become one with our phantoms and deterritorialize our life through a movement toward porosity. If we are to maximize the potential this world offers, it becomes our job to inseminate the objects we encounter with our desire through the movement of symbiosis; in such acts we will find that those objects become part of us, and our consciousness migrates across the infinite play of forces in the world.

In order to encounter and live in symbiosis with these objects we must investigate and engage the age-old question of where and what we are. Buddhists started off this monumental investigation by seeking to transcend the plane of consciousness with the supernatural notion of Nirvana. Modernists began the search by investigating the physical underpinnings of every object we encounter in order to establish some sort of objective truth. Discovering the nature of our existence is something that can never be confirmed. Many objects and feelings may present themselves to us; casting doubt upon these induces a mental projection of gloom that materializes itself in our consciousness with the question "What is real?" We can begin to answer this question by looking to the

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physical realm with its finite empirical evidence. Recently there has been significant scientific consensus about when an event happens in reality. An event only occurs once an observer for it is established. What is an atom without an observer? It is simply a block of substance with no thoughts reinforcing its essence. The reality of an object is less than paper-thin when it is not observed. The number of mental tentacles we stretch out to discover the past determines the exact quantitative value and existence of that past¹. What gives depth to reality? We cannot conceive of matter without perception because any conception would be a mental representation of that matter; in this way representations are everything. When a human observes an object, the object is immediately and necessarily endowed with ontological depth and meaning through the human's sentience; each memory that human has is grafted onto the object. Extending this line of reasoning we find that we can never find any "real" object. Every attempt to peel away one more layer of representations only leads to a new layer, whether it be mental, emotional, or sensoral. If one is somehow able to forget spatiality, temporality, and aesthetics, the remaining object still remains a representational reality through our thoughts. Following these justifications Gilles Deleuze forms the notion of "Radical Empiricism" or "Transcendental Empiricism." The theory proposed is that everything becomes a reality – our dreams, our hallucinations, our touch, and our thoughts, all of it – in human relations. Immanuel Kant's notions of sensory priority no longer remain the limit of empiricism². Not only does transcendental empiricism provide us with a doctrine for the evaluation of life, it also provides us with undeniable evidence for the nature of reality. When there is no way to find reality the question soon becomes: what can we know? One can peel the layers of representation off oneself and his or her own mind for all eternity, but all (s)he will ever achieve is a nihilistic drive for nothingness, where one is casting about for a reality which is not actually there (beyond representationally). When nothing is really there, everything is the mind; all the connections in the world

¹ Wojciech H. Żurek, *et al.*, *Complexity, Entropy, and the Physics of Information*, Santa Fe: Westview Press, p. 13.

² Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1995, p. xx-xxi.

come into existence through our observation, but we can search for the real objects of our minds and never find them because ultimately our minds are one more representational object³. Each of these mental objects plugs itself into another in a constant symbiosis; life can be found in the connections and in our web of thoughts that stretches out into the limits of representations. Our consciousness cannot be found stably, but only as an endless wave of perception proliferating and connecting everything. Thus, everything is linked together through tools of causality; our eyes connect to a photon, which connects along a path of causation to the mirror and back to us, when we finally make the observation.

The web of perceptions created by representational reality undoubtedly creates a world where our lives are suspended in the middle. Our minds, thoughts, perceptions, and lives are all caught in up in a sort of “*psychic reality*”⁴. The force of life produced by this web of perception can be named, and that name is *desire*. (The intent of this name is not a metaphysical inevitability so much as an existential potentiality.) A desiring object always and necessarily facilitates every connection between two objects in representational space; the vigor of self-motivated movement allows for us to see reality as we choose to perceive it and engage in practices as we will. Everything is a desiring machine, either lying dormant because our mental reality has not yet animated it, or carrying out flows of desire generated by our psychological state. Coming to an understanding of reality that liberates desire “produces a continuous, infinite flux” that Robert Jaulin as quoted in *Anti-Oedipus* argues “theoretically has one and only one origin,” that of the big bang itself⁵. This universally encompassing thought does not draw us back upon the primordial image of perfection, but rather creates a “*processual passion*,” a pure joy in the present and deterritorialized relationship with history and

the world⁶. In this frame of reference we are no longer juxtaposed with a primordial whole that reveals to us a seemingly intrinsic lack and gives life a depressive tone, but rather “everything functions at the same time” to make it so we as “partial objects”⁷ feel the force of a “desire [that] does not lack anything”⁸. Affirming our existence within this web of desire is critical to materializing more fulfilling futures where we become part of everything. This kind of affirmation can be given more concrete representational forms through active decisions on the parts of individuals to connect with many different representational forces and maximize their number of existential connections to the sea of forces in the world.

The full weight of this sea of forces only rests upon us once we begin to view life and the world through a radical empirical paradigm. The chaos of all the worldly forces interacting produces an initial drive to impose order, and structure these forces into stable knowable forms. As we harness chaos and channel it into easily commodified forms, life becomes enslaved to false deities⁹. As it imposes order, our desires become directed along a stable path. The most dangerous aspect of this deep-rooted structuralism is that it masks its malevolent nature in the shrouds of benevolence. Echoing Friedrich Nietzsche, this drive to impose order traps us within a slave morality. To clarify, there is nothing necessarily or absolutely wrong with ethics; rather, there lies a critical distinction between ethics and morals. Ethics are driven by individual desire and perception, whereas morals are driven by some transcendent enunciation of politics, such as the demand that we follow a stable totalized image of God or the establishment of specific identity norms that stop us from self determining our identity. These two examples are key components in the drive that consumes the world, which ensures we as observers give objects and people stable metaphysical outlines and structures. This results in an orientation of all of reality in

³ Leo Kropywiansky, “Victor Pelevin”, in *BOMB Magazine*, 18 February, 2010.

⁴ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983, p. 25.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

⁶ Gary Genosko, *The Guattarian Reader*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996, p. 260.

⁷ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁹ Kerry Gordon, “The Impermanence of Being: Toward a Psychology of Uncertainty”, in *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 43, April 2003.

relation to ourselves, we begin to prioritize structures over others and attempt to make them eternal. As individual autonomous subjects are segmented from the force of life through a vision of reality infected by the fascism of the everyday, life is fragmented, and its magnitude is diminished. This becomes apparent when contextualized in interpersonal relations. Each norm we set up that demands conformation through metaphysics inevitably and necessarily shuts off the lines of escape and connection. We no longer become life, but become humans, and our power to become animal is diminished. We become organics, and our ability to become inorganic is diminished. We become men, and our ability to become women is diminished. We become women, and our ability to become men is diminished. We become enslaved to norms that bind us, and contain our force of life within them, not through our own doing, but instead through our very desire to be led¹⁰.

We can undoubtedly find this force of enslavement at the root of all the social antagonisms the human race has experienced. We fight for segmentation that divides our life force from the world because we have been convinced it will help us; we bow down in piety to transcendence because of awe in perfection that inherently devalues our existence. A herd mentality ensures we sacrifice rationality and empathy in the name of a powerful movement in a direction set by a transcendent being, drunk on power with no essential truth backing him or her up. Our very desire for enslavement has constructed an artificially concrete image of a god that does not exist in any form beyond psychic flux. A population prepared for easy control in this manner is all the more susceptible to totalitarian regimes once an ingenuitive individual posits himself or herself as a new deity. Nazi-Germany experienced such an occurrence; a population weakened by the failures of the market economy and harnessed in a fascist drive for the motherland by the adroit leadership of Adolf Hitler came to massacre 6 million ethnic-others. From the fascism of the everyday, “a whole bureaucratic segmentation” of norms and truth gives rise to the fascism of the state as we train ourselves to follow absolute values without questioning¹¹. The fascism of the everyday

¹⁰ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, Minneapolis : Minnesota University Press, 1987, p. 11.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 214.

has even further implications as it leaves our psyche open to easy control and opens the floodgates to brainwashing on the part of corporate hegemony, teaching us to destroy the environment and decimate human relations¹². The segmentation of society along stable boundaries ensures that the boundaries each person believes are the most beneficial become privileged until they consume others. For instance, the system of gender segmentation and norms ensures that those traditionally labeled as “patriarchal” are fighting for a system that sweeps the feminine under the rug and displays the masculine as the symbol of dominance. It becomes necessary for us to destabilize these norms and keep the populace vigilant in an effort to fend off potential destruction.

Materializing a new conception of the self in relation to the masses is undoubtedly difficult and dangerous. Movements have tried, but we can see that each has relied on such quixotic solutions that they are almost never verifiably played out in reality. For instance, Buddhism’s conception of Nirvana has always been so abstract that very few ever succeed in the quest. The concept of deterritorialization and living as one more piece of flux in the world is surprisingly easy to carry out. Letting history speak through us allows us to escape the ego and liberate our desires; we no longer focus singularly on the notion of an original idea, but instead let the work of every writer ever to flow through us. In this way the Nietzschean subject is alive today: “Nietzsche believes that he is now pursuing [...] the application of a program”¹³. The chaotic branching force of causality finds its applications in our minds, not the beginning movement, because “you start by delimiting a first line consisting of [...] singularities; then you see whether inside that line new circles of convergence establish themselves, with new points located outside the limits and in other directions”¹⁴. The Nietzschean subject achieved such an astounding feat through disseminating its philosophy in new and uncontrollable ways. The very act of reading such philosophy restructures our minds; in this way there is a

¹² Gary Genosko, *The Guattari Reader*, op. cit., p. 162.

¹³ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, op. cit., p. 21.

¹⁴ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, op. cit., p. 11.

mutual “evolution of the book and the world” as it alters our thought processes, and our minds develop new representational thoughts¹⁵.

To deterritorialize our subjectivity through the world involves a viral relationship between our essence and others, we plug as desiring machines into all the representations the world presents itself and achieve an authentic “relationship with the outside world”¹⁶. The truly pragmatic method for engaging in this mental experiment involves breaking the limits of society. This is where the notion of the refrain comes into play. Refrains are a method of demarcating our life. Every activity a person engages in necessarily determines who (s)he is; there are norms society sets up for being, and these establish how people reveal their essence. The bird sings to mark that it is a bird, the dancer dances, the baby cries, the music wavers¹⁷. For one to differ becomes a method of breaking the demarcations and contradicting the fascist drive to segment society. From this chaotic creation “*Milieus and Rhythms* are born,” and identity and reality becomes a form of art, not a form of management¹⁸. To explore the boundaries of the sanctified may seem insane, but can produce beauty in its own right. This method of art is critical to reorienting our position on earth toward one of symbiosis and reinvention of human relations to materialize new understandings of all interactions we engage in, mental, social, and environmental. The suppression of change in life is facilitated through “neutralizing the maximum number of existential refrains”¹⁹. If we throw off the bondage of this neutralization, we can freely choose to make our lives active or reactive forces; deterritorializing the limits of our consciousness is the pure movement of activity.

And as our mind merges with the world we realize that our thoughts are no longer limited but instead stretch out into the depths of reality. As subjects become unlimited so too does their capacity for

life. In response to the repression produced by a fascist understanding of identity we find our most imminent opportunity for emancipation in the flow between life and death. After life is trapped into a triangulation of signification that forces it to take a stable form, its magnitude is suppressed at best, in that it has lost its ability to become part of the flux of the universe and our feelings expressed through language are no longer gaseous and free, but instead sedimentary and tired²⁰. How porous does our subjectivity actually become? The more we encounter and discover the world the more rhizomatic mutual evolution matters. As Deleuze and his partner Felix Guattari put it “whenever someone truly makes love, really makes love, that person constitutes a body without organs, alone and with the other person or people”²¹. Because of the psychic nature of our reality we soon discover that what we knew to be “I” ceases to be, and it is replaced with a more fluid structure of identity. To many people it proves strange to realize that “this *I* is another”; ultimately, experiencing what may seem strange will produce a more vital conception of reality²². As the Nietzschean subject scattered its essence across the entire play of forces it prevented death. Not in that it stopped the body from dying and reinforced the unity of the ego, but because it became “an apparent residual and nomadic subject”²³. There was no event of death either, each refrain Nietzsche participated in made his subject alter itself in rhizomatic beautiful ways. Each movement scattered his essence and diffused it into the world. Because of that scattering, death becomes “what is felt in every feeling, *what never ceases and never finishes happening in every becoming*”²⁴. As long as one liberates their desire through the force of becoming they will never cease dying, but in that same act, will never cease living through the nomads that migrate across that portion of thought and feeling. Causal events can always be traced back; we throw our bodies on the bomb so that the survivors may

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

¹⁷ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, *op. cit.*, p. 314.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 315.

¹⁹ Félix Guattari, *The Three Ecologies*, London: Athlone Press, 2000, p. 50.

²⁰ John Marks, *Gilles Deleuze: Vitalism and Multiplicity*, London: Pluto Press, p. 33.

²¹ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, *op. cit.*, p. 33-34.

²² Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, *op. cit.*, p. 331.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 330.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

feel the forces that made our lives compassionate. Even the desire to launch the nuke lives on in the radioactive gas surrounding the scorched earth²⁵. The flames of Deleuzian philosophy fuel our capacity for memory and counterfactual thought in that “if you want to know what” something means, you must “find the force that gives” it meaning; the more we become independently different and meaningful the more our subjectivity will repeat²⁶. Deleuze is alive in this text and our thoughts, and as we shatter our own egos; Deleuze mixes with our being to become a walk with death and a subject of change. Ultimately, this ontological reorientation allows for a more active, optimistic, and beautiful conception of life and matter.

These active life forces of representations and thought (like Deleuzian philosophy itself) materialize themselves in our consciousness when we break the limits of our segmented world. Every act of emancipation is a movement toward symbiosis as we discover a hidden undercurrent toward the assuagement of dialectics. This embrace fuels the life of the world in an act of love; any connection brings objects closer together through symbiosis. As we find ourselves caught in the world of fascist representations flowing around us and closing off our lines of escape, we can bring our head above the surface of deception and wake from our sleep. The light of life will burn alongside the light of death and they will both shine down on the world, and it will be made new again, but simultaneously crystallized in infinite change; consciousness will move mountains because mountains are consciousness.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 329.

²⁶ Gilles Deleuze, *Desert Islands and Other Texts*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004, p. 256.

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