

Introduction. This paper argues that in contemporary debates in cultural studies, but also social and political theory and in new media theory, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari have been pushed excessively to the camp of cultivated artificiality and confined to the corner of post-humanist thought. In opposition to this view, I will argue that they are materialist thinkers who emphasize both immanence and vitality (or 'life'-centered perspectives) within a strong ethical project that aims at creating social horizons of hope and sustainable change.

are bugs to nature as chips to culture? on becoming-insect with deleuze|guattari

Moreover, I will explore to what extent their brand of vitalism is non-essentialist and anti-teleological, with special reference to the notion of immanence and the Spinozist political ontology.

There is a growing field of scholarship today which could be defined as Deleuzian 'life-studies.' This field is marked by the ability to construct productive interrelations between distinct and often competing disciplinary discourses. For

rosi braidotti

instance between cultural, literary and film studies on the one hand and social sciences, studies of technology and epistemology on the other. Rhizomatics or nomadic thinking has the ability to provide some missing links between these perennially separated 'two cultures,' by introducing much-needed doses of complexity and internal differentiations. In a transdisciplinary approach that stresses the importance of processes and interrelations, Deleuze's non-realist naturalism or anti-essentialist vitalism offers new and yet untapped possibilities to reconnect the two cultures of the humanities and the hard sciences. In this regard, as I have argued elsewhere (*Metamorphoses*), Deleuze can be read alongside the new science studies and radical epistemologies of today, not only

in mathematics actively), but also a More specifically, Lynn Margulis (M There is also a c the monistic phik mode of a 'natur of mind and body currently taking discursive form: emphasizing the ment of the mind appraisal of the r nomenclological (Sobchack), in Spinozism (Gate Lloyd), in ecologik ist thought (Shive neurological anc live sciences (Wl well as in the d taken by conte genomics resea molecular biology lin, Lury and A monistic al however, can als of matter? in the creative evolutio evolution (Ansell: mobility of matte tion that reduce: as the life (*bios*)- this equation, thi: the non-determin reading, this is c the sense of rela: return to this pair

rary debates in and in new me- e been pushed and confined to n to this view. I mphasize both cives) within a orizons of hope inable change. I will explore to t their brand of non-essential- anti-teleological, al reference to of immanence pinozist political

in mathematics and physics (see Plotnitsky and Delanda respec- tively), but also alongside the new genetics and bio-technology. More specifically, I see clear resonances between Deleuze and the non-anthropocentric epistemologies of Donna Haraway and Lynn Margulis (Margulis and Sagan; Parisi). There is also a common root that connects Deleuze/Guattari to the monistic philosophies that assume one living matter, in the mode of a 'natureculture' continuum or of the mutual imbrication of mind and body. This is currently taking different discursive forms: from emphasizing the embod- iment of the mind, in a re- appraisal of the neo-ph- nomenological tradition (Sobchack), in feminist Spinozism (Gatens and Lloyd), in ecological activ- ist thought (Shiva), in the neurological and cogni- tive sciences (Wilson), as well as in the directions taken by contemporary genomics research and molecular biology (Frank- lin, Lury and Stacey). A monistic approach, however, can also take the form of stressing the 'embodiment of matter' in the sense of a return to Henri Bergson's notion of creative evolution (Grosz, *Time*), or non-deterministic visions of evolution (Ansell-Pearson). The idea of the intelligence and the mobility of matter contrasts the century-old philosophical tradi- tion that reduces matter to immobility and defines intelligence as the life (*bios*-force that produces movement. In opposition to this equation, rhizomatic thought supports an idea of evolution of the non-deterministic, non-linear and non-teleological kind. In my reading, this is connected to the processes of becoming-other, in the sense of relating, hence of affecting and being affected. I will return to this point later in the essay.

beyond the cult of the inorganic. Although 1 from several quarters the end of postmod- 4 ernism is currently being celebrated, some 9 of the postmodern conceptual and cultural habits are still very much in circulation. Not the least of them is the cult of the inorganic, the celebration of the sublimely fake and the purposefully inauthentic. This provides one of the frameworks of reception of Deleuze/Guattari's work as some sort of kings of queer artifice at the tail-end of the linguistic turn of postmodernism. One discursive area where this is evidenced is in the hasty renditions of the electronic web as rhizome. This establishes a convergence between the hype sur- rounding the new digital media and information technologies and the philosophy of Deleuze. Technology is at the heart of a process of blur- ring fundamental categorical divides between self and other, a sort of het- eroglossia of the species, a colossal hybridization which combines mon- sters, insects and machines into a powerfully post-human approach to what we used to call 'the embodied subject.' This trend towards 'techno-bodies' - which for conservative thinkers spells a crisis - offers affirmative aspects, in indicating the return of 'real bodies' and real materiality. An onto- logy of presence is replacing postmodernist deconstruction. Politically, there is definitely a conservative side to this phenomenon, which has led the neo-liberal thinkers (Francis Fuku- yama) to celebrate 'neo-realism' and the return of fundamental moral values. Neo-liberals re- cycle two main master-narratives: on the one

hand, the triumph of market economies as the historically dominant form of human evolution and on the other genetic determinism under the authority of the DNA and the capital value of the Human Genome. These concerns have the neo-Kantian thinkers struck by high levels of anxiety about the sheer thinkability of human future (Habermas).

Because of this context, both the figuration of the cyborg and the cyber-imaginary that supports it can be seen and, to a certain extent, dismissed today as dominant modes of representation. They are powerfully active throughout the social fabric and in all the modes of cultural representation. Claudia Springer argues that this discourse celebrating the union of humans and electronic technology is currently circulating with equal success among the scientific community as well as in popular culture. The cyborg as a technologically-enhanced body-machine is the dominant social and discursive figuration for the interaction between the human and the technological in post-industrial societies. It is also, however, a living or active, materially embedded cartography of the kind of power-relations that are operative in the post-industrial social sphere (Haraway, *Witness*). Scott Bukatman argues that this projection of the physical self into an artificial environment feeds into a dream of terminal identity outside the body, a sort of "cybersubject" (187) that supports new-age fantasies of cosmic redemption via technology. New age spirituality or techno-mysticism form part of this trend.

In the cyber universe which we inhabit, the link between the flesh and the machine is symbiotic and therefore can best be described as a bond of mutual dependence. This engenders some significant paradoxes, especially when it comes to the human body. The corporeal site of subjectivity is simultaneously denied and strengthened or re-enforced. Anne Balsamo stresses the paradoxical concomitance of effects surrounding the new post-human bodies: "[E]ven as techno-science provides the realistic

possibility of replacement of body parts, it also enables a fantastic dream of immortality and control over life and death. And yet, such beliefs about the technological future 'life' of the body are complemented by a palpable fear of death and annihilation from uncontrollable and spectacular body-threats: antibiotic-resistant viruses, random contamination, flesh-eating bacteria" (1-2). In other words, the new practices of life mobilize not only generative forces, but also new and subtler degrees of extinction. This type of vitality, unconcerned about clear-cut distinctions between living and dying, composes the notion of zoe as a nonhuman yet affirmative life-force (Braidotti, *Metamorphoses*). This vitalist materialism has nothing in common with the postmodern emphasis on the inorganic and the aesthetics of fake, pastiche and camp simulation.

does deleuze offer a theory of post-human bodies? The answer is negative if the post-human is understood in the vulgar common-sense understanding of the hyped cyborg and the neo-liberal celebrations of the inauthentic, the willfully constructed and

sublimely artificialia the less lazy-min nonhuman, ever among living force a renewed conce a world that is ter The model of it of post-human r dependence. Thi to the co-present embodied subj different element different stages lution: like in different tim simultaneously. man organism is wholly human, person, nor just ganism. It's an machine, radic manent, which c transforms and p interconnections. power of such ai ism is certainly contained nor to consciousness and the self-ironi philosophy, resti living beings, inc nature,' as Gene Steven Shaviro c are at the end of subjectivity and v silic' mode. This i today's body is practices of pros is anything but m

are bugs to nature as chips to culture?

...k between the
...an best be de-
...genders some
...to the human
...reously denied
...o stresses the
...the new posi-
...es the realistic
...of replacement
...rfs, it also en-
...ntastic dream
...ality and con-
...ife and death.
...such beliefs
...technological
...i' of the body
...mented by a
...fear of death
...hibition from
...ible and spec-
...dy-threats: an-
...istant viruses,
...contamination,
...ing bacteria"
...other words,
...ractices of life
...not only genera-
...extinction. This
...ctions between
...nonhuman yet
...This vitalist ma-
...xtern emphasis
...liche and camp

sublimely artificial. The answer is positive however, if it points in the less lazy-minded sense of re-configuring the extended, the nonhuman, even cosmic span of possible interconnections among living forces. This is the direction of neo-materialism and a renewed concern for the corporeal structure of the subject in a world that is technologically mediated and globally connected. The model of the embodied subject proposed by the brand of post-human nomadism I am defending is symbiotic interdependence. This points to the co-presence within embodied subjects of different elements, from different stages of evolution: like inhabiting different time-zones simultaneously. The human organism is neither wholly human, as a person, nor just an organism. It's an abstract machine, radically immanent, which captures, transforms and produces interconnections. The power of such an organism is certainly neither contained nor confined to consciousness, nor does it coincide with the deliberately fake and the self-ironically un-natural. If anything, Deleuze/Guattari's philosophy, resting on a Spinozist monistic ontology, makes all living beings, including the human subjects, very much 'part of nature,' as Genevieve Lloyd put it.

Steven Shaviro describes this in terms of a new paradigm: We are at the end of the Cold War, binary nuclear model of embodied subjectivity and we have entered the rhizomatic, 'viral' or parasitic mode. This is a graphic way of explaining the extent to which today's body is immersed in a set of technologically mediated practices of prosthetic extension. Read with Deleuze, this mode is anything but negative. It expresses in fact the co-extensivity of

the body with its environment or territory, which is one of the salient features of the notion of 'becoming-animal.' A body is a portion of forces life-bound to the environment that feeds it; all organisms are collective and inter-dependent. Parasites and viruses are hetero-directed: They need other organisms. Admittedly, they relate to them as incubators or hosts, releasing their genetically encoded message with evident glee. This expresses a self-ish cruelty that horror movies capture perfectly, but it is a mere detail in a much broader picture. The conceptually solid point here is that the virus/parasite constitutes a model of a symbiotic relationship that defeats binary oppositions. It is a simulacrum that duplicates itself to infinity without any representational pretensions. As such it is an inspiring model for a nomadic eco-philosophy.

The analogy with human reproduction is picked up by Shaviro, who argues that reproduction also involves vampirism, parasitism and cancerous simulation. All origins are tainted by such un-noble modes of interaction with nonhuman life. This does not mean to assert the alleged dictatorship of the viral proliferation of codes. I want to resist the hasty dismissal of the complexities of the corporeal self, the specificity of human embodiment and the paradoxes which define the human species. This over-inflation of the powers of the DNA would be a form of bio-centered nihilism which borders on moral irresponsibility. This over-simplified glorification of raw, 'animal' life needs to be nuanced in order to avoid genetic determinism: A new mix, a more balanced com-

2 bination of elements needs to be negotiated.

The point of convergence among these different discourses and practices of bodily materialism is that the human body is fully immersed in systems of reception and processing of information: those which emanate from its genetic structures, as much as those which is relayed by satellites and wired circuits throughout the advanced world. The most significant thing about post-human bodies of all species, however, remains their dense materiality, which means that they are also surprisingly generative, in that they stubbornly and relentlessly reproduce themselves. The terms of their reproduction are slightly off-beat by good old humanist standards in that they involve animal, insect, and inorganic models of both sexual and a-sexual reproduction. In fact they represent a whole array of possible alternative morphologies and 'other' sexual and reproductive systems. The paradigm of cancerous proliferation of cells is mentioned as an example of this mindless self-duplicating capacity of generative/viral life. Critics like Judith Halberstam and Ira Livingston are quick to point out how this generative disorder in contemporary molecular biology and genetics is both echoed and implemented by the everyday evolution in contemporary societies where sexed identities and sexual bodies are in a state of flux.

Consequently, the post-human body is not merely split or knotted or in process: it is shot through with technologically mediated social relations. It has undergone a meta(morphosis (Braidotti, *Metamorphoses*) and is now positioned

in the spaces in between the traditional dichotomies, including the body-machine binary. In other words, it has become historically, scientifically and culturally impossible to distinguish bodies from their technologically mediated extensions. Halberstam and Livingston conclude: "Queer, cyborg, metametazoan, hybrid, PWA; bodies-without-organs, bodies-in-process, virtual bodies: in unvisualizable amniotic indeterminacy, and unfazed by the hype of their always premature and redundant annunciation, posthuman bodies thrive in the

mutual deformations of totem and taxonomy" (19). 'Life' is simply not what it used to be. Whereas contemporary culture tends to react to the cyber-world according to a problematic double-pull: on the one hand the hype and on the other hand nostalgia, I would plea for a more passionate but distant approach. A form of neo-materialist appreciation of the body would be helpful here, to think through the kind of techno-universe we inhabit. Rethinking the embodied structure of human subjectivity requires an ethics of lucidity, as well as powers of innovation and creativity. I wish to avoid references to the paradigms of human nature (be it biological, psychic or genetic essentialism) while taking fully into account the fact that bodies have indeed become techno-cultural constructs immersed in networks of complex, simultaneous and potentially conflicting power-relations. I do not want to fall, however, into either moral relativism or the suspension of ethical judgement. This is why I am a Deleuzian.

radical immanence. One of the consequences of this post-human predicament is that it exposes the limitations of liberal individualism. Emphasis on the unitary subject of possessive

individualism is ing the complex ticularly for the c human (*bios*) ar Two core objec deeply seated universalism. TI working within a others, can be s side the forms Western neo-hi shared by a ni contemporary s ics working with (Braidotti, T tions), race, pos or non-Western tives who argue etary cosmop (Gilroy) or an r non-Western ism (Shiva; Bha pointing out the verging lines critiques of hi from the cente speak, and thc the postcolonial differences, nor rather as a form along a series o tics of their resj and non-Wester along productive graphic move, v diverse positions tive political affe back into 'activis that leaps acros

ies, including the
some historically,
bodies from their
1 and Livingston
d, PWA, bodies-
in unvisualizable
f their always pre-
odies thrive in the
formations of to-
taxonomy" (19).
imply not what it
e. Whereas con-
y culture tends to
the cyber-world
to a problematic
jll: on the one
e hype and on
hand nostalgia,
plea for a more
le but distant
. A form of neo-
it appreciation of
would be helpful
think through the
techno-universe
it. Rethinking the
structure of hu-
well as powers of
to the paradigms
etic essentialism)
have indeed be-
orks of complex,
lations. I do not
r the suspension

as of this post-
alions of liberal
t of possessive

individualism is of hindrance, rather than assistance, in address-
ing the complexities of our post-human condition and more par-
ticularly for the discussion on the discourses about life in both the
human (*bios*) and the nonhuman (*zoö*) sense of the term.

Two core objections have emerged against it: One targets its
deeply seated anthropocentrism, and the other its posturing
universalism. The post-humanism of social and cultural critics
working within a Western perspective, like Deleuze/Guattari and
others, can be set along-
side the forms of non-
Western neo-humanism,
shared by a number of
contemporary social crit-
ics working within gender
(Braidotti, *Transposi-
tions*), race, post-colonial
or non-Western perspec-
tives who argue for plan-
etary cosmopolitanism
(Gilroy) or an enlarged,
non-Western human-
ism (Shiva; Bhabha). By
pointing out these con-
verging lines between
critiques of humanism
from the center, so to
speak, and those from
the postcolonial 'margins,' I do not mean to flatten out structural
differences, nor to draw facile analogies. I see this convergence
rather as a form of synchronization that pitches the discussion
along a series of variations on a theme, while honoring the poli-
tics of their respective locations. Bio-centered post-humanism
and non-Western neo-humanism can be traveling companions
along productive axes of transposition. The point of this carto-
graphic move, which aligns along the same axis theoretically
diverse positions, is to facilitate the transposition of the respec-
tive political affects that activate them. I do like putting the 'active'
back into 'activism.'³ This transposition is like a musical variation
that leaps across scales and compositions to find a pitch or a

shareable level of intensity. What matters is the
affective dimension, the affinity between these
different tunes, not their political or theoretical
correctness.

Anti-individualistic nomadic politics is a critique
of the center from the center. It assumes a
multiplicity of centers in a world of scattered
hegemonies (Grewal and Kaplan). The carto-
graphic reading of the present points
to a post-humanist system in which
the human has been subsumed into
global networks of control and com-
modification which have taken 'Life'
and living matter as the target. This
is framed by an affective political
economy of advanced capitalism
that alternates euphoria with gloom
and inscribes us in a state of con-
stant crisis. The crisis of human
rights, of human life, the environ-
ment or of human survival is on the
agenda. The generic figure of the
human is in trouble. Haraway puts it
as follows: "[O]ur authenticity is war-
ranted by a database for the human
genome. The molecular database is
held in an informational database

as legally branded intellectual property in a
national laboratory with the mandate to make
the text publicly available for the progress of
science and the advancement of industry. This
is Man the taxonomic type become Man the
brand" (*Witness* 74).

This standard is posited in a universal mode
as *Man*, but this pseudo-universal has been
widely criticized (Lloyd) precisely because of
its partiality. Universal *Man*, in fact, is implicitly
assumed to be masculine, white, urbanized,
speaking a standard language, heterosexual,

as a sustainable
ct, enlarges the
human agents,
earth as a bio-
-anthropocentric
riority or habitat
ghly problematic
ay suggests, we
work towards "a
no-scientific de-
' (*Witness 95*).
Indeed a totality,
I confined. Be-
f the complexi-
are facing, we
review method-
that have tended
rplay the role
ical or genetic
This marks a re-
g of the subject
rially embedded
if responsibility
al accountability
vironments s/he
This calls for a
of alliances of a
ities of scholars
politics. Becom-
ons, and points
ir own diversity.
3 anterior, that is
act of construct-

assumptions of the necessity of the unitary subject and the extreme forms of epistemologically driven post-humanism which dismiss the need for a subject altogether. It is not the case that the subject's transcendent nature needs to result in either disembodied abstractions or in universalistic pretensions. On the contrary, a nomadic-materialist philosophy rethinks the embodied foundations of the subject in a non-essentialist yet accountable manner. Philosophical investigations of alternative ways of accounting for the embedded and embodied nature of the subject are indeed relevant and generous allies in the ongoing efforts to develop an approach to subjectivity worthy of the complexities of our age. One needs at least some subject position: This needs not be either unitary, or exclusively anthropocentric, but it must be the site for political and ethical accountability.

I would define this approach as a nomadic evolutionary thought which contrasts openly with contemporary bio-technological determinism. What comes especially under scrutiny in this perspective is the anthropocentrism that is in-built in so much evolutionary, biological, scientific and philosophical thought. Radically immanent philosophical nomadism, on the other hand, sponsors a subject that is composed of external forces, of the nonhuman, inorganic or technological kind. It is territorially based, and thus environmentally bound. The 'machinic' in Deleuze's thought refers to this dynamic process of unfolding subjectivity outside the classical frame of the anthropocentric humanistic subject, re-locating it into becomings and fields of composition of forces. This is far removed from the advanced capitalist hype

about technology as the future of humanity. 1
The latter constitutes an all-pervasive master- 5
narrative of flight from the human embodied 5
self, into the fake transcendence of a machine
that strikes me as molar, Oedipalizing, des-
potic and exploitative. It is against this social
imaginary of techno-transcendence that I want
to argue for a more dissipative, eroticized and
flowing interaction between the hu-
man and the bio-techno-logical: an
evolution of the non-teleological and
nomadological kind.

becoming-world. At this stage of
the argument, it is important to em-
phasize the difference between the
minoritarian becomings (woman,
animal and others) and the becom-
ing-world or merging with the envi-
ronment, or the Earth. This does not
fit in with this pattern because it is
a pure form of becoming, which is
immanent to all the others: it is plan-
etary. It is the only form of becoming
which is not minoritarian, but stands
qualitatively at a distance from the
standard or norm of the dominant
subject position or Majority. As such it has the
power to de-territorialize the Majority and its
main categories and classifications. The no-
tion of 'becoming-imperceptible' is the most
forceful expression of this positive or qualita-
tive shift or de-territorialization. It concerns
the movement of the totality of all that lives, of
that great animallmachine that is the cosmos
itself, or the planet as a whole. In this sense
the becoming-imperceptible traces a general
eco-philosophy of becoming that produces
positive interconnections on a planetary scale.

The phrase 'we are in *this* together' accurately sums up the global dimension of the problems we are facing when we take the power relations around *biolzoë* as the defining feature of our historicity, as I stated earlier. How to think accurately about the complex singularity of the subject at the same time as the generic materiality of this earthly embedded, 'g-localized' and universal subject is the crucial question.

The model of alternative ethics proposed by radically immanent philosophies of nomadism implies a non-hierarchical idea of transcendence and a non-binary model of interrelation. This has implications for the notion of desire as *potentia*, or affirmative vitality. Historically, Western culture has coded as 'feminine' – fluid, generative, affective and erotic – that vitalistic power of affirmation, no matter who embodies it or where it happens to actualize itself. Accordingly, the aim of Deleuzian feminist theory is not to affirm the feminine, but to open up fields of multiple becomings (Colebrook). It is nonetheless the case that the kind of style and sensibility that sustains the process of becoming-minoritarian is unequivocally closer to the feminine and that it requires the 'becoming-woman' as a compulsory transition phase (Braidotti, *Patterns*). Vitalism poses several problems to the critical thinker, because of its historical links to the organicist philosophy of European fascism. Erin Carston argues that some elements of this fascist definition of vitalism are the mystical union of the soul with an inflated idea of Nature, a tendency

to naturalistic romanticism in opposition to the brutality of industrial culture, a mistrust of the masses and a touch of aristocratic disdain and a true worship of free will in its anarchical mode. Carston reminds us that gender and ethnicity play a major role here, as both lesbianism and Jewishness became major issues in fascist aesthetics and politics, as symbols of degeneration and hence as targets for extermination.

On this, as on other issues (for instance the specification of a new, post-nationalist European identity), philosophical nomadism operates the denazification of philosophy. Vitalism is too important a notion to let it freeze in its historical past as a decadent aesthetics. In order to think the anti-essentialist vitality of *zoë* in the era of advanced technologies, we need to re-think vitalist ideas. Nomadism de-fascistizes them, demystologizes them and de-racistifies them, as it does to all the molar or sedentary formations of Western culture. Vitalism is a relevant question and the time has come to think through this notion in a rigorous and updated fashion.

The intensive subject is trans-generational and environmentally bound; as a living organism it partakes of the shared time sequence of the genetic code, which makes it a collective entity that moves beyond anthropocentrism. The human organism is an in-between that is plugged into and connected to a variety of possible sources, time-lines and forces. It may be useful to define it as a machine, which does not mean an appliance or anything with a specifically utilitarian aim, but rather something that is simultaneously more abstract and more materially embedded.

My minimalist defective and intelligent energies a (be it 'natural,' embodied in this merged in fields, them are positive this cannot be or judged a *pr* core of the matterless force of *biolzoë* specific brand (species egalize which they between the human animal others. For philosophical ology, the strangeness lies precisely not being-one, expressed in attachment to ar dependence on ry. They rely on s highly confined slices of environmentively. Insect among Deleuze' ritory physically, markcode) possess and signs constitute upper primates, lands with bodily howl in pain aimed at coping of recognizing, animality, joining

utility of industrial of aristocratic archical mode. ay a major role re major issues of degeneration

specification of post-nationalist identity), philo- nomadism opera- enazification of y. Vitalism is tant a notion to ze in its histori- as a decadent i. In order to anti-essentialist

zoe in the era laced technolo- need to re-think eas. Nomadism icizes them, de- ses them and ies them, as it ill the molar or , formations of n and the time us and updated

environmentally shared time se- collective entity an organism is d to a variety of ce useful to de- ppliance or any- something that ally embedded.

My minimalist definition of a body-machine is: an embodied, affective and intelligent entity that captures, processes and transforms energies and forces. An embodied and embedded nomadic entity feeds upon, incorporates and transforms its environment (be it 'natural,' 'social,' 'human,' or whatever) constantly. Being embodied in this high-tech ecological manner means being immersed in fields of constant flows and transformations. Not all of them are positive, of course, although in such a dynamic system this cannot be known or judged a priori. The core of the matter is the relentless generative force of bios/zoe and the specific brand of trans-species egalitarianism, which they establish between the human and animal others.

For philosophical nomadology, the strength of animals lies precisely in their not being-one, which is expressed in their attachment to and interdependence on a territory. They rely on small and highly confined/defined slices of environment to which they relate sensorially and perceptively. Insects, especially spiders and parasites like ticks, are among Deleuze's favorites. Like artists, animals mark their territory physically, by color, sound or marking/framing. In order to mark/codelpossess/frame their territory, animals produce signals and signs constantly; insects buzz and make all sort of sounds; upper primates practically talk; cats, wolves and dogs mark the lands with bodily fluids of their own production, dogs bark and howl in pain and desire. They are immanent to their gestures aimed at coping with needs and environments. In the process of recognizing, coding and coping they transcend their sheer animality, joining up with the human in the effort of expressing,

inhabiting and protecting their territory. Orienting oneself in a strange territory; finding food and water, let alone a mate, expressing all this so that the others in the collective pack or group can get the idea – that is a model of radical immanence that needs to be revalued. It is non-verbal communication at its best.

In this respect, humans may have more in common with their genetic neighbors – the animals – than they may care to admit and in some ways, they are less constructive. This proximity, however, is not to be taken in the classical, benevolent mode of caring for 'our four-legged friends.' The culture of pets in some ways constitutes the epitome of humanism: Pets are indeed those Oedipalized entities we watch television with. In philosophical nomadism, on the other hand, the proximity is trans-species and transgenic, material in the sense of matter/mater. It has to do with a chain of connections which can best be described as an ecological philosophy of non-unitary, embodied subjects.

In order not to confuse the becoming of the animal with becoming-animal, it is important to distinguish the discourse of physiology, which deals with organic functions, from that of ethics. Nomadic ethics, inspired by Spinoza, is related to the physics and the biology of bodies. This means that it deals with the question of what exactly a body can do and how much it can take. This is the issue that I code as 'sustainability': how much a body can take in pleasure or enhancement of its potentials, as in pain or impoverishment of its *potentia* (or

conatus). This implies an equation between ethical virtue, empowerment, joy and understanding. To represent adequately to oneself one's own good amounts to understanding it. Such an act of understanding, however, is not the mere mental acquisition of certain ideas. It rather coincides with a bodily process, that is, an activity that enacts or embodies what is good for the subject: the actualization of his/her *potentia*. Mind and body act in unison and are glued together by what Spinoza calls *conatus*, that is to say the desire to become and to increase the intensity of one's becoming.

This approach is made explicit in Pearson's work on Deleuze's philosophy of the body. By reading Nietzsche and Darwin with Deleuze, Pearson explores the interconnections between ethics of values and the nature of bodies, he thus emphasizes the continuum of becoming as well as the transmutation of values that is implied in a nomadic concept of 'life' that is simultaneously materialistic and vitalistic. In so doing, Pearson uses Deleuze's insights to "begin to map non-human becomings of life" (109), combining in a skillful manner biology and technology. Pearson envisages a 'trans-human' space of pure, processual metamorphoses that asserts the infinite powers of a life that does not require the supervision of the human mind in order to endure a generalized becoming-world.

becoming-insect. Let me illustrate the distance that separates the philosophy of inhuman and nonhuman becomings from the cultural

trend of post-humanist artefacts by turning to one of the many possible worlds with which we share our planet: insects. They are neither technological artefacts nor trendy innovations: They have been here far longer than we have, invisible to our scopic apparatus, impenetrable to our gross senses, inaudible to our damaged ears. Insects signal their ecology of belonging in clear and unequivocal – albeit non-linguistic – codes. They are actualized slices of alternative living matter, which expresses the multiplicity of possible worlds

and their co-presence within our humanized universe. They are a radical form of otherness which we cannot perceive, wrapped up as we are in our habits, which are the locus of our structural stupidity.

Insects also have a very respectable literary pedigree in European culture and are very much coded culturally. In the post-nuclear historical context, they have become the sign of a widespread repertoire of angst-ridden

fears and deep anxiety as phobic objects. Creepy mutants; vermin emerging from the sewerage; resilient survivors; tentacular left-overs from a previous evolutionary era; signs of the wrath of God as the Biblical locusts, insects cover a number of staggering signifying practices. On the positive side, from Aesop to La Fontaine until contemporary Hollywood animation films, ants are the prototype of the industrial robot, or the industrious factory worker. Capable of lifting 50 times their own bodily weight, they are resistant to pesticides and enjoy fast reproductive cycles. Crickets may be the lazy hedonists lying in the sun, they have, however, amazing destructive powers. Louis-Vincent Thomas estimates that crickets can reach a density of 2,000 square-

meters, they can destroy something maniacal precisely different species sure make their lived on it for months the sophisticated marvels at them: wax, serve a little practical purpose: work hard, folk leaders and responsibility. Collective: they are ideal of the polity that ants, they tend to be sessive. Jacques resorts to the notion of bees to express disapproval of a feminists and condemn our alleged mented and authentic ways of thinking also, however, in individual entities they produce the grated in their own – and are superb business and em Derrida wishing! Last, but not least of their life-cycle stadia of development as an immense matter. For Arist sexuality is undetermined they exercise the

one of the many
 et: insects. They
 novations: They
 ble to our scopic
 inaudible to our
 belonging in clear
 They are actual-
 presses the mul-
 if possible worlds
 air co-presence
 our humanized
 i. They are a
 form of other-
 hich we cannot
 i, wrapped up
 ire in our habits,
 ire the locus of
 tural stupidity.
 also have a very
 ble literary pedi-
 European culture
 very much coded
 y. In the post-
 historical con-
 y have become
 of a widespread
 e of angst-ridden
 py mutants; ver-
 vitors; tentacular
 ts of the wrath of
 mber of stagger-
 orm Aesop to La
 on films, ants are
 dustrious factory
 xidly weight, they
 roductive cycles.
 3 sun, they have,
 Vincent Thomas
 of 2,000 square-

meters, they can also cover 10 kilometers a day and thus can
 destroy something like 4,000 tons of greens every 24 hours. With
 maniacal precision Thomas also adds that there are five million
 different species of insects. At the average weight of 2.5 mg, they
 sure make their presence on the earth felt! After all, they have
 lived on it for more than 300 million years. Bees are, historically,
 the sophisticated Industrial engineers. In his *Natural History* Pliny
 marvels at them as real-life factories. They produce honey, make
 wax, serve a thousand
 practical purposes; they
 work hard, follow their
 leaders and respect their
 governmental organiza-
 tion. Collective-minded,
 they are ideal members
 of the polity though, like
 ants, they tend to get ob-
 sessive. Jacques Derrida
 resorts to the metaphor
 of bees to express his
 disapproval of academic
 feminists and to con-
 demn our allegedly regl-
 mented and authoritarian
 ways of thinking. Bees
 also, however, believe
 in individual enterprise;
 they produce their own medicine – the *propolis*, perfectly inte-
 grated in their own environment, in which they hibernate in winter
 – and are superbly well-organized. Great leaders, military minds,
 business and engineers, the bees leave Pliny gasping for air and
 Derrida wishing for more.
 Last, but not least, insects are kings of queer. The fact that most
 of their life-cycle is made of metamorphoses through different
 stadia of development means that transformative speed as well
 as an immense power of adaptation are the heart of the insect-
 matter. For Aristotle, insects have no specific sex, for Pliny, their
 sexuality is undecidable as their sex is invisible. Tiny miniatures,
 they exercise the same immense sense of estrangement as di-

1 nosaurs, dragons or other gigantic monsters.
 5 Improbable morphological constructs, they
 9 challenge and titillate; non-mammals that lay
 eggs, they are hybrid par excellence. Insects
 carry life in their cross-species pollinating
 encounters with plants and flowers. They also
 carry death, through their own bodily reserves
 of poison, stings, bites and bumps, but also by
 carrying around powerful viruses,
 malaria being the best known.
 Elisabeth Grosz ("Animal Sex") fo-
 cuses on the fascination of humans
 with insect sexuality. Grosz sees the
 insect as a highly sexualized 'queer'
 entity, capable of titillating the col-
 lective imagination especially on the
 issue of sex and death. She concen-
 trates on two insects particularly: the
 black widow spider and the praying
 mantis, especially in the work of
 Roger Callois and Alphonso Lingis.
 She finds in these the prototype of
 a post-human philosophy. In their
 mimicry and camouflage abilities, in-
 sects enact the psychoanalytic phe-
 nomenon of psychasthenia, that is
 to say a disintegration of the bounds
 of consciousness and the relinquishing of its
 ties to the body so that the distinction between
 the inside and the outside becomes difficult
 to hold. Accordingly, the sexual connotation
 of this orgasmic dissolution of the boundar-
 ies of decency in insects leads Callois to a
 semi-delirious set of associations between the
 praying mantis-religion-food-orality-vampires-
 vagina-dentata-automatism-female android.
 What emerges loud and clear from the series
 of associations is the insect-paradigm as a
 model for polymorphous anti-phallic sexuality.

1
6

0 Lingis argues that the organic body cannot be reduced to the organic body but to an organic assemblage of forces that exceeds and challenges the boundaries of morphology and finds an interesting resonance in the sexuality of insects.

Disruption rather than the unfolding of the predictable old scenario of heterosexual seduction is the key to trigger off desire in these post-human times. Transformations and metamorphoses are the true site of desire, asymmetrically embodied ecstasy in and of difference, through the construction of unprogrammed surfaces of pleasure, not the articulation of the libidinal economy of the same. Lust and pleasure in the nomadic mode melt down the cohesion and unity for the body, allowing for the cricket in you to sing, and the cockroach in you to endure. Something that David Cronenberg has understood completely.

Other qualities that make insects paradigmatic are: the power of metamorphosis; the parasitism; the power of mimicry or blending with their territory and environment and the speed of movement; their hyper-active sexuality, with highly accelerated rhythms and made of many rhizomatic trans-species copulations with plants and flowers as well as entities of the same species (a life cycle can be completed in 24 hours). They defy gravity and embody a specific temporality of their own, with very fast rates of genetic recombination. Shaviro argues that "insect life is an alien presence that we can neither assimilate nor

expel" (47). As such it dwells between different states of in-betweenness, arousing the same spasmodic reactions in humans as the monstrous, the sacred, or the alien. This is a reaction of simultaneous attraction and repulsion, disgust and desire. They pose the question of radical otherness not in metaphorical but in bio-morphic terms, that is to say as a metamorphosis of the sensory, cognitive and perceptual human apparatus. In this regard, the insect provides a new paradigm for discontinuous

transformations without major disruptions. The key elements of this are: larval metamorphoses; the speed of their reproductive system; the propensity to generate mutations; the faster rate of genetic recombination. Moreover, not having any major neuronal reservoir, insects are free from the hold of memory and of the socially enforced forms of sedimented memory known as institutions. In Deleuze's terminology, they are multiple singularities without fixed identities. All of these have been amply explored and documented in literature, cinema and culture: insects evidence the proximity and co-presence of multiple worlds existing alongside each other in a cruelly symbiotic form of mutual indifference.

the insect paradigm of contemporary culture. The evidence points to a powerful link between the insect and electronic technology: the ticking away of incessant bytes of information at the speed of light. I think this destabilizing post-human speed is the source of Deleuze's connection to writers like William S. Burroughs, but also to others, whom he ignores, like Kathy Acker and Angela Carter.

Insects are power centrist and po This is clearly r ence fiction and l Barbara Creed between becomi Cronenberg's *T* sis of the scienti and the fly, whic enforced in the ri scene where st birth to a giant Films like *T* (1955) and *Th* which features post-nuclear ar blown-up, larger- female figure is ; on which all sorts anxieties get proj *The Fly* (1958) v mad scientist too wife through his eyes, we get blow-up phenor the female multi fold. In a gestur anticipates Cam kills him under al Insects are tech tween the organi of Bruce Sterling only the most evi of irreconcilable human/machine" of imbrication of evidenced in the often used to des and virtual reality

states of in-be-
 itions in humans
 is a reaction of
 ind desire. They
 telaphorical, but
 norphosis of the
 paratus. In this
 or discontinuous
 ations without
 isruptions. The
 tents of this are:
 metamorphoses;
 ed of their re-
 re system; the
 ty to generate
 s; the faster rate
 c recombination.
 r, not having any
 uronal reservoir,
 re free from the
 memory and of
 cially enforced
 of sedimented
 known as insti-
 n Deleuze's ter-
 r, they are mul-
 tularities without
 plored and docu-
 pts evidence the
 xisting alongside
 indifference.

e. The evidence
 l electronic tech-
 nformation at the
 nan speed is the
 William S. Bur-
 like Kathy Acker

Insects are powerful indicators of the decentring of anthropo-
 centricism and point to post-human sensibilities and sexualities.
 This is clearly manifest in popular literary genres, such as sci-
 ence fiction and horror, for instance, in the women/insects nexus.
 Barbara Creed argues that there is a privileged relationship
 between becoming-insect and becoming-woman. For instance
 Cronenberg's *The Fly* (1986) displays a Kalka-like metamorpho-
 sis of the scientist. The film draws parallels between the woman
 and the fly, which are re-
 enforced in the nightmare
 scene where she gives
 birth to a giant maggot.
 Films like *Tarantula*
 (1955) and *Them* (1954),
 which features gigantic
 post-nuclear ants, this
 blown-up, larger-than life
 female figure is a screen
 on which all sorts of other
 anxieties get projected. In
The Fly (1958) when the
 mad scientist looks at his
 wife through his insect-
 eyes, we get another
 blow-up phenomenon of
 the female multiplied ten-
 fold. In a gesture which
 anticipates Cameron's *The Terminator* (1984), she mercifully
 kills him under an industrial press.
 Insects are technological artifacts, or entities that stand in be-
 tween the organic and the inorganic. Bukatman, in his analysis
 of Bruce Sterling's cyberpunk novels, argues that "[i]nsects are
 only the most evident metaphorical process conflating a number
 of irreconcilable terms such as life/non life, biology/technology,
 human/machine" (277). As such, insects signal a high degree
 of imbrication of the organic with the technological; this can be
 evidenced in the insectoid and arachnoid terminology that is so
 often used to describe advanced technologies, especially robots
 and virtual reality artefacts. This kind of imagery stresses the in-

ter-dependance of technology on other, social
 and environmental forces. Cyber-feminists like
 Helene von Othenburg argue that the Internet,
 or the computer-mediated web, can only be
 arachnoidic, or spider-like. The World Wide
 Web functions via lines, knots, connections,
 relations in a manner that is also analogous to
 the human brain. Thus, the discourse of arach-
 nomancy can be used to explore
 possible evolutions of information
 technologies: weaving a quilt with
 the synapses of our brains and the
 sinews of our nerves.
 In biology, it's the speed and effi-
 ciency of its molecular structure and
 more especially of its reproductive
 cycle that has made the fruit-fly into
 the most important experimental site
 in modern molecular research (Fox
 Keller). Haraway also hints at an
 'insect paradigm' in contemporary
 molecular biology, which has moved
 beyond the classical opposition of
 'vitalistic' and 'mechanistic' prin-
 ciples, to evolve instead in the direc-
 tion of serial repetitions. Haraway
 takes this as a serious indication that
 we have already left the era of "bio-politics" to
 enter that of "the informatics of domination"
 ("Cyborg Manifesto" 161).
 Insects have also gained widespread promi-
 nance and star-billing in contemporary media
 culture. An evident insect and also a spider
 paradigm is on full display in recent cinematic
 exploits in the genre of computer games, cy-
 berpunk and science-fiction. Gigantic metal-
 framed imitation-insects crawl all over the sur-
 face of films as *Star Wars VI: The Return of the
 Jedi* (1983), *Robocop* (1987), as well as in the

digital nightmare-worlds of *The Matrix* (1999). Insect aesthetics reaches its apotheosis in the digital images of *Antz* (1998) and *A Bug's Life* (1998) which merely officialize a *topos* that is firmly instilled in the contemporary imaginary: the post-human mix of organic and inorganic organisms.

There are other aspects of the becoming-insect, however, that, read in a Deleuzian perspective, point towards technology and away from humanism: *homo faber* rather than *homo sapiens*. Deleuze/Guattari argue that insects are essentially about becoming-imperceptible, becoming-molecular mostly because of the speed of their lifespan (333). Their significant traits in terms of a Deleuzian mapping of forces are: dryness; hairiness; metal-like body-frames; great resilience. They are environment-bound, thus elemental, either because linked to the earth and to its under-ground/crust (*chthonic* forces) or defying its gravity thanks to aircraft-like body-frames (remember the exhilaration of Kalka's Gregor Samsa when he discovers that he can crawl up on the ceiling). Of great importance is the shift in sensorial and spatio-temporal coordinates that make insects into genuinely admirable organisms. The power of vision of some of them, for instance the fly's eye, can be considered as a masterpiece of evolution. In all these regards, the insects are a very perfect machinic organism which is as other from the mammals and therefore the humans as biologically possible. What interests Deleuze particularly about the speed

of the insects' bodies, however, is their geomorphic technological performativity. Insects are fantastic music-makers. Deleuze distinctly warns us that he does not mean the usual bodily noises that one makes in moving about the planet, but rather the specific capacity to produce sounds that have speeds, variations and intensities worthy not only of human compositions, but also of the harmony of the spheres. Insects – as well as other animals – offer convincing examples of nonlinguistic communication

and modes of thought, ranging from visual apprehension to sonar and other acoustic technologies, including an acute sense of internal time. It is probably on this score that insects constitute a real challenge for humanity, they deprive the human of his/her alleged monopoly over music-making.

It would be interesting to analyze contemporary music by artists like Meredith Monk and Diamanda Galas along these lines: the latter being especially comparable to Carmelo Bene for her vocal virtuosity and the capacity to capture the sound-like inner core of words, pushing the phonemes to the point of implosion. They certainly undo not only the priority of the human voice in music-making, but also the centrality of the human as a sensible means of achieving rhythms and sounds that reflect our era.

The interconnection sounds|technology|insects|music stresses how rare it is to encounter music or sound that reflects the acoustic quality of the environment most of us inhabit. That is to say, a very crowded, noisy, highly resonant urban environment where stillness and silence are practically unknown. I think that a great deal of music or sound production of the alternative kind today

aims precisely at spaces, and yet experiments create and the technologists like R. C. Spooky, or of chemistry is a game out the acoustic-classical function as the incar the most subtle of the humanist: In music, time heard. It is a purification through the nutshell, is its for nomadic sul Technologically ed music de- and de-human time-sequence. push speed anc post-human heit it can also fade pre-human depth audibility. How us hear the inal the other side of impose an audib inhabit is, for De of composition: process, and transitions in the marks the proxir to avoid syntheses pursuing disson: sounds belong, :tably to outer sp:

raphic technological-makers. Deleuze
ual bodily noises
t rather the spee-
eds, variations
sitions, but also
as other animals
communication
des of thought,
from visual ap-
on to sonar and
oustic techno-
luding an acute
internal time. It
ly on this score
ects constitute
allenge for hu-
they deprive the
f his/her alleged
y over music-

be interesting
yze contempo-
sic by artists
edith Monk and
la Galas along
nes; the latter
e for her vocal
-like inner core
implosion. They
i voice in music-
sensible means
era.
[music stresses
fects the acous-
That is to say, a
ironment where
hink that a great
ative kind today

aims precisely at capturing the intense sonority of our lived-in spaces, and yet to empty it of its representational value. Sonic experiments create alternative possible worlds. Techno-sounds, and the technological performances of Deleuze-inspired music colorists like Robin Rimbaud, also known as Scanner, or DJ Spooky, or of contemporary artists like Soundlab, or Cultural Alchemy is a gamble with this apparently contradictory aim: to map out the acoustic environments of here and now, while undoing the classical function of music as the incarnation of the most sublime ideals of the humanist subject.

In music, time can be heard. It is a pure form of time through the mediation of rhythm. This, in a nutshell, is its relevance for nomadic subjectivity. Technologically mediated music de-naturalizes and de-humanizes the time-sequence. It can push speed and pitch to post-human heights, but it can also fade them to pre-human depths of inaudibility. How to make us hear the inaudible, the imperceptible, that roar which lies on the other side of silence, is what is at stake in this process. How to impose an audible form upon the amorphous mass of sounds we inhabit is, for Deleuzian composers, the challenge. The method of composition is in keeping with Deleuze's criteria of selection, process, and in-between transitions. In music one can hear the transitions in the form of intervals. In nomadic music, the interval marks the proximity but also the singularity of each sound, so as to avoid synthesis, harmony or melodic resolution. It is a way of pursuing dissonance by returning it to the external world, where sounds belong, always in transit, like radio-waves moving ineluctably to outer spaces, chatting on, with nobody to listen.

There is also a political side to this. Given that vision as a sense has been historically privileged as a hegemonic element in the constitution of the subject. Considering also that thescopic is dominant in contemporary epistemology and psychoanalysis. And keeping in mind that visualization techniques are central to contemporary formations of power as domination, I can only conclude

that the visual regime is dominant, or molar, in the political economy of postmodernity. As such, it is saturated with power-relations. This is not the case for sounds or the acoustic regime. They are more subversive, because they are less codified by power. Sound is more abstract, less prone to immediate commodification into an economy of language. Since the 1968 events, in Europe the counter-culture has invested in the production of alternative acoustic environments and forms of sound-transmission as central elements of cultural and political activism, from the free radio stations of the 70s to the techno-music of today. The coming of the new information technologies, cyber-feminism and iPods have merely intensified this trend.

Whereas classical music, including pop, rock and their off-shoots aims at resonances, and the constitution of alternative resisting, counter-cultural subjectivities, nomadic or rhizomatic musicology, to quote Ronald Bogue, attempts to make us hear the inaudible. It aims at a virtual sound space. This is a space of de-territorialization of our acoustic habits through the production of unexpected, speedy, hostile

4 sounds that facilitate unexpected connections and relations. In fact, the example of insects suggests that we inhabit unfamiliar, post-human acoustic environments all the time: We just call it 'nature' and mostly ignore it. We just do not hear them – we are not used to 'take them in,' or to tune into them. Rhizo-music forces this encounter by re-creating it technologically, in the best musical tradition. As such, it represents a space of becoming. The key-notion in becoming-insect as in rhizo-musicology is that of an environment, an acoustic territory, a position of spatio-temporal coordinates where rhythms are remembered or stored and eventually produced. Hence the connections to animals and insects, territories, or habitats are constituted through the composition and the organization of refrains or rhythms understood as patterns of repetition and occupation and marking of a space. Invisible signatures, so to speak. Bogue sums up as follows the function of these refrains or patterns of repetition: "They may (1) mark or assemble a territory; (2) connect a territory with interval impulses and/or external circumstances; (3) identify specialized functions; (4) or collect forces in order to centralize the territory or go outside" (91). The function of the refrain is to create spaces of transition or becoming-in-between passages that destabilize the linearity of recorded time, packaged as musical sounds. Deleuze's vision of the becoming-minoritarian of music offers a way of reconstructing the subject's relationship to his/her environment, earthly and cosmic, in

a non-mathematical mode. Deleuze's 'abstract machines,' best expressed in his becoming-insect, are rhythmic and abstract. Deleuze challenges the representational function of music as expressing the harmony of the spheres. In opposition to the dark chaos of unaccounted-for space. The accountability of space is ensured by mathematical ordering. In Plato's philosophy this results in a time-honored connection between music, mathematics and cosmology. It is this cosmic quality of music that makes it

relevant for philosophical nomadism, in that it points to the infinite in a very grounded, embedded fashion.

In their committed anti-Platonic mode, Deleuze and Guattari want to de-link the representation of the cosmos from its reliance on the rationality of a mathematical order. They approach it instead as an open system, uncontrollable and incommensurable with the human capacity to count. Music is accordingly liberated from its

human constraints and turned into a transversal space of molecular becomings. Rhythms acquire a singularity and autonomy of their own. As many contemporary artists from Laurie Anderson to Stelarc have pointed out, the sheer materiality of the human body and its fleshy contents (lungs, nerves, brains, intestines, etc.) are as many sound-making, acoustic chambers. Enhanced technologically, these internal sounds can confront the listener with as shocking a sensation of unfamiliarity as the external rumbles of the cosmos. Possible worlds are already here, we just do not seem able to extend our perception, cognition and empathy far enough to actually inhabit them and do justice to their complexity.

The becoming of the sounds of music has been amply used mostly banal in themselves. A and runs; the fine and color. both the artist music aims at normalizing our habits, making that the human ruling principle of the space. Lawrence sees acoustic as a crucial framing space sound-walls that and contain it. Sonic bricks for stability, all rarely. Under of molecular level however, they all boundaries tear down the re-join the cosmobilization" (1 music production unitary subject upon them. Music increasing as many All becoming imperceptible, writing for Deleuze so music can boundaries. It

machines,' best
ic and abstract.
ion of music as
sition to the dark
bility of space is
ilosophy this re-
sic, mathematics
sic that makes it
for philosophi-
adism, in that it
, the infinite in a
ounded, embed-
ion.

committed anti-
mode, Deleuze
want to de-link
resentation of
smos from its
on the rational-
a mathematical
they approach it
as an open sys-
containable and
ensurable with
nan capacity to
music is accord-
erated from its
sal space of mo-
ity and autonomy
Laurie Anderson
lity of the human
rains, intestines,
rbers. Enhanced
front the listener
as the external
n, cognition and
and do justice to

The becoming-animal or insect has nothing to do with imitating the sounds of animals or insects. That mimetic capacity has been amply used up in classical music. It has produced flat and mostly banal renditions of animal sounds that make a mockery of themselves. As Deleuze suggests, art does not imitate: it steals and runs; the painter does not imitate the bird: She captures it as line and color. This is a process of becoming that deterritorializes both the artist and his/her object. Against imitation, rhizomatic music aims at deterritorializing our acoustic habits, making us aware that the human is not the ruling principle in the harmony of the spheres.

Lawrence Grossberg sees acoustic refrains as a crucial element in framing space-creating sound-walls that encircle and contain the subject. Sonic bricks that allow for stability, albeit temporarily. Under the impact of molecular becomings, however, they can split all boundaries open, tear down the walls and re-join the cosmos. It is a case of mobility versus the "disciplined mobilization" (97) of social space. The becoming-minoritarian of music produces a practice of expression without a monolithic or unitary subject that supervises the operations and capitalizes upon them.

Music increases the intensity of becoming: it is about crossing as many thresholds of intensity as the subject can sustain. All becoming is transgressive: it also aims at approaching the imperceptible, the unthinkable, the audible. Just as intransitive writing for Deleuze can engender becoming by being intransitive, so music can express affectivity, immanence and dissolution of boundaries. Music is constant becoming, its refrains and myth-

mic narrations. It makes audible the irreducibility of in-between spaces, polyphonic hybridization, multiple sonic interferences. 5 6

conclusion: an eco-philosophy of multiple belongings. The post-human predicament is not about artificiality, but rather about the emergence of zoe, or of 'life' itself as a political subject in advanced, genetically backed capitalism. In this context, at the end of the postmodernist celebration of the inorganic and fake, I have stressed the need to rethink the materialist foundations of subjectivity and to cultivate positive political passions and an ethics of affirmation. Re-visiting Spinoza and Nietzsche with Deleuze, anarchist and feminist theory allow us to posit the project of constructing an affirmative approach to complexities of our historical condition. We need to re-think ethics, politics and representation in view of the non-unitary subjects in process, which we have already become. Conceptual creativity and vision are needed, as is the love for zoe. Zoe as the ultimate echoing chambers of the specific slice of life that we embody is larval, but also cosmic. Questions linked to post-secular spirituality arise as a consequence of the politics of life and an ethics that takes zoe seriously as a productive category.

The potency of zoe as the defining trait of the subject displaces the unitary vision of consciousness and the sovereignty of the 'I.' Both liberal individualism and classical humanism are accordingly disrupted at their very

foundations. Far from being merely a 'crisis' of values, I think this situation confronts us with a formidable set of new opportunities: renewed conceptual creativity and a leap of our collective imagination to meet the challenge. A post-humanistic brand of non-anthropocentric vitalism, inspired by philosophical nominalism, is one possible response to this challenge. A politics of life defined as *bios/zoe* power opens the possibility of the proliferation of highly generative post-humanities.

A sustainable ethics for a non-unitary subject proposes an enlarged sense of interconnection between self and others, including the nonhuman or 'earth' others, by removing the obstacle of self-centered individualism. Far from entailing the loss of values and a free fall into relativism, this rather implies a new way of combining self-interests with the well-being of an enlarged sense of community, which includes one's territorial or environmental interconnections. It is a nomadic eco-philosophy of multiple belongings, which involves transposing the subject out of identity politics into a non-unitary or nomadic vision of selves as interrelational forces. Consciousness is redefined accordingly not as the core of the humanistic subject, but at best as a way of synchronizing the multiple differences within each and everyone, which constitutes the ethical core of nomadic subjects. The return of the master narratives of genetic determinism and market capitalism today provide a perverse equation of individualism with the multiple inter-connective capacities of

advanced technologies. This result is simultaneously containing and narrowing down the enormous potential of the technologies themselves, which are advanced enough to redesign our cosmological views as well as social relations. They also prevent humans from active experiments with new thresholds of sustainability: How far we can go without cracking, how much our bodies can take on the current transformations.

This calls for a revision of the subject in terms of an eco-philosophical integration into his/her environment. The shift to bio-centered egalitarianism posits the subject as a post-identity site, or an embodied and embedded entity, which exists in the interaction with a number of external forces and others, not all of them human, social or historical others. Such a vision of the subject transposes both humanism and social constructionism and calls for a revision of vitalism as a major theoretical issue.

Before we mistake a shift of scale for a qualitative shift of perspective, we need to develop more accurate cartographies, to stay focused on the potential for qualitative changes (becomings), not just quantitative proliferations of counter-identities. In order to answer these challenges, the specific time-sequences and temporality of nomadic subjectivity need to be accounted for. The non-linear time of becoming accomplishes a number of productive transpositions of life into *zoe* and of death into a-temporal and incorporeal becomings. In this project, insects stand as the indicators of a path of becoming-imperceptible which can be considered as paradigmatic in contemporary techno-culture. Bugs may indeed be to nature as chips to culture, but the terms of this new 'natureculture' continu-

um, far from respect for the notes. I am in his opening the University of coined by John N. with Intensities' thanks to Judith for this warm of my work.

works cited.
Pearson, Keith, *Life: Perspectives on Transhumanism*. London: Routledge, 1997.
Balsamic Technologies *Gendered Bodying Cyborg*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1996.
Bhabha, Homi K., "Unpacking my differences," *The Postcolonial Question: A Dialogue with History*. London: Routledge, 1994.
Sulamita, *Metamorphoses*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997.
Pollack, *Politicizing the Subject: A Nomadic Ethic*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997.
Dunham, *Terminal Identity*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1997.
Sappho, *Fascism: Sappho's Poem*. Stanford UP, 1997.
Humanism: Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1977.

um, far from resulting in facile assimilations, can create renewed respect for the complexity of their interrelation.

notes. I am grateful to Hanjo Berrsessem for this expression in his opening remarks at the 'Deleuzian Events' conference at the University of Cologne, 1-3 July 2005.¹ This expression was coined by John Marks at the Deleuze conference 'Experimenting with Intensities' at Trent University, Canada, May 2004.² With thanks to Judith Butler for this warm formulation of my work.

works cited. Ansell Pearson, Keith. *Viroid Life: Perspectives on Nietzsche and the Transhuman Condition*. London: Routledge, 1997. ¹ Balsamo, Anne. *Technologies of the Gendered Body: Reading Cyborg Women*. Durham: Duke UP, 1996. ¹ Bhabha, Homi K. "Unpacking my library... again." *The Post-Colonial Question: Common Skies, Divided Horizons*. Eds. Iain Chambers and Lidia Curi. New York: Routledge, 1996. 199-211. ¹ Bogue, Ronald. "Rhizomusicology." *Sub-Stance* 66 (1991): 85-101. ¹ Braidotti, Rosi. *Metamorphoses: Towards a Materialist Theory of Becoming*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002. ¹ ---. *Patterns of Dissonance*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991. ¹ ---. *Transpositions: On Nomadic Ethics*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006. ¹ Bukatman, Scott. *Terminal Identity: The Virtual Subject in Post-Modern Science Fiction*. Durham: Duke UP, 1993. ¹ Carlston, Erin G. *Thinking Fascism: Sapphic Modernism and Fascist Modernity*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1998. ¹ Colebrook, Claire. "Postmodernism is a Humanism: Deleuze and Equivocity." *Women: A Cultural Re-*

view 15.3 (2004): 283-307. ¹ Creed, Barbara. *The Monstrous Feminine: Film, Feminism and Psychoanalysis*. New York: Routledge, 1993. ¹ Delanda, Manuel. *Intensive Science and Virtual Philosophy*. London: Continuum, 2002. ¹ Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Trans. Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1987. ¹ Derrida, Jacques. "Women in the Beehive: A Seminar with Jacques Derrida." *Men in Feminism*. Eds. Alice Jardine and Paul Smith. New York: Methuen, 1987. 189-203. ¹ Fox Keller, Evelyn. *A Feeling for the Organism*. New York: Freeman, 1985. ¹ Franklin, Sarah, Celia Lury, and Jackie Stacey. *Global Nature, Global Culture*. London: Sage, 2000. ¹ Fukuyama, Francis. *Our Posthuman Future: Consequences of the Biotechnological Revolution*. London: Profile Books, 2002. ¹ Galens, Moira and Genevieve Lloyd. *Collective Imaginings: Spinoza, Past and Present*. London: Routledge, 1999. ¹ Gilroy, Paul. *Against Race: Imaging Political Culture Beyond the Colour Line*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2000. ¹ Grewal, Inderpal and Caren Kaplan, eds. *Scattered Hegemonies: Postmodernity and Transnational Feminist Practices*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1994. ¹ Grossberg, Lawrence. *Dancing in Spite of Myself: Essays on Popular Culture*. Durham: Duke UP, 1997. ¹ Grosz, Elizabeth. "Animal Sex: Libido as Desire and Death." *Sexy Bodies: The Strange Carnalities of Feminism*. Eds. Elizabeth Grosz and Elisabeth Probyn. London: Routledge, 1995. 278-99. ¹ ---. *In the Nick of*

- Time. Durham: Duke UP, 2004. ¶ Habermas, Jürgen. *The Future of Human Nature*. Trans. Hella Beister and William Rehg. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003. ¶ Halberstam, Judith and Ira Livingston, eds. *Posthuman Bodies*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1995. ¶ Haraway, Donna. "Cyborg Manifesto." *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*. London: Free Association Books, 1991. 149-82. ¶ ---. *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium: FemaleMale@Meets_Oncomouse™. Feminism and Technoscience*. London: Routledge, 1997. ¶ ---. "The Promises of Monsters: A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/Others." *Cultural Studies*. Eds. Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson and Paula Treichler. London: Routledge, 1992. 275-332. ¶ Lloyd, Genevieve. *Part of Nature: Self-knowledge in Spinoza's Ethics*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1994. ¶ Margulis, Lynn, and Dorion Sagan. *What is Life?* Berkeley: U of California P, 1995. ¶ Massumi, Brian. "Requiem for Our Prospective Dead! (Toward a Participatory Critique of Capitalist Power)." *Deleuze and Guattari: New Mappings in Politics, Philosophy and Culture*. Eds. Eleanor Kaufman and Kevin Jon Heller. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1998. 40-64. ¶ Parisi, Luciana. *Abstract Sex: Philosophy, Bio-Technology, and the Mutation of Desire*. London: Continuum, 2004. ¶ ---. "For a Schizogenesis of Sexual Difference." *Identities* 3.1 (2004): 67-93. ¶ Plotnitsky, Arkady. *The Knowable and the Unknowable: Modern Science, Nonclassical Thought and the "Two Cultures"*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 2002. ¶ Shaviro, Steven. "Two Lessons from Burroughs." Halberstam 38-56. ¶ Shiva, Vandana. *Biopiracy: The Plunder of Nature and Knowledge*. Boston: South End Press, 1997. ¶ Sobchack, Vivian. *Carnal Thoughts: Embodiment and Moving Image Culture*. Berkeley: U of California P, 2004. ¶ Springer, Claudia. *Electronic Eros: Bodies and Desire in the Postindustrial Age*. Austin: U of Texas P, 1996. ¶ Thomas, Louis-Vincent. *Civilisation et divagations: mort, fantasmes, science-fiction*. Paris: Payot, 1979. ¶ Wilson, Elizabeth A. *Neural Geographies: Feminism and the Microstructure of Cognition*. New York: Routledge, 1998.

are bugs to nature as chips to culture?

1

6

9

Shiva, Vandana.
Boston: South
wights: *Embodi-*
of California P.
as and Desire in
1996. ¶ Thomas,
fantasmes, sci-
beth A. *Neural*
ties: Feminism
Microstructure
tion. New York:
e, 1998.